

Association of Seventh-day Adventist Librarians / Adventist Resources Section

Guidelines for Images (Scans)

July 2005

Introduction

More Adventist libraries and special collections are becoming involved in scanning photographs and textual materials. The process is not too difficult for simple applications or for single use needs such as use on a web page or for an exhibit. However, a project to systematically capture a body of material introduces considerable questions which need to be address before moving forward.

This present document arose from the June 20, 2004, meeting of the Adventist Resources Section of the Association of Seventh-day Adventist Librarians meeting in Orlando, Florida. The Section set up a small task force [Jim Ford, chair, Jonathan Brauer (GC), Michael Campbell (LLU), Mark Copsey (WWC), Gerald Rezes (LLU), Steve Sowder (AU)] to prepare some guidelines to help librarians know better how to plan such a project and then how to go about doing the work. What follows is the first edition of what will definitely be a work in progress. The technology and the expectations constantly change so guidelines need to change regularly as well.

These guidelines are not meant to be the last word. We recognize there are many limitations. Our goal is to provide members with an easy to understand and easy to follow guideline when they undertake a scanning project. The following four scanning projects provide much more comprehensive guidelines and specifications than does this document. If this present document does not answer your questions please refer to one of these.

- http://www.archives.gov/research_room/arc/arc_info/techguide_raster_june2004.pdf
- <http://dublincore.org/documents/dcmi-terms/>
- http://www.cdpheritage.org/resource/scanning/documents/WSDIBP_v1.pdf
- <http://www.lib.duke.edu/insight/scan>

At the Andrews University Center for Adventist Research web page <http://www.andrews.edu/library/car/info.htm> get:

- a copy of this document
- a photograph database [<http://www.andrews.edu/library/car/photosearch.htm>] which incorporates much of the points mentioned in this document. See also <http://search.llu.edu/heritage/PhotoFile.htm>
- procedures for the Center for Adventist Research photograph scanning project. Your site-specific application will need to vary from what you see here based on your local needs.
- a program script (CGI) which will allow you to begin indexing photographs. See it at: <http://www.andrews.edu/library/SourceCode/photos.txt>. Setting this up may require help from an IT person depending how conversant you are with Perl computer language. Source person: Steve Sowder (AU) (269-471-6242)

Planning

The decision to properly scan a set of photographs, documents, or other records encompasses more than simply making the decision to scan. There are issues of:

- Equipment and supplies
- Hardware and software
- Selection
- Preparation
- Supervision and management of the process
- Backup and long-term preservation
- Quality control
- Legal issues
- Updating/migrating

Critical Issues

1. Plan your project carefully.
 - A. Purpose
 - B. Realistic time line
 - C. Funds needed
 - D. Consult with experts and others who have done such a project; read technical/professional literature which discuss scanning projects.

2. Hardware and Software
 - A. Up to date computer.
 - i. Pentium 4 or Apple G4.
 - ii. The more RAM the better. 512 MB absolute minimum.
 - iii. Very good quality monitor. LCD not recommended currently unless high end.
 - iv. Large hard drive. 80-100+ GB
 - v. CD/DVD burner (should be up to date, i.e. fast)
 - vi. Color printer—ink jet or laser, high quality.
 - B. Scanner
Up to date with good technical recommendations. Plan to spend \$500 or more. Consider a tabloid size if you may do more than standard photographs.
 - C. Software
 - i. Scanning software should come with scanner. Generally OK.
 - ii. Photoshop 7.0 or Photoshop CS. Educational pricing will be around \$250. You can get by with lesser programs, but for a project which will continue beyond a handful of photographs or documents you will want a suitable professional program. The results will be worth it.
 - D. Space.
You will need adequate space to spread out the work without being crowded or becoming mixed with other projects. Also consider updating the storage methodology after scanning—i.e. provide better housing and access for original photographs.

3. Selection
 - A. What is most central to what you want to accomplish with this project
 - B. What are 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc. priorities
 - C. Start with your best “stuff.”
 - D. Start with photographs which will provide the most clarity, color, resolution, etc. Do lesser photos later as your skills will be better.
 - E. What documents are most significant and meaningful to the project goals
 - F. Alternatively, what collections are most at risk from over use or physical deterioration

Considerations in creating an image

1. Review the National Archives, Western States, and Duke University guidelines. Also, review the procedures from the Andrews University Center for Adventist Research found on their web site: (<http://www.andrews.edu/library/car/>). Please bear in mind these procedures are specific for the Andrews situation; your procedures will need to differ in some of the details. Feel free to call Andrews 269-471-3209 or Loma Linda 909-558-4942.
2. Set up your own procedures. Test them. Access the database from off campus, if that is a part of your projects goals.
3. Use-neutral. Do not materially change the image from what the original looks like. You may crop the border, perform minimal color correction, bright/contrast adjustment as necessary, and sharpen, but nothing else. Let the end user modify the image to fit their needs. If you are the end user keep a minimally modified archival copy and then modify a copy.
4. Consistency in file naming conventions. Develop a naming convention for the whole project and stick with it. If you change the convention part way through the project then go back and change everything.
5. Quality control, especially if more than one individual is doing the work or the project manager is not the one doing the work.

Standards for scanning

1. **Resolution** 600 dpi. Sources referred to in this document will suggest 4,000 pixels across the long dimension of a photograph. This is rather cumbersome. Consistently using 600 dpi will result in a perfectly acceptable and very useable image. Most scanning software is calibrated in dpi. If you plan to scan text documents 600 dpi may be more than you need. Consider your goals, needs, and advice from those knowledgeable in the field. 600 dpi is acceptable now, but bear in mind this is a moving target. It continues to go higher.
2. **8-bit** gray scale for black and white
24-bit RGB for color and monochrome (especially old photographs)
3. **File Format:**
 - A. TIF (TIFF). This format creates the largest file but also saves the data without much loss. Other formats run compression algorithms which will result in loss of some data.
 - B. JPG (JPEG). This is a good general purpose format but is not considered archival as is TIF. Thumbnails for the web site can be jpg. Copies made for others could be jpg if they don't need a TIF image.

Preservation of the original photographs

1. Marks on the photograph. What type of marking do you need to identify the photo?
 - A. Do not mark photograph except along the corners and away from any significant portion of the photograph. Only mark on the back. Some inks will bleed through to the image on the front.
 - B. Write gently. The impression made by writing may show on the image on the front.
2. Enclosures and Storage
 - A. Enclosure to protect. Melinex[®] (Mylar[®]) or polyethylene envelopes. Archivaly inert.
 - B. Storage of the photograph.
 - i. Ideally as cool and dry as possible. Recommended is 68° F. or less and 35% relative humidity. These conditions should be maintained constant 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Frequent fluctuations will cause the most damage to paper based materials.
 - ii. Supportive environment. E.g. sturdy file cabinet in a hanging file folder.

Make your work accessible

1. Catalog using MARC or Dublin Core standards and provide links to the image or to a thumbnail. Use
 - A. the library computer catalog system
 - B. Stand-alone database.
2. Web accessible.
 - A. Access policy and legal issues. You cannot show a photograph of a living person along with their name without their approval. Those who are dead are exempt. High profile figures may be OK, but be careful here.
 - B. Will users be able to download the actual image in high resolution, or only see a thumbnail? If the latter, how will you provide requested copies, for what cost, etc. This could be a means to recoup some of the start up and maintenance costs for labor and equipment. See for example of a form: http://www.andrews.edu/library/car/Imaging_Request.pdf

Indexing (metadata)

1. Must include the following:
 - Call number or photograph number
 - Name [title] of the person or object in the photograph
 - Date. Try to at least give a decade, i.e. 198-
 - Physical description of the photograph. Inches or centimeters, color, b/w, sepia, etc.
 - Note. Provides additional information. May be a transcription of notes attached to the photograph or written on the back.
 - Subject. May be the same as the name above or may include additional name(s).
 - CD/DVD number. Presuming backup is on a CD/DVD, this will aid future retrieval.
 - File name/location. This is the electronic file address on your hard drive or server.

2. Other useful information
 - Category. People, building, campus, events, places, etc.
 - Photographer. Who took the original photograph.
 - Condition of the photograph. Good, fair, poor
 - Provenance. How did the library get the photograph; who was the donor.
 - Additional note fields. Helpful when more than one discreet unit of information needs to be recorded.
 - Additional subject fields. Helpful when more than one person or place seen in the photograph.
 - Release information. Is the photograph available for general release—is the individual alive or dead?

The above data in the name [title] and subject fields should be entered as you would in to a library catalog with last name first, etc. Think how a computer will sort and proceed accordingly. Also, you will need to establish some form of authority to follow for names, places, and events.

Preservation of the scanned image

1. Back up the hard drive regularly.
2. Create two copies of the back up, keep one off-site. Use gold or archival CD's or DVD's.
3. Consider necessary migration of the data in a few years (~5)
 - A. Media deterioration [not really sure how long a CD/DVD will last]
 - B. Media obsolescence [will CD's made today be readable by current equipment in 5 to 10 years?]
 - C. Format obsolescence [will today's TIF or JPG be understood by tomorrow's new formats?]

▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ The End ◀ ◀ ◀ ◀