Outsourcing Book Repair
—by Clara Keyes, Morehead State University

All libraries perform book repair, however, the quality and quantity of repairs varies widely, as does the time and money committed to book repair. I conducted a survey in 1996 to determine the status of book repair programs in circulating collections (also called collections conservation or collection maintenance) and to see whether outsourcing repairs might be a viable alternative to performing repairs in-house.

The survey was sent to 30 Kentucky libraries of all types, 30 regional (Indiana and Ohio) libraries, e-mailed to several selected libraries, and posted on the Conservation Distribution List. Ninety-six libraries responded.

Of libraries responding, 74% were academic (college or university), 13.5% research, 7.3% special, and 5.2% public. Of these libraries, about one third had circulating collections of 1,000-249,999 volumes, another third had collections 250,000-999,999 volumes, and another third had 1,000,000 or more.

Book repair programs were located organizationally in preservation departments (35.4%), cataloging or technical service departments (31.3%), or other (24%), usually circulation, serials, or special collections departments. Only 9.4% of the libraries maintained a “bindery” unit.

Staffing
By far the greatest majority (69.8%) of library book repair programs were staffed by zero to two full-time employees [FTE]. Of these, about two thirds use one or fewer FTE staff, and 42.8% use one or two FTE students. Another 22.9% employed three to five FTE staff. Amazingly, 86.4% use no volunteers, and 42.8% use no students.

Training
Of the libraries responding to the survey, 86.5% report they have received training in “preservation” repairs from some source. Of these, 60.4% say they were taught in-house by a qualified trainer; 60.4% were self-taught using videos/manuals; 30.2% attended local or consortium-sponsored workshops; 27.1% attended NEH-sponsored training; 19.8% attended SOLINET or AMIGOS workshops, and 14.6% had completed formal coursework or apprenticeships. (Because multiple responses were possible, the percentages do not add up to 100%.)

Productivity
Fully half the libraries reported performing 25 or fewer repairs per week. Fewer than 20% of the

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libraries performed 100 or more repairs per week. One third of the libraries (32.2%) reported a turn-around time of more than two weeks; and only 17.7% reported a turn-around time of one to three days.

Low staffing and long turn-around times lead to repair backlogs, and 66.7% of the libraries report a book repair backlog. In about one third of the libraries, the backlog consisted of fewer than 25 items but in over 35% of the libraries the backlog was more than 100 items.

Most Frequent Repairs
It would not surprise anyone who works in book repair to know that spine and hinge repairs are the most common types of repairs performed in-house. Page repairs and page replacements, as well as end sheet replacements are also common.

The repairs most frequently outsourced are recasing or rebinding of hardcover books, reinforcement or binding of paperback books, and construction of protective enclosures. It follows that of libraries reporting, 79.2% send repairs to a library binder; 18.8% use preservation services vendors such as BookLab primarily for preservation photocopying; 4.2% use a regional or cooperative service; and 14.6% use private conservators or technicians.

Problems of Outsourcing
Library binderies, the principal supplier of outsourced book repairs, supply new bindings for books and periodicals. Since the processes in a library bindery are highly automated, an hourly charge (usually $25 or more) is incurred when basic repair service, such as page mends are required. Other vendors, such as BookLab, perform high-end repairs, usually providing a full treatment for an entire book, at a cost of $35-$50 per item. Private conservators who are highly trained and very expensive are asked primarily to treat rare and special materials.

Some Cost Considerations
In “Collection Conservation Treatment: a Resource Manual for Program Development and Conservation Technician Training” (Berkeley: The Library: Conservation Department, 1993), several libraries with well-developed collections maintenance programs reported procedures and techniques as well as approximate time and material costs associated with repairs. While it is probable that programs which operate on a production level are able to perform routine repairs on a cost-effective basis ($2-3 for a typical spine repair), it is also probable that many programs which resemble those responding to our survey are operating in a very inefficient and costly manner. The reported figures for staffing levels and numbers of repairs performed help us to safely estimate the average repair produced by a program which is staffed by a half-time technician at $8.00 per hour, and two ten-hour work-study students at $4.25 per hour, performing 25 repairs per week. The labor alone for each repair would cost nearly $10.00.

What is needed
Two obstacles of outsourcing book repair are resistance to change, since mending has historically been performed in-house, and lack of vendor support. No one offers the kind of production-level routine repair service that would allow libraries not able to perform repairs efficiently to contract the work to be done inexpensively and in a timely manner. One objection to outsourcing repairs by librarians is that keeping materials in-house for mending deems the materials “available” for patron use.

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BOOK REVIEW:
Promoting Preservation Awareness in Libraries
A Sourcebook for Academic, Public, School and Special Collections
Edited by Jeanne M. Drewes and Julie A. Page

As collections deteriorate and libraries have fewer dollars to replace them, the longevity of collections becomes a management issue of larger and larger proportion. Rare books and manuscripts are susceptible to damage, and users of these works are generally monitored carefully. But it is the circulating collections that face the misuse and abuse by both staff and patrons—children color or scribble in books, students cut articles out of magazines and books, and scholars annotate academic monographs. Library staff often do not know how to handle materials correctly, and their lack of training may cause damage. To minimize harm to collections, librarians need to emphasize the importance of preservation and proper handling. This professional reference explains how to create, implement and evaluate formal and informal preservation education programs in school, public, academic, and special libraries.

Chapters are written by contributors from a wide range of positions in librarianship and academia. Building on the assumption that most misuse is because of misunderstanding or lack of understanding, much attention is given to reaching all types of patrons and changing attitudes. Because preservation largely depends on the attitude of patrons, much attention is given to reaching all types of patrons. Informing adults to avoid misuse and teaching children to respect books and to handle them carefully are two different methods. Visual messages using posters, bookmarks, and signs to educate can help prevent damage. Library staff, on the other hand, benefit from training programs, which can effectively include self-help review tests and videos. Users of rare and archival materials can be informed through brochures and one-on-one interaction with librarians. The volume includes over 35 illustrative case studies and concludes with an extensive bibliography and videography.

Contents:
Introduction; Preservation Issues and the Community of Customers; Creating Preservation Education Programs for Staff and Library Customers; Evaluating Preservation Education; Programs for Staff and Library Customers; Preservation Education in School Libraries; Preservation Education in Public Libraries; Preservation Education in Academic Libraries; Preservation Education in Special Collections and Archives; Appendix 1: Effective Graphics for Displays and Handouts; Appendix 2: Books for Children, Teachers, and Parents; Appendix 3: Annotated Videography; Appendix 4: Annotated Bibliography; Index.

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Julie A. Page is Preservation Librarian at the University of California-San Diego. She has established preservation education as an integral part of the Library staff and user education programs. She has cochaired preservation education programs for the American Library Association and is active in its Preservation and Reformatting Section. Topics of her publications include preservation education and disaster preparedness and recovery.

“This volume will be a very useful source for librarians, archivists, paraprofessional staff, administrators, and preservation professionals who are engaged in educating their communities about preservation issues...an excellent ‘one-stop’ resource for anyone looking for concrete suggestions for educational programs aimed at patrons and staff...[This book] will be an important addition to the preservation literature, pulling together information that is essential to effective preservation programs but that has not been widely and easily accessible in the past.”

—Ann Russell, Executive Director, Northeast Document Conservation Center.

“Promoting Preservation Awareness fills a long-standing need in the field of library preservation...[The book] speaks to the preservation needs of public, school, and academic libraries that have, for too long, been sparsely represented in the literature. This volume goes a long way toward redressing that imbalance. Happily it does so with a number of interesting, informative and well-written articles that give good advice, concrete examples, and sound reasoning.”

—Robert DeCandido, Preservation Division, The New York Public Library

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Using Custom Made Four-Flap Enclosures For Book Boxes — by Julia Franklin

Idaho State Library book boxes were put together from two strips of perforated manila cardboard folded around the book when I first started as Technical Services Clerk. The book’s measurements were taken and compared to the available strip sizes which were then bent around the book. After going through this process a few times, I knew there had to be a better way. I received my first copy of the Archival Products catalog and saw the solution—Four-Flap Enclosures. I called our Customer Service Representative, Millie Knee, to request samples of the enclosure.

After using the four-flap enclosures for a while, I noticed that books with a spine larger than one inch would prevent the top flap from closing properly. I called Millie again to learn if Archival Products could make a custom four-flap enclosure with a two inch spine. This size would hold most of the books in our collection. Millie took the opportunity to work with me to make the specially sized enclosures. Since then, I have also ordered a custom four-flap enclosure measuring 12” x 9” x 1 1/2” for a large book in our collection. The custom made four-flap enclosures are used for books too small to be shelved in the stacks without being lost, books in delicate condition, or books we want to keep in the collection but cannot send to the bindery, such as one with narrow margins.

Very small books that may get lost in the stacks due to their size require modification to the four-flap enclosure. These books require supports that are placed in the book box to hold the book in place. The modification procedure I use follows.

Materials needed:
- one Custom Four-Flap Enclosure
- three Velcro buttons (supplied with the enclosure)
- four supports assembled out of .040+ or corrugated archival board (if needed)
- one cover label
- one spine label
- adhesive transfer tape
- laminate

Supports:
1. Cut a piece of board two to three inches long by the height of the book plus 1/4 to 1/2 inch. The 1/4 to 1/2 inch lays flat on the box. [See example #1] Glue the support to the surface of the inside box to hold the book in place.
2. Use a computer software program (such as WordPerfect) to produce a cover title and spine label for the box. Referring to the book’s title page, type the title, author’s name and any subtitle in a 50 pt. font.
3. Use a 15 pt. font for any notices such as FRAGILE, PLEASE HANDLE WITH CARE; placing it at the top of the cover title page. Appropriate graphics from the computer software program can be used on the cover.
4. Make a spine label in 15 pt. by reformatting the title and author’s name from the cover, and add the call number to the label for the spine.
5. Adhere the cover label and spine label to the enclosure with an adhesive transfer tape or glue.
6. Laminate the cover and spine labels if you choose.

Another lesson I learned is that the proper placement order of the flaps keeps the book secure in the four-flap enclosure. The folding procedure I use is: [See example #2]
1. Fold A over the book
2. Affix one Velcro button, with the loop and hook sides together on C
3. Fold C over A attaching the Velcro button between A and C
4. Fold over C, then affix the second Velcro button to B
5. Fold B over D affixing the Velcro button between B and D.
6. Fold over the front flap, affixing another Velcro button to the inside cover and to B.

I have looked at the book boxes made the old way and the new way. The old boxes are falling apart at the perforations. If you are still using the manila —continued on page 6
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Book repair is an access issue. In every library surveyed, book repair was use-driven, meaning repair items were identified as they came in from circulation or during shelving following in-house use. Many libraries have policies which provide that “only” items identified in these ways should be repaired. Since the best predictor of future use is past use, it follows that the items most in demand are those most likely to sit on the backlog shelves waiting for someone to fix them.

For many years, convenience materials such as book tape or transparent tape have been used to stick spines back on books, to patch broken hinges, and to repair torn pages. The preservation movement has succeeded in helping library staff to upgrade their repair processes and improve the materials used, and has provided some opportunities for training. Unfortunately in many cases, staff has less time, equipment, and training to perform permanent, non-harmful repairs in a timely manner.

At its essence, book repair is a service issue. From the standpoint that collection conservation should keep materials available for as long as needed, poorly executed or inappropriate repairs which can further damage the materials are poor service to future users. From the standpoint that book repair is use-driven, having materials in demand languish in repair backlog is poor service. While libraries have learned to streamline, share, automate, and out-source many of the processes which formerly occupied much manual and intellectual labor, most of those processes are related to the bibliographical apparatus surrounding the library materials they represent. The materials themselves are what library users ultimately need, and if we are unable to provide the information because the container is broken, we are not performing our job.

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strips, and do not want to change, laminating the boxes will keep them together a little longer. However, the non-perforated seams of the four-flap enclosures hold together longer, give a more stable environment, and give better protection.

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- Polypropylene Protectors
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Archival Products Focus

Custom and Four Flap Enclosure

Archival Products Four-Flap Enclosure and Custom Four-Flap Enclosure were designed to protect materials that should not be bound or slid into an enclosure. Both binders are hand-crafted using our .060 dark tan archival board with green C-cloth spine. The difference is the interior. The four-flap, designed for thinner materials, uses .010 dark tan archival board and the custom four-flap, which has multiple scores to store up to 1" of materials, uses .020 dark tan archival board. Velcro buttons secure the interior enclosure of the custom four-flap enclosure.

Technical Specifications:
- Outer folder is constructed from .060 dark tan archival board.
- Inner enclosure is constructed from .010 or .020 dark tan archival board.
- Dark tan archival board contains a 3% calcium carbonate reserve, has a pH of 8.5, is acid-free and lignin-free.
- Single flap enclosure piece is die cut and scored except for special sizes.
- All adhesives are acid neutral polyvinyl acetate.
- Spine is made with green C-grade book cloth.
- Corners are rounded to 1/8 inch radius.
- Spine measures 1/2 inch with folder closed on the four-flap and 5/8 inch on the custom four-flap.

We would be delighted to discuss your preservation needs with you. If you have a special project that needs a special enclosure we will research, develop and help you consider the methods to appropriately contain your materials. Contact us for more information and to request a sample.

Millie Knee, Customer Service Representative
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In consideration of some documents that require more protection against destructive elements, Archival Products developed the **Manuscript Folder** with envelope storage to keep irreplaceable references intact longer. Personal papers such as academic documents, professional licenses, birth certificates, and other important papers can be housed and organized safely in the envelopes of the manuscript folder.

The **manuscript folder** is hand-crafted as are all Archival Products preservation enclosures. It is constructed from .060 dark tan archival board with the spine formed of blue C grade book cloth for strength. The inside envelopes are acid-free with a 3% calcium carbonate buffer. The envelope seams contain no acidic adhesives, and the flap style envelope is not gummed. Tyvek™ brand envelopes are available in five of our standard sizes. The inside envelope is attached to the back cover to prevent fracture points.

Manuscript folders specifying a hinged envelope can be created for special projects requiring that type of construction. A protective sleeve made of .010 dark tan archival board is available in all sizes to protect the document as it slides in and out of the envelope.

Envelope options for the manuscript folder include:

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B. Standard envelope with ungummed flap;
C. Diagonal cut envelope;
D. Envelope without flap; and
E. Side-opening envelope.

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We would be delighted to discuss your preservation needs with you. If you have a special project that needs a special enclosure we will research, develop and help you consider the methods to appropriately contain your materials. Contact us for more information and to request a sample.

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