

temporarily off display); a full description (detailed measurements, color, material, etc), the date it was made or an approximate range of years, who made it, any identifying marks, condition at time of accession & the date, person making the entry, status (is there info missing, is it a loan). Scan of the donation form and a scan or photo of the object is made when a new item is entered; we use the overhead scanner for most of this. We can save time by scanning the form and item in one if they fit on the scan table. If it's an older item, another step is to note in the record that a scan or photo needs to be done. All the paper donation forms in our files have been scanned, and we're quickly getting through "found in collection" forms. All the scans are in the process of being labeled with the Object ID and donor number so attachment to the appropriate record will be quick. A new laptop is on hand for Past Perfect records, replacing the outdated desktop model we were using. After all that, an abbreviated entry with some of this info is made in the physical Object ID notebook, the paper form gets a notation that it's in the Past Perfect system, and every item is tagged with the specific ID number and the donor's number. Many will also get some type of descriptive sign that will go with the item for display. The only thing the program does for you is enter the date the record is being created! You're really lucky if you can process something in less than 10 min. per item. Unfortunately, we are still doing catch up of the many, many items that were processed before this system was in place, and filling in a large amount of missing info. Lack of adequate and reliable collection records can be a real problem so it is good that DCHS is realizing that this needs to be done.

I want the members to know that I really value the opportunity to be part of DCHS's efforts to preserve Dunn County history. I don't take this responsibility lightly; I worry about not producing new material fast enough but on the other hand I don't want to produce things that are done hastily and without adequate care. I think it is of great importance to treat someone's life story with respect; each one requires establishment of a trust between the interviewer and the narrator. The same goes for doing collection records; if it takes longer to be sure the entries are correct, then I think that is what should be done to treat donations to the museum with respect. Besides these two responsibilities, I continue to do the upkeep on the website, to do most of the advertising /publicity, monitor email and help with programs. I'm recording secretary for Board of Director's meetings, and do other things as needed. I try to take advantage of online education on doing histories and on equipment / software recommendations for both cataloging and recording so we stay up to date. I always appreciate Pam Hartman's expertise with the upkeep of our Facebook page; she's awesome. There has been more stress than I would like from contentious meetings in the past year and I'm hopeful we can move beyond this. I think the cliché, "teamwork makes the dream work" still seems to be a good guideline in the effort to keep the best interests of DCHS and the museum in mind. You would likely be surprised by the number of times I've heard people from Dunn County say they didn't know the museum exists. The production / publicity of Dauntless Dunn III is another good opportunity for changing this. I want to end this with a plea to members to please help us preserve more history by bringing in photos and documents to scan, by borrowing a recorder to visit with someone or to save your own memories, doing an interview or encouraging someone else to, or by just spreading the word that these programs exist and that DCHS wants the museum to be a community resource for historic preservation and genealogy research.

Thank you for helping and for reading!  
Deb Lancaster