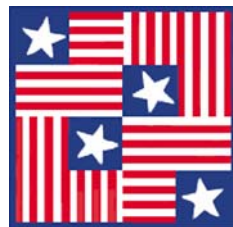




**Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories**  
**Manual**  
**2007**

A project of  
The Alliance for American Quilts

Karen S. Musgrave  
Editor



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## **The Mission of Quilters' S.O.S.-Save Our Stories**

### **A Project of The Alliance for American Quilts**

The Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories (Q.S.O.S.) project's goal is to create, through recorded interviews, a broadly accessible body of information concerning quilting, both present-day and in living memory, for scholarship and exhibition.

## **From the Editor**

“If you think you are too small to be effective, you’ve never been in bed with a mosquito.”

You probably won’t recognize my name. I am a volunteer that simply took the initiative; stepped up and did the job. So if I could do this, just think what you could do and perhaps more importantly, just think what we could do together.

Karen S. Musgrave  
Editor

### **Special thanks to The Alliance for American Quilts**

And the Q.S.O.S. Task Force

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And all the participants of our many projects with Quilters’ S.O.S. - Save Our Stories.

## **For the Record: The History of Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories**

September 2007

In the fall of 1999, The Alliance for American Quilts and International Quilt Festival introduced the “Quilters’ S.O.S. – Save Our Stories” (Q.S.O.S.) project to record, preserve, and share the oral histories of living quiltmakers before they disappear. This introduction included a training followed by three days of interviewing in Houston, Texas during International Quilt Festival. Trainings and interviewing continued at International Quilt Festival through 2002. One hundred and seventy interviews were conducted during this period.

Bernard Herman, Marcie Cohen Ferris, Patricia Keller and Patricia Crews, all of whom were members of The Alliance Board of Directors, developed the Q.S.O.S. project model and program. Karen Musgrave joined the group at the first training in Houston. Since the initial Houston phase many others around the country are spearheading Q.S.O.S. projects.

From 1999 until January 2007, the University of Delaware, Center for Material Culture Studies, under the guidance of Dr. Bernard Herman, was the project partner and the location of the archive. In January 2007, the archive transitioned to Library of Congress American Folklife Center. It is both appropriate and exciting as the American Folklife Center has been an Alliance partner since the inception of the organization in 1993. We are also fortunate that Bernard Herman continues to support the project and remains a member of the Task Force.

With the successful launch of Q.S.O.S. requests from other groups and individuals for assistance began pouring in. Karen quickly realized the importance of developing a Q.S.O.S. Manual to meet the demand for this exciting Alliance project. The Manual took a year to write and in the fall of 2000 it was added to the website and has had regular revisions and updates.

From the beginning, Q.S.O.S. has had an active volunteer Task Force under the auspices of The Alliance. To date, more than 140 people have conducted interviews. These interviews include quiltmakers of every type, from those who simply dabble to those who are professionals, and now include interviewees from outside the United States as well.

The DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) became seriously involved when in 2004 they created a position on their American Heritage Committee for Q.S.O.S.--National Vice Chair Q.S.O.S. In July 2007 Carolyn Kolzow was appointed the position and also serves as the DAR representative on the Task Force.

In 2005, the Task Force did a survey of the interviews to determine areas that were under represented and needed focus. A plan was implemented to include quiltmakers who were Hispanic, Native American, men, under the age of 25, and over the age of 65. In December of each year, the Task Force reviews and accesses its accomplishments and establishes goals for the following year.

A grant from the Salser Family Foundation in the fall of 2006 provided Karen with the opportunity to interview the members of the mostly Latina quilt group, Los hilos de la vida, in Boonville, California.

Q.S.O.S. continues to grow and evolve. The interviews included in the project show us the complexity and diversity of quiltmakers and their quilts.

## **Just a Few Things You Should Know**

**(that don't seem to fit anywhere else.)**

This manual is a living document. It went through many lives before the life you see here and it will continue to grow and change. It has been updated three times and will continue to be updated as needed. Check <http://www.centerforthequilt.org/qsos/> for changes or sign up for our newsletter and you will be informed when changes occur.

### **Terms of Use**

This manual was written to be shared and we encourage you to do so. You are free to copy it for personal or project use. You may not copy and use it for profit. Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories and the Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories Manual are the sole property of The Alliance for American Quilts. Copyright 2000-2005. Any group or individual desiring to use the copyrighted name of "Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories" and/or "The Alliance for American Quilts" in conjunction with their oral history project must adhere to the policies and procedures set forth in the Manual. If you have any questions, please e-mail [qsos@quiltalliance.org](mailto:qsos@quiltalliance.org).

### **Why we use the word informant**

Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories follows the oral history convention of using the word informant to identify the individuals who have graciously shared their stories. We do this simply to avoid any confusion. We searched high and low for a better term. Suggestions for an alternative to "informant" included narrator, interviewee and donor. Actually we could find no word that truly captured the spirit of the people whose words appear in these interviews.

## Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories

Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories (Q.S.O.S), a project of The Alliance for American Quilts, was designed to be simple, inexpensive and inclusive. The project's format is intended to be easily adopted by other organizations (such as regional or local quilt guilds) eager to document the personal stories of quiltmakers in their communities.

First, what is oral history? Oral—spoken word; history—a narrative of a remembered past. Oral history records the living memories and feelings of people and creates a more vivid picture of our past. It is exciting because it is interactive. It is history shared and a rare chance for us to actually “talk to history face to face.”

Q.S.O.S. is attempting to build on the techniques of oral histories to pursue conversations about quilting today. Thus, Q.S.O.S. has been developed with three working concepts in mind:

- **Focus Interviews**

Each interview is intended to run approximately forty-five minutes and to stand as a recorded conversation about observations and questions springing from a quilt or related object. Focus interviews are not intended to record comprehensive biographies of working quiltmakers but to get at questions about quilt design, techniques, sources, and standards among others issues.

- **Touchstone Object**

Each quiltmaker interviewed is asked to bring one object that she/he considers significant in her/his own quilting practice, preferably a quilt of her/his own making. The touchstone object serves as both a point of departure and reference for the interview. The idea of a touchstone object serves two key purposes:

- 1) it frames the conversation with an object chosen by the person being interviewed;
- 2.) it provides a consistent point of reference throughout the interview.

- **Accessibility**

Interview equipment and techniques are designed to be easily acquired and used by individuals with a minimum training. One of the primary goals of Q.S.O.S. is to initiate a project that can be pursued readily throughout the larger quilt community.

The working concepts of focus interviews, touchstone objects, and accessibility are designed to be flexible and manageable. A quiltmaker, for example, may be interviewed more than once. Interviews can take place in different venues, for instance an exhibition, guild meeting or home. The key points are to keep the process simple, manageable and focused.

Remember, Q.S.O.S. has as its basic goal: “to create a broadly accessible body of information” – our choice of format is based on equipment and methods that are easily mastered and readily shared.

There are many “tricks of the trade” and observations useful in conducting interviews. A few key techniques should be introduced at this point

- learning to listen;
- asking open-ended questions;
- using silence;
- verbalizing visual information;
- seeking clarification;
- etiquette;
- sharing.

These will be discussed in the following pages.

## **Determining the Candidates**

“We never stop to wonder until a person’s gone. We never yearn to know him ‘til he’s packed and traveled on. When someone is around us, we never stop to ask,” wrote Dory Previn, singer/songwriter. Q.S.O.S. wants to ensure that not only do we ask, but also that we document and preserve the stories of quiltmakers. These quiltmakers do not necessarily have to be famous quilt artists, teachers or authors. We all have a place in history. We have all been eyewitnesses to significant events. Quiltmakers know that every quilt holds a story.

Who to select for interviewing is as simple as finding someone willing to talk.

### **How to Find a Candidate**

1. Local quilt guilds
  - talk to guild members
  - advertise in the guild newsletter
  - advertise on the guild Websites
  - distribute fliers at meetings and/or bees
2. Quilt shows
  - distribute fliers
  - posters
  - booth/table
3. Quilt/fabric stores
  - post a flier
  - talk to the management or store employees
4. Churches, schools and nursing/assisted living homes
  - post a flier
  - talk to administrative staff
5. Museums/historical Societies



7. Libraries
8. Local colleges/universities
9. Web listserves
10. Press release(s) (Appendix A)

### **An Important Caution:**

Remember, when posting a flier/poster or announcement in a public place; provide a method of contact that is easy and safe for you. Remember the Internet is also a public place.

### **How to Find a Candidate and Arrange the Interview**

1. Personal introduction from friend or acquaintance
2. Letter of invitation (Appendix B)
3. Telephone call
4. Announcement at quilt guild meeting

### **Points to Remember**

- Always be polite.
- If contacting by telephone, ask if it is convenient for the person to talk.
- Explain how you obtained the candidate's name.
- Explain the purpose of the project and why you would like the person to participate.
- Indicate the amount of time required.
- Briefly describe the interview process.
- Explain the use/purpose of bringing a quilt or related object.
- Arrange a location that is convenient yet conforms to the requirements of the interview (i.e. minimal background noise and interruptions).
- Follow up the above with a letter, if possible. (Appendix C)
- Send a thank you note after the interview.

## **Informing the Informant**

After you have determined your candidate, it is important for them to clearly understand the process. Appendix D is a prepared handout for you to give your informant that includes the following information.

### **Things Your Informant Should Know Before the Interview**

1. The tape-recorded interview is approximately 45 minutes long.
2. The informant is asked to bring ONE quilt or quilt related item that is significant to the and preferably also made by them. We call this a "touchstone."
3. The informant will be asked to fill out and sign the following:
  - A permission form
  - A participant and quilt information form which includes the date the quilt was made, title, where it was made and dimensions

- A “Quick Question” (Appendix G) form about her/his quiltmaking experience
4. The informant will be photographed with the “touchstone” after the interview.
  5. A sampling of the interview questions is available in the online Manual.

### **During the Interview**

1. The interviewer will make a brief announcement of the place, date, etc. on the tape before the interview begins.
2. The main goal of the interview is to elicit information from the informant that allows listeners to see the world through her/his eyes. The interviewer will do very little talking.
3. The informant should relax and talk as much as she/he wants.
4. There may or not be a scribe during the interview. The scribe’s job is simply to take notes to make the transcription process easier. The scribe may ask for clarification on some things like spelling of names after the interview.

### **The Transcription Process**

1. The tape of the interview is copied and mailed to a transcriber, who is a volunteer.
2. Transcribing an interview can take anywhere from 6-10 hours (sometimes more) depending on the skill of the transcriber and the quality of the tape.
3. However, since most transcribers are busy volunteers, it can take six months to a year for the tape to be transcribed and sent back for editing.

### **When the Transcription is Complete**

1. Two copies of the transcription (one for her/his records and the other to return) and a final permission letter will be mailed.
2. The informant will be asked to review and return the corrected transcription as soon as possible. The informant should NOT rewrite the interview but check for facts; fill in missing information like last names, etc.
3. Once the corrected transcription and final permission letter has been returned to Karen Musgrave, it is checked one more time for correct formatting before being posted to the website.
4. Once the interview is posted to the website, the informant will be notified by e-mail, postcard or telephone.
5. All the materials from the interview are archived at the *Library of Congress American Folklife Center* in partnership with The Alliance for American Quilts.

## Taking an Ethical Approach

“Sometimes when I consider what tremendous consequences come from little things...I am tempted to think...there are no little things.” Bruce Barton

The American College Dictionary defines ethics as the principles of morality, including both the science of the good and the nature of the right. Stephen Covey, author of *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, states, “Principles are guidelines for human conduct that are proven to have enduring, permanent value. They’re fundamental. They’re essentially unarguable because they are self-evident.”

An ethics statement reminds us to be conscious of how we conduct ourselves with the people we are interviewing. It focuses on what we want to be (character), and to do (contributions and achievements) and on the values or principles upon which being and doing are based. By agreeing to abide by the principles in the ethic statement, we commit to act with integrity, to relate to the people we are interviewing with care and compassion. As Stephen Covey notes, “The more we know of correct principles, the greater is our personal freedom to act wisely.”

“An ethics statement denotes the seriousness with which an organization takes its ethical commitments. Words are empty without some documentation. The written statement then serves as a foundation from which ethical behavior can be built,” says Patrick Murphy, author of *Eighty Exemplary Ethics Statements*.

Although every oral history project is unique, we encourage every group that conducts a Q.S.O.S. project or any oral history project of their own to adopt an ethics statement. While writing and publicizing an ethics statement is admirable, it is certain not enough. A strong commitment to these principles at all levels of your organization is necessary to make the statement come “alive.” Use the Q.S.O.S. ethics statement (Appendix E) or for a more extensive ethics statement, examine the American Folklore Society’s statement. (The American Folklore Society, 4350 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 640, Arlington, VA 22203) While Patrick Murphy’s book covers corporations, it is full of useful information.

## Considerations about Interviewing

Oral historian Sherna Gluck in *Doing Oral History* has observed that, “the best oral history is quasi-monologue on the part of the interviewee which is encouraged by approving nods, appreciative smiles, and enraptured listening and stimulated by understanding comments and intelligent questions.”

1. An interview is more than a conversation. You are a listener and your informant is a storyteller who is sharing a narrative to be preserved and shared for future generations.
2. One of an interviewer’s main goals is to elicit information from people that allows us to see how the world looks through their eyes. Your job is to help the informants become comfortable and forthcoming.
3. Think of your tape-recorded interview as a “trialogue,” not a “dialogue.” The three parties are: you (the interviewer), your informant, and anyone who will listen to the tape recording or read its transcript in the future.
4. Interviewing requires honesty and respect for one’s informants.

Donald Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, lists the fundamental rules that apply to all types of oral history interviewing:

1. Do your homework.
2. Be prepared.
3. Construct meaningful but open-ended questions.
4. Don’t interrupt responses.
5. Follow up on what you have heard.
6. Know your equipment thoroughly.
7. Promptly process your tapes.
8. Always keep in mind and practice ethics of interviewing.

## **Before the Interview Begins**

Be prepared by gathering all materials needed to conduct the interview. Everything should be in place so the interview can begin and end on time. Depending on the design of your Q.S.O.S. project, you may want to assemble some or all of these items and “Informant Checklist” (Appendix F):

- Tape recorders
- Tapes
- Batteries
- Cameras
- Color slide film
- Pencils
- ID numbers
- Note pads for scribing/note taking
- Release forms
- Handouts on the project
- “Quick Questions” forms
- “Interview Quadrant Questions” form
- Gloves for handling quilts
- Clock/watch
- Pole(s) for hanging quilts
- Backdrop for photographing quilts
- Floodlights
- Chairs
- Tables
- Water and drinking cups
- Extension cords

## **Guidelines for What to Ask**

### **Quick Questions**

In order to guide the interview, we have created a “Quick Questions” form (Appendix G). This helps the interviewer quickly learn about the informant and optimize the use of the forty-five minute interview. This form is a list of simple “yes” or “no” questions. It can be given to the informant to fill out before the interview is conducted or may be used as an icebreaker by the interviewer before the interview begins.

### **Interview Quadrant Questions**

The forty-five minute interview can be informally structured into four ten-minute quadrants, with five minutes to wrap-up the interview. Questions and conversation should flow freely between the quadrant topics. There will be overlap and repetition of material, which is fine. The purpose of the quadrants is to help structure the interview and to ensure the purposes of comparison and analysis. (See Appendix H.)

## Tips for Successful Tape-Recorded Interviews

Much of the information for this handout comes from source materials used by many field researchers, including Edward D. Ives, *The Tape-Recorded Interview* and Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*.

1. Be familiar and comfortable with your tape recorder so you won't be distracted.
2. Use the list of prepared questions. (See Appendix H.) These will help you effectively conduct the interview. These are open-ended questions that allow the informants to volunteer their own accounts, to speculate on matters, and to have enough time to include material they think relevant to the subject. In framing an open-ended question, you can use a two-sentence format. The first sentence should state the problem; the second poses the question. "Over 50,000 people attended International Quilt Festival. How do you account for this kind of interest?" (D. Richie)
3. Take your time. The goal is not to answer every question, but to have an informative conversation. Let the informant explain what they think is the most significant before you begin to narrow your question or move on to the next one. "A good interviewee hears an unexpected statement and follows up with additional questions," (D. Richie)
4. Be yourself. Don't pretend to know more about something than you do. Never be afraid to admit that you did not understand what an informant meant. Just ask them to explain, clarify or even spell.
5. Never record secretly.
6. Put a watch or clock nearby, so you gauge your time. Q.S.O.S. interviews are 45- minutes long.
7. Use release forms (Appendix I & J) to obtain permission for the interview and photography, and for archiving the collected information. Collect these before the interview begins.
8. Greet your informant with a handshake and a smile. Introduce yourself; briefly explain your interest in the project, where you are from, your interest in quilts. Guide your informant to the interviewing area.
9. Invite your informant to sit and get comfortable. Offer a drink of water. Arrange the quilt so that you both can easily see and discuss it.
10. Clearly and accurately explain what is going to happen, why you want to do the interview and what will happen to the information you collect. Having this as a handout for the informants to take with them is a good idea. "This will be informal. I have a few questions to ask you about your experience with quilts. We'll go for about forty-five minutes, and please let me know if you need a break for water or the bathroom. I promise we'll stick to the schedule, because I know you've got a busy day."
11. Before asking the first question, make a **brief opening announcement** that specifies date and place, and the names of the interviewer and informant. Consider writing this on a 3" x 5"

card or on your question sheet so you include everything. (This is (say your name). Today's date is (date), it is (time), and I'm conducting an interview with (informant's name) for Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories project in (location and special event if applicable). Jane, tell me about the quilt you brought today?")

12. During the interview, encourage your informant by paying attention. To minimize time spent looking at the list of questions. Be expressive with your face, but silent when the informant is talking. Refrain from telling your own story.
13. As a rule, keep your questions short. Avoid complicated, multi-part questions. Try to avoid asking questions that can be answered with a "yes" or a "no."
14. Don't interrupt. If you think of a question, jot it down on your note pad so you can ask later. If your informant strays from the planned questions, it's alright. Be prepared to let your informant take the interview off in different directions. This can sometimes lead to unexpected and exciting discoveries.
15. Don't argue or refute knowledge. Keep your opinions out of the interview. Don't ask leading or "loaded" questions that suggest answers. Example, instead of asking, "Is it true that a good quilt is one with interesting design?" Ask, "What makes an interesting quilt?"
16. Keep the tape recorder running throughout the interview. Don't turn the recorder on and off except when asked to do so or when an interruption requires it. Try to avoid "off the record" information.
17. Use "probes" to elicit more detailed information. When did that happen? Did that ever happen to you? What did you think about that? What are the steps in doing that?
18. Don't fear silences. Your informant may need a moment to respond to your question. Allow the informant enough time to collect thoughts. If she/he has nothing to offer about a particular question, let them tell you so, then simply move on. Silence can also be an effective probe.
19. Take good notes. Describe any gestures and/or important actions made by the informant. Keep running notes on names, places and dates mentioned in the interview. In the past, we have used scribes (See section "Procedure for Scribing the Interview.") but this might not be possible if you interview on your own.
20. Thank your informant and tell them time is just about up. Reach conclusion on any open-ended questions.
21. Record a closing announcement. "I'd like to thank (informant's name) for allowing me to interview her today as part of the Quilters' S.O.S.-Save Our Stories project in (place). Our interview concluded at (time), (date)."
22. Immediately label your tape with identification number, informant's name, date and interviewer's name. Always use a pencil.

## **Procedure for Scribing the Interview**

While the interviewer is conducting the interview, another volunteer undertakes the job of “scribe.” The scribe is usually a silent and attentive observer and makes a hand-written index of the interview questions. This index is help to the transcriber, who can use it during the transcription process as a reference tool. It does not need to be exact.

The job of scribe is optional. If you do not have enough volunteers, do not let this prevent you from conducting interviews.

This is a great way for someone to participate, observe, and become comfortable and knowledgeable about interviewing.

### **Procedure for the Scribe**

1. Sits quietly to the side of the interviewer and informant with a clear view of a watch or clock.
2. With a pad and pencil, creates a timed list of all questions that occur during the interview.

### **The index looks like this:**

Date: November 2, 2000  
Interviewer: Mary Smith  
Informant: Jane Doe  
Scribe: Bill Jones  
ID # TX76121-006  
Location: Anywhere, U.S.A.

9:00 AM: Jane, tell me about the quilt you brought today.

9:10 AM: When did you make it?

9:12 AM: Where did you first encounter quilting?

9:15 AM: Tell me how quiltmaking has touched your life.

Etc.



## **Recording the Interview**

If you have had any experience with a cassette tape recorder, it won't take long for you to feel comfortable taping interviews. Any small recorder will do. Whatever cassette recorder you decide to use, be sure to read the operating manual carefully, and practice recording and other functions until you become familiar with how your particular machine works. We do not recommend using the voice activation feature. It is important to record the pauses that can occur during the course of an interview.

- **Power Source**

Your tape recorder will need electricity to run. This can be supplied by house current or by batteries. The advantage of using house current is that it is dependable and cheaper but you will need an adapter – one of those plug-in devices that convert house current to the proper voltage for your tape recorder. The disadvantage to using house current is that you will need to conduct your interviews within an extension cord's reach of an electrical outlet.

While there are several types of batteries on the market, alkaline batteries (manganese dioxide) are probably the best choice for running your tape recorder during interviews. They are more expensive than carbon-zinc batteries, but they last much, much longer and are less likely to leak. However, when purchasing rechargeable batteries, rechargeable alkaline batteries lose their charge very quickly but rechargeable NiMH batteries last much longer. Over the last couple of years we've seen higher capacity NiMH batteries hit the market, especially in the popular AA size which most tape recorders and now digital camera use. There is a wide choice of cells ranging from 1500 to 2700mAh. As expected, the higher the capacity - the longer the run time.

Depending on the tape recorder you are using, fresh alkaline batteries can provide power for up to ten or more hours. It's easy to forget how many "hours" any given battery has been used and a disaster if you try to tape-record an interview with weak or failing batteries. To avoid this problem, it is important to keep track of how many hours of service your batteries have provided. One method of keeping track is to put a small stripe on the battery with a felt-tip marker for each hour of use, and record the date of purchase on it as well. Remember that batteries can run down without completely giving out. This may happen without your being aware. Run-down batteries make the recorder run more slowly. It may record, but will not play back successfully because the tape is not being played back at exactly the same speed at which it was recorded. Check your batteries frequently — perhaps with an inexpensive battery tester — to ensure they are strong and change them frequently.

- **Tapes**

We recommend using and only accept standard-size cassette tapes rather than microcassette tapes. Tapes come in various lengths. The thinner they are the more can be gotten on the cassette and the longer they play. But thinner tapes are more likely to stretch and to print-through (that is, one layer of the tape transfers its magnetic imprint to the layer beneath it, giving an echo effect on playback). While (C-60) tapes (runs an hour, 30 minutes each side) are fine for recording interviews, Q.S.O.S. selected C90 tapes (runs 90 minutes, 45 minutes each side) and only uses one side of the cassette for each interview. This way the 45-minute interview is not disrupted by turning over the cassette. C-60 and C-90 tapes are manufactured with a standard thickness of 1.5

mil. Tapes longer than 90 minutes are not recommended as they are only .5-mil thick and have a good chance of giving you problems.

Tapes also are manufactured with several kinds of magnetic coatings. For interview purposes, tapes with the label “Type I” or “Normal” will serve well. Get the best Type I name brand tapes your project can afford (“high output” and “low noise” are also helpful designations). Only select Type II (chromium dioxide or CRO2) tapes if your tape recorder has a special setting for this tape type.

- **Cassette Construction**

Some oral historians recommend purchasing cassette tapes that are held together with little screws at each corner. Cassettes don’t get tangled very often, but if you can open the case with a screwdriver you can sometimes straighten things out if a tangle occurs. If you have a choice, always try to purchase cassettes that are constructed with screws holding the case together. But if you cannot locate cassettes with screw-construction, don’t let that stop your project, as good-quality name-brand cassettes are usually quite reliable.

- **Digital Recording**

Technology is changing and we do accept digital recordings. Read your manual carefully.

## **Photography**

Photographing the touchstone object and the informant is an important part of documenting your Q.S.O.S. interview, and therefore deserves careful thought. Good photographs result from good planning, so that the final results serve your project’s purposes.

Start planning by first considering the kind of photographs you want to make as documentation for your project. What specific information do you want those photographs to contain? Will you photograph the informant with her/his touchstone object? Will you make one photograph of the informant and another of her/his object? Will other people or objects figure into your photographic documentation? Establishing a basic “must photograph” list will help you remember to take all the pictures you will want to have.

Once you know the specific kinds of information you want to document with photographs, you will need to decide what photographic format you will use to create your images. To make these decisions, it is helpful to first think of how you will want to use the photographs you are going to create. Will they be for archival and study purposes? Will you want them to be useful for publication, whether in print media or electronically? Will you want color prints, color slides, or black-and white prints? What about digital photography – will the resolution meet your information goals?

Next, consider the kind of photography equipment you have available or will want to acquire. The limitations of your equipment may dictate things like lighting conditions, the distance the photographer must stand away from the subject, or the ability to do extreme close-up shots of object details. Spend some time with the camera you have, its manual, and a roll or two of film to learn the limitations of your equipment, and what kind of pictures this camera is best at

producing. You may decide that you need to acquire new equipment, or enlist the help of someone who already has the photographic equipment you need for the photographic documentation you want to make.

While you are evaluating your photographic equipment needs, you will need to think about the actual physical setup for taking pictures for your project. Will you be conducting your interview in a space that will permit the display of large objects? Will there be sufficient light in the room, or will you have to bring supplementary lighting devices, like photoflood lamps? Or will your camera's flash produce the light you need? If the space is too small, can you move the photography session out-of-doors to take advantage of natural light? If you photograph out of doors, how will you ensure that the touchstone object remains clean? Whether photographing indoors or outdoors, how will you support the touchstone object so that it is visible in its entirety in the photograph? If you can't hoist the object, will you be satisfied with a photograph of only part of the quilt – say, a quarter; if it is folded over a chair back or in the informant's arms?

- **Recommendations for Lighting for Indoor Photography**  
Two tripod-based photoflood lamps with electrical extension cords  
Daylight light bulbs with Ektachrome film (daylight) - 500 or 250 watts each  
(Estimate about six hours of color-balanced use for each bulb.)

In documentation situations where you are photographing multiple quilts, it would be helpful to have a computer ready for downloading the images (be sure you have sufficient memory available if you are planning to download digital images to a computer hard drive). A computer with a "zip drive" and a supply of blank zip disks will allow you to make backup copies on-site.

## **Film**

If you are not using a digital camera, you will need to acquire a supply of photographic film. Once you know both the location's lighting conditions (natural light outdoors, incandescent light or fluorescent light indoors, or flash) and the photographic formats you want to produce (color prints, color slides), it is time to select the film types for your project.

- **Recommendation for Film (for 35 mm cameras): Indoors with Daylight Flood lamps**  
Color slides: Ektachrome 200 ASA color slide film
- **Recommendation for Film (for 35 mm cameras): Outdoor with natural light**  
Color slides: Ektachrome 200 ASA color slide film

## **Photography Tips:**

- Be sure to include the informant's identification number in each photograph. See the section entitled "Using Identification Numbers during Photography."
- Back up in order to get the entire quilt as well as the informant in the picture frame.
- The informant should NOT stand in front of quilt but to the side.
- Take outdoor photographs in direct sunlight. Shade will make the colors "cold."
- Always take at least two shots to ensure that you have at least one usable view of each photograph. Play it safe. "Bracket" your photographs, taking a "security shot" on either side of the setting recommended by your camera. Take the one in the middle, too!

- Use your viewfinder to compose your photograph. Take care that the object and your subject are both visible and centered within the frame.
- Be careful not to “cut off” hands and feet—use your viewfinder to be sure they are inside the photographic frame.
- A least one detail picture of the informant’s choice should be taken in addition to the overall picture.

## **Digital Photography**

Digital photography offers numerous advantages for making a visual record of the Q.S.O.S. interview. Better models of digital cameras make it possible to take high resolution images that are easily stored and readily adaptable for both electronic and print media. The new generation of digital printers also makes it possible to make archival prints from digital images. Because there are many different models of digital cameras, the following points are intended to be generally applicable. For more detailed information, consult your user’s manual.

- **Quality.** You should use a digital camera only if it can produce a “fine” image. A fine image is usually about a 1M JPEG (or roughly an image of 28 by 21 inches at 72 dpi). Smaller images tend to look digital when printed.
- **Settings.** Your digital camera should have both automatic and manual options. These include default settings for the flash, etc. If you are comfortable with your camera and its functions, you should use the manual settings to achieve the best images. If not, trust the default settings—they are designed to answer most ordinary needs.
- **Flash.** The default for most cameras generally selects the flash for poor light conditions. The flash, however, will also tend to wash out colors and create reflected highlights. Always take images with and without the flash. Even in poor artificial light conditions, the colors in digital cameras can be corrected just as they can in a graphics program.
- **Review.** The real advantage of many digital cameras is the playback feature. Take the photographs and play them back. Some cameras even have zoom reviews that make it possible to check details for focus and clarity. Use these features to insure that the digital photographs are sharp and detailed. As with film cameras, take multiple images for the sake of insurance.
- **Saving the Image.** As soon as possible, download the digital photographs to a computer hard drive and make a back up. Once the images are saved, then make copies for future use. The current preferred medium is a CD-ROM, but Zip disks are also a good option. In either case, once you save the copied images, open the copies in your computer and make sure that they are all there and usable.

### **Handle With Care**

Even though you do have to think through and resolve all of these technical questions, do not forget to consider the needs of your informant in your plans. Remember as you photograph that you are handling someone’s prized possession. Be careful, and respect the wishes of the owner. Consider wearing clean white gloves when handling the touchstone object.

## Transcribing Tape-Recorded Interviews

Transcribing tape-recorded interviews is an essential part of every successful oral history project but especially to Q.S.O.S. We expect many Q.S.O.S. projects will want to have their interview transcriptions archived. Transcriptions from Q.S.O.S. will be archived at the Library of Congress American Folklife Center in partnership with The Alliance for American Quilts. This is where the transcriptions will be made available through the Internet at [http://www.quiltcenter.org/qsos/qsos\\_interviews.html](http://www.quiltcenter.org/qsos/qsos_interviews.html). It is important that all transcribers whose work will be archived with us follow the same style and conventions in formatting their transcriptions. Other transcribers may want to follow these guidelines too.

This section details the information you need to know to format transcriptions of tape-recorded Q.S.O.S. interviews. We are writing with the assumption that you will be using Microsoft Word, computer and computer printer. However, a typewriter will work just as well, except that someone will have to type it into a word processor if it is to be made available on the Internet. While transcriptions will be accepted that have not been put into Microsoft Word, there are no resources at this time to have someone retype them so the transcriptions will be available on the Internet. If you are using a word processor other than Microsoft Word, you will need to contact us. (Information on how to contact us is provided under “Archiving the Transcription...”)

We have also prepared for you a two page “Transcriber’s Tip Sheet” (Appendix K) for easily and quick reference for transcribers. This should be used in conjunction with the manual.

### Getting Ready

- Review one of the transcriptions that are online.
- Set page margins: One inch margins at left, top and bottom and at least half inch on the right side of the page. Justification to the left.
- No page numbers.
- No bold anywhere.
- Select “Times New Roman” font, size 12 point.
- Double space between each person’s passages, otherwise single space.
- Save your file with tape number first then last name. Example: IL60540-001 Musgrave.doc.

### Transcribing the Interview

- There is a Basic Rule for transcribing tape-recorded interviews:  
Get everything down **exactly** as it is on the tape.

### However, a Few Don’ts:

- Don’t record what you think the informant meant to say.
- Don’t correct grammar, usage or sentence structure. We talk in phrases.

- Don't include 'uh's,' 'um's,' 'you know's' and false starts.
- Don't represent dialect or local accents or mispronunciations by altering spelling.
- Don't use commas to signify pauses.
- Don't use exclamation points. Underscoring can be used for emphasis if needed but keep this to a minimum.
- Don't use a series of spaced periods to indicate anything on the transcription. These are standard ellipsis marks indicating that something has been left out. The only exception to this is when the beginning of the interview was not caught on the tape.
- Don't hyphenate words like hand quilted, machine quilted, wall hanging, etc. We also recognize quiltmaker and quilting as words.

**Follow the following format to begin:**

The Alliance for American Quilts  
 Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories  
 Tape Number  
 Name, Interviewee  
 Name, Interviewer  
 Name, Transcriber  
 Event/location  
 Town/City, State  
 Date  
 Time interview begins

**It should look like this example not like it does on the website:**

The Alliance for American Quilts  
 Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories  
 Tape Number IL60540-001  
 Judy Smith, Interviewee  
 Karen Musgrave, Interviewer  
 Kim Greene, Transcriber  
 Quilt Show  
 Naperville, Illinois  
 September 22, 2007  
 8:30 a.m.

- When you transcribe each speaker's first passage regardless of when they speak in the interview, use their full name and include their initials in capital letters, enclosed in parentheses (see example below).
- After their first passage, you can use their initials to indicate who is speaking on the tape so you don't have to write out their names again and again.
- If you cannot identify a person speaking, use Unidentified Person (UP).

*Example:*

Mary Smith (MS): Joyce, when were you first introduced to quilting?

Joyce Gross (JG): My grandmother made quilts and I remember sleeping under them at her house.

MS: What date was this?

JG: This was in the 1930s. My grandmother pieced the quilts and sent them off to be quilted by women in the rural South.

Kate Jones (KJ): Do you know where in the South?

- For all information on the tape that is not part of the interview itself enclose extraneous information in square brackets [], underline it, and put a period at the end. For example, if a loudspeaker announcement was made and can be heard on the interview, describe it as such:

*Example:*

[announcement over the loudspeaker.]

- There are other kinds of information that may be on your tape that you will want to include in your transcription. You may need to describe a gesture made by the informant:

*Example:*

[demonstrating: Joyce showed with her hands the size of the quilt's center medallion--about 1 foot square.]

- Or, you may need to indicate that the person being interviewed directed a comment to someone else:

[speaks to her daughter who was seated at the interview table.]

This additional information in brackets will be very helpful to your readers because it helps to explain why some passages are unintelligible if only the spoken words are considered. If you were not present for the interview, simply disregard this and transcribe what you hear.

Additionally:

- Transcripts can also indicate laughter in brackets, if important to the conversation:  
[laughs.]
- Brackets should elucidate any breaks in the transcript because of mechanical problems with the tape, time out for a break, tape turned off because of noise, etc. [tape turned off for quick water break.]
- Transcripts should be amended in order to provide, in brackets, the full name and any relevant title of individuals when mentioned, such as "Florence [Peto.] was an important quilt designer." Use brackets to elucidate a state if a town is mentioned, "Marcie grew up

in Blytheville.” [Arkansas.] Or to explain initials, “QNM.” [Quilter’s Newsletter Magazine.]

- If there is a passage or word on the tape that you cannot understand, try listening to it three times, then if you still can’t understand it clearly, put: [inaudible.]. It can also be helpful to invite another listener or two to listen to the passages that you cannot understand. Other ears may understand some words that you cannot make out. Also the informant will have the opportunity to fill in the passage. Please do not use “[unintelligible.]” to indicate passages you cannot understand as this can be misunderstood.
- If interviewed person pauses for significant length of time to answer a question, note this with: [pause: 10 seconds.].
- Quotes should have single quotation marks. Titles should have double quotation marks.

*Example:*

(JG): When my daughter saw my quilt “Piece,” she said, ‘Wow.’

- How to handle two people speaking at once? Separate the two speaker’s passages with a space and then connect them with a brace in the margin. This indicates that two people were talking at once, and dashes at the end of one speaker’s passage indicate that one person broke off while the other continued. If this is too confusing, explain in a bracketed direction:

*Example:*

[both Joyce and her daughter Paula were talking at the same time.]

JG: Remember the store you girls started to sell mod clothing--

Paula Gross (PG): The Mod Shop--we started that in 1969.

- Punctuation: use two dashes or hyphens to show where an informant breaks off or was interrupted.
- Titles should have quotation marks but quilt patterns like Log Cabin, Nine Patch, Trip Around the World, etc. do not.
- Magazines and newspapers should be put into italic.

### **After you finish your Transcription**

- The informant should be sent a photocopy of the transcript, with a self-addressed and stamped envelope, and a request that they read the transcript over and correct errors. It is difficult for transcribers to know how every person’s name or place name should be spelled, and sometimes people will realize that they made an error in the interview and want a chance to straighten the facts.



- A sample cover letter designed for use by projects that plan to archive their interviews with the project is located in Appendix L. This cover letter explains the reason for the final reading and reminds the person interviewed that their interview will be posted on the Internet. If your project is not planning to archive materials, you may find this cover letter sample helpful as a template.
- Ask the informant to return the corrected transcript to you. When you receive it, note the corrections that have been made and make those corrections to your final copy. The transcript is completed only when the person interviewed has read it and checked it for errors, returned it to the interviewer, and the interviewer has made these corrections.
- Printing: Use good quality 8 ½” x 11” paper, preferably non-acidic or pH neutral. These kinds of papers are available at office supply stores like STAPLES, OfficeMax, and Office Depot as well as Mail Boxes, Etc. and places listed in Appendix N. They work fine in home computer printers.
- If you find a typographical error on the final copy that you need to correct and do not want to reprint the document, make any corrections using a pen with black ink only.

### **Archiving the Transcript**

When you have completed the transcript and corrected any errors noted by the informant, send the following to:

Karen Musgrave  
 Quilters’ S.O.S. – Save Our Stories  
 1226 Whitingham Circle  
 Naperville, IL 60540-69281

- a hard copy of the final transcript;
- the edited copy received from the informant;
- an electronic copy of the final transcript on a CD;
- a copy of the tape or digital file from which the transcription was made;
- the release forms and pictures.

It is also a good idea to email Karen at [qsos@quiltalliance.org](mailto:qsos@quiltalliance.org) to let her know that your tape and transcription copies are on their way.

## **Preserving Your Tapes and Starting an Archive**

The information here is provided for those who would like to have their own archive. If you send your Q.S.O.S. material to Karen or if your state or local historical society agrees to become your repository for your materials, then you may not have these storage concerns. Many local historical societies, however, do not have an archivist on staff so you may need to educate their staff and serve as an advocate for protecting and preserving your materials.

### **Immediate Considerations**

- Have you labeled all cassettes?
- Have you made a copy of all interview cassettes to use as a working copy?
- Have you stored the original tapes in a safe place?
- Have you developed an index of the taped interview?
- Have you developed a transcript of the interview?
- Have you rechecked (audited) the transcript for accuracy?
- Have you sent to the informant a copy of the full transcript or a list of names for review of spelling and clarification, if needed?
- After the transcript is made, correct and finalized, have you given all materials related to the interview to the repository chosen for the project?

### **Recommendations for Storage**

- Protect the audiotapes generated by the interviews and photographs and/or slides by storing them under relatively constant temperature and humidity.
- Play the tapes through completely at regular speed at least every five years. Contact an archivist at your state historical society for current guidelines.
- Photocopy the master of the interview transcript onto acid-neutral paper and file it in its own acid-neutral folder.
- Protect the photograph of the informant in its own acid-neutral folder or protector made of either paper or polyester and place in the master file.
- Use soft pencils for labeling photos, slides and recordings.
- Avoid paper clips, rubber bands, adhesives (e.g. tapes and self-adhesive notes) that may rust or leave sticky residue on your materials.
- Protect materials from rodents and insects.

### **Get the Word Out**

- Publicize the existence of the interviews. Look for themes and patterns among the taped and transcribed interviews to guide interpretation and to make comparisons.
- Share the findings of the project with the community through public presentations, publications, exhibitions, radio programs, websites, newspaper articles, and/or television programs.

## How to Write a Press Release

This is a suggested list to follow when writing a press release. You should first check with your local paper to make sure this is the format that they wish you to use.

1. If at all possible, type the press release on letterhead stationery. Regardless, the press release should be typed.
2. At the top, before the actual press release, there should be “Contact: name and telephone number” of the person in charge.
3. Give your press release a title. It can simply be the name of your event or simply state what you are doing.
4. The first paragraph should include who, what, where and when. Details should be included in subsequent paragraphs.
5. Make the release as concise and interesting as possible. You are trying to catch the interest of the newspaper, radio, etc. so they will send someone to cover your event.
6. The press release should not be more than two pages in length (one page front and back). Shorter is better.
7. Generally, it helps to include as many names of local people as possible.
8. The last paragraph should start “For more information about ‘title of event,’ contact person’s name and phone number.” This is also your chance to include additional people and phone numbers with different responsibilities for your event. (Appendix B)
9. Check your local newspapers, and radio and television stations for how much advance notice they require. Meet your deadlines.
10. When checking on the deadlines, try to get the name of a specific reporter or person that covers your type of news. Address your press releases to these people to expedite and increase your chances of getting coverage.
11. If you do not hear from the press, make a follow up call.

## Creating Identification Numbers and Documentation Files

If you or your group should decide to start a Q.S.O.S. project of your own, there will need to be planning before you record your first interview. How will your project organize the material you collect during your Q.S.O.S. project? Having a system in place before your project begins will make managing the project's data easier.

We recommend a system that incorporates the following:

- A unique identification number for each informant (**For Q.S.O.S., this includes the state where the interview is taking place followed by the zip code then the informant's number. Example IL60540-001 Musgrave.**). If you decide to do a Q.S.O.S. project, you must get your number from Karen Musgrave (qsos@quiltalliance.org).;
- A registration notebook to serve as a project index;
- Information file folders, one per informant, for organizing paper documents relating to each informant;
- A master worksheet listing all the documentation created for each informant, filed within the informant's information file folder;
- Organizing all data and files numerically using the identification numbering system.

Much of the information your project will need to track can be easily managed in a computer database program, like MS ACCESS, or on paper records maintained in a file box or drawer.

We suggest assigning each informant a unique identification number (ID#) at the time of their interview, and recording this information in a permanent registration notebook. This identification number should be recorded on all of the information you collect concerning that informant. To keep track of the information, the identification number can be linked to a master information worksheet listing everything you have collected for this informant, along with the informant's name, the date of interview, the informant's address, phone number, interviewer's name, and other information your project wishes to record. The master information sheets can then be filed within information files, identified numerically (using the informant's identification number) and organized in your file box or drawer in numerical order. The tapes, slides, photographic prints, typed transcripts, and any other materials each keyed with the same identification number for their respective informants, and depending on their type can be filed in the informant's individual information file (like transcripts and correspondence) or as independent collections (like recorded tapes, slides, and negatives) arranged in numerical order. After storage, the location of each item should be noted on the Master Information Worksheet in pencil (locations change). For example, Cassette tape #001 Main Office, Cabinet A, Drawer 1.

For example: Your Q.S.O.S. project conducts its first interview appointment with Betty Jones. Betty Jones is assigned the identification number "001" in your project's registration notebook. The registration notebook entry may also note Betty Jones's name and address, the date her interview is scheduled, and the name of the person who will be conducting the Betty Jones interview. Whoever is keeping your project records will also want to set up a new "Information File" in a file drawer or box for Betty Jones. This file should be given the name "001" (not "Betty Jones") because the information files will be organized numerically. A blank "Master Information" worksheet keyed with Betty Jones's identification number (#001) is created and

placed in Information File #001. Copies of any correspondence with Betty Jones will also be keyed with her identification number (#001) and placed in this information file. Additionally, all of the tape recordings, transcripts, slides, photographic prints, and negatives resulting from Betty Jones's Q.S.O.S interview will also be keyed with her identification number, and noted on the master information sheet in her Information File. (Incidentally, we recommend that you select one consistent location, like the upper right-hand corner of documents, for noting the identification number, and using pencil.)

When your project has finished processing all of the materials relating to Betty Jones's Q.S.O.S. interview, it will be easy to learn what kinds of documents you have created for her interview – they will all be noted on the Master Information List which you have filed in “Information File #001”, along with copies of letters, release forms, and transcripts from Betty Jones's interview – all of them keyed with Betty Jones's identification number, #001. Should you want to find the tapes, slides, photographic prints, or negatives from Betty Jones's interview, they will be easily retrieved because your project will have keyed them to her informant number -#001 – and then stored them in numerical order in file drawers, boxes, etc.

### **Using Identification Numbers During Photography**

The unique identification number (ID) assigned to each informant is an important indexing tool to include in your Q.S.O.S. project's photography planning. Including the informants identification number in every photograph made for her/his interview simplifies the process of identifying the subjects in Q.S.O.S. photographs after the interview is over. The identification number also makes filing and retrieving photographic images quick and easy.

Before the interview, prepare an index card with the informant's unique identification number on it in numerals large enough to read clearly from a distance of 15 feet. You can use a wide-stroke felt-tipped pen, press-on numbers, or your computer printer to create these identification number cards.

Be sure this identification number card is included in every photograph you make to document that particular informant's Q.S.O.S. interview. Have your informant hold the index card when she/he poses with the touchstone object and include the card in each photograph you make of the touchstone object's details. Doing this will make organizing and filing your slides, prints and negatives numerically by informant identification number a much easier task.

## Archiving Your Project's Data

If your project chooses to share your Q.S.O.S. interviews with The Alliance of American Quilts, where they will be archived with the Library of Congress American Folklife Center, you will need to add a second part to your informants' identification numbers. This will allow your project's data to be integrated easily with the larger archive without confusion. Making this change is a simple task and one that builds on the unique identification numbering system described above. Your numbering system will use your State then zip code (**only one zip code should be used for your project regardless of where everyone lives and you should clear your project identification number with Karen Musgrave at [qsos@quiltalliance.org](mailto:qsos@quiltalliance.org) before beginning**) as a prefix to the identification number of each informant. For example: a Q.S.O.S. project having the state and zip code of "IL60540" would simply add their first informant with the identification number, #001, to their project zip code, resulting in the numerical identifier "IL60540-001" which would then be used on all files and information related to this informant.

### **IMPORTANT- How to Label Files**

The files for both the transcription and the photographs should be saved and sent with the identification number then the informant's last name so that the interview may be easily traced. Examples: IL60450-001 Musgrave.doc, IL60540-001 Musgrave a.jpg and IL60540-001-Musgrave b.jpg.

Using this system, the identity of both the particular Q.S.O.S. project that created the documentation, and the identity of the particular informant are easily traced in the Q.S.O.S. collection.

## **Conducting a Q.S.O.S. Training of Your Own**

The Quilters' S.O.S.-Save Our Stories project was designed to be simple and inexpensive, in the hopes that others would adopt the project format and conduct training sessions of their own. It will take many dedicated individuals to help save and document the stories of quilting and present-day quilters. The following information is to help you make your training a success.

### **Presenting the Subject**

These are some tips to help you make your presentations more interesting, worthwhile, and fun for both you and your audience.

#### **1. Prepare your presentation.**

- Assess your audience, consider the sort of people they are and what they know and want to learn about the subject.
- Write down the purpose of the presentation and decide on the ideas that should be covered.
- Research the subject by carefully reading this manual, taking brief notes.
- Outline your presentation, including only the most important points—usually the fewer the better—and put them in a logical order. Plan your key points and words.
- Keep it simple. Make it your own. Be creative.

#### **2. Practice your presentation.**

- Rehearse your presentation until you are comfortable. One suggestion would be to use a tape recorder so you can hear yourself.
- Write in your notes the time allotted for major points. This will help you stay within the time limits.
- Put your outline in final form so that it will not be cluttered with discarded ideas.
- Try to be ready for extemporaneous speaking, with an occasional look at your outline. Do not memorize or read it word for word.
- When you are well prepared, you will feel more at ease during the presentation. Also, it helps to take a few deep breaths before you begin.

#### **3. Personalize your presentation.**

- Let each person feel you are talking to him or her. If you are nervous, find a friendly face in the audience and direct your remarks to that person for the first few minutes.
- Watch the audience's reaction as you go along.
- Use thought-provoking questions. This will help stimulate everyone's thinking. It will also help you get feedback from participants, which will tell you whether or not they understand what you are saying.

#### **4. Illustrate your presentation.**

- Use a chalkboard or flip chart to list your main points, or draw diagrams or sketches while you talk. Training aids help make your presentation more interesting and reinforce the learning process. Remember quiltmakers are generally visual people.
  - Balance what you say with what you show. Don't let the visual aids be so elaborate that it is distracting.
  - Show the equipment like tape recorders that participants will be using.
  - Use handouts.
5. Pace yourself.
- Stay within the time limit.
  - Stay on the subject. Don't get sidetracked.
6. Clinch your presentation.
- Summarize the subject by restating its main idea or problem, its importance, and the major points you have made.
  - Give your audience a chance to ask questions, either during the presentation or at the end.

## **Visual Aids**

Charts and posters are used to:

- Attract and hold attention;
- Develop an idea;
- Present information to small groups;
- Highlight key points;
- Review and preview;
- Add variety to discussion;
- Speed up learning;
- Increase retention.



## How to Make Posters/Charts

You don't have to be an artist or a sign painter to make a terrific poster/chart. Just follow these simple rules.

1. Select the main idea. Jot down a few simple words that explain it.
2. Try out different ideas to create the effect you want. Don't be afraid to brainstorm. Even try being silly. Do you want it to be funny, dramatic, serious or factual?
3. Try out different ideas. Put it all down on scratch paper.
4. Lettering
  - Block out the poster or chart using lightly penciled guidelines.
  - If you aren't an artist, use plastic stick-on letters, pressure-sensitive letters, trace lettering patterns, or use letter stencils. This saves a lot of time.
  - Use block letters. Make them a little taller than they are wide.
  - Don't squeeze the letters together or place them too far apart.
  - Avoid fancy or difficult-to-read letter sizes and typefaces.
  - Follow this guide for determining letter sizes.

10-15 people (10 feet away) use letters ½" high, 1/8" thick  
15-30 people (25 feet away) use letters 1" high, 1/8" thick  
30-60 people (45 feet away) use letters 1½" high, 1/8" thick  
60-100 people (75 feet away) use letters 3" high, ½" thick

### 5. Color

- Color adds interest. Use colored ink or paint to fill in letters.
- Select colors that contrast sharply to the background color.
- Make the main idea the largest and brightest. Use lots of white space. It makes the main idea stand out.
- Color on Color ranked from most visible to least visible.

1. Black on yellow  
2. Green on white  
3. Blue on white  
4. White on blue

5. Black on white  
6. Yellow on black  
7. White on red  
8. White on orange

9. White on black  
10. Red on yellow  
11. Green on red  
12. Red on green

## How to Use a Chalkboard/Whiteboard

Keep it simple and brief. Copying lengthy outlines or lists is a waste of everyone's time. If it is important for the participants to have a copy of the material, give them a handout.

Think of a chalkboard/whiteboard as a store window. Everyone knows that an overcrowded, dirty and untidy window has little appeal compared to one that is clean, neat and displays a few well-chosen items.

Use chalkboards/whiteboards-

- If they are available; (They can be a real workhorse.)
- When the group is recording ideas;
- When a permanent record is not needed;
- To obtain learner participation;
- To attract and hold attention;
- To add interest;
- To increase retention;
- To speed up learning.

Advantages of chalkboards/whiteboards-

- Often available
- May be used in a variety of ways
- Are simple to use
- You can easily introduce color by using colored chalk or dry markers

A few rules for using the chalkboard/whiteboard will increase its effectiveness.

- Words should be printed instead of written.
- To prevent chalk from breaking, grip the chalk so that your forefinger extends over the tip of the chalk.
- Don't crowd the chalkboard/whiteboard. A few important points make a vivid impression.
- Make the material simple. Brief, concise statements are more effective than lengthy ones.
- Plan ahead.
- Gather all your supplies before the group meets.
- Use color for emphasis. Yellow and green are more effective than white chalk and black markers.
- Erase all unrelated material. Make sure your eraser is clean.
- Strips of paper can be fastened over printed material so that information can be revealed one at a time.

## Slides

“A picture is worth a thousand words.” Rather than trying to explain to your participants, show your own slides. Slides can be an effective means of clearly communicating information. If you are not fortunate enough to have slides, you may be able to borrow some or have duplicate copies made. Duplicate slides are relatively inexpensive.

- Slides of exhibits and displays like International Quilt Festival or Q.S.O.S. can be used to show your participants how to set this up.
- Remember to use slides that clearly relate to your main points.

## Overhead Projector Techniques

Many churches and schools have overhead projectors.

1. Most overhead projectors are designed to project transparencies up to 10” x 10”.
2. Projection can be done in a normally lighted room. A darkened room is not necessary.
3. Remember to face the audience. By keeping eye contact with the audience, you keep engaged with your audience rather than just with your equipment.
4. A large image is projected at a short distance. If the projector is 12 feet from the screen, the projected image is approximately 8 feet square.
5. It is possible to write and draw on prepared transparencies.
6. Lettering on a transparency should be no smaller than 1/8 inch.
7. A pointer can be used to call attention to details or important ideas.
8. Overlays can be used for step-by-step build up or breakdown of a layout.
9. Strips of opaque paper or cardboard can be used to cover sections to progressively disclose information.

## How to Give a Demonstration

There is a difference between just using a skill or method and demonstrating it so others can learn. Here are a few suggestions.

### Preparation

1. Plan in advance the steps you will use.
2. Make a written outline of these steps.
3. Collect and prepare the necessary materials and equipment.
4. Practice the demonstration from beginning to end until you do it smoothly and with ease.
5. Plan it to appear as natural as possible, even if you can't perform the skill exactly as you would in use.

6. Don't be surprised if something doesn't go as planned.
7. Size up your audience to determine their present knowledge and get an idea on how much detail you will need to give them.

### **Giving the Demonstration**

1. Briefly tell your audience the major points to watch for during the demonstration.
2. If you warn against the wrong way by showing it, always demonstrate the right way both before and after you show the wrong way.
3. When you have finished, summarize. Give the participants a chance to ask questions, or better still, give them a chance to practice while you coach.

## **Suggested Agenda for Your Own Q.S.O.S. Training Workshop**

The following section has been prepared to help you plan your training. It is meant to be a guide and starting place.

### **Before the Training**

#### **Presenter Preparation:**

1. Study the section in the Q.S.O.S manual that applies to your presentation.
2. Review the handouts. Check the appendix of the manual.
3. Select a method of presentation that will help meet the learning objectives.
4. Prepare displays if needed.
5. Review the learning objectives.
6. Practice and time your presentation in advance to help you stay within the time limits.

Make sure you have-

- name tags
- schedule of the day
- copies of handouts and materials
- paper and pencils for participants
- displays
- evaluation forms

### **The Training and Learning Objectives**

30 minutes: **Registration**

10 minutes **Welcome, introductions, housekeeping details and overview of day**

15 minutes **“The Importance of Conversations: Quilters’ S.O.S. - Save Our Stories and Quilt Documentation”**

**Learning Objectives:** As a result of this session, each participant should be able to understand:

1. what oral history is;
2. the objectives of Q.S.O.S. and how your group is involved;
3. what is involved in a focus interview;
4. the importance of and reason for a touchstone object;
5. ethics in interviewing.

30 minutes      **“Conducting a Successful and Enjoyable Interview: Tips for Getting Started, Asking Questions, and Coming to Conclusion”**

**Learning Objectives:** As a result of this session, each participant should be able to understand:

1. how to ask open-ended questions;
2. how to make informants comfortable;
3. how to conduct an interview;
4. how to use “Quick Questions;”
5. how “Interview Quadrant Questions” help structure the interview;
6. what needs to be in the opening and closing announcements on the tape;
7. the procedure for scribing the interview.

20 minutes      **“Know Your Equipment: Preparing for a Productive and Untroubled Interview”**

**Learning Objectives:** As a result of this session, each participant should be able to understand:

1. and be comfortable with the tape recorder you are using;
2. the importance of using certain tapes and film;
3. care of the touchstone object.

20 minutes      **“Transcribing Tape-Recorded Interviews”**

**Learning Objectives:** As a result of this session, each participant should be able to understand:

1. the procedure used for transcribing;
2. what will happen with the transcriptions?

you determine      **Lunch Break**

50 minutes      **“Sample Interview”**

**Learning objectives:** As a result of this session, each participant should be able to understand:

1. how your interviews will be conducted.

15 minutes      **“Questions and Answers/Discussion”**

15 minutes      **Break**

2 hours      **“Practice Interviews”**

**Learning objectives:** As result of this session, each participant should be able to understand:

1. how to conduct an interview;
2. how to relax and enjoy the interviewing process.

15 minutes    **“Question and Answer/Discussion”**

**“Photographing Informants with Their Quilts”**

**Note:**

Evaluation is an important part of learning, so consider having an evaluation form for your participants and a follow up meeting to review them.

## Appendix A: Sample Press Release

**Contact: Karen Musgrave, Publicity Chair**

SewBeautiful Quilt Guild

P.O. Box 111

Anywhere, State 00000

(000) 000-0000

**For Immediate Release:**

### **“Every Quilt Tells a Story--Quilters’ S.O.S. - Save Our Stories”**

*Anywhere, State, September 22, 2002-* Members of the SewBeautiful Quilt Guild will be conducting, a Quilters’ S.O.S.- Save Our Stories, an oral history documentation project on November 2, 2002 at (location), address from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. The guild will collect the stories of our local quiltmakers. Participants have been invited to bring along a quilt of special importance to them to help spark their stories. Pat Smith of Newark, Delaware, will photograph the quiltmakers and their quilts as part of the project.

“At first I was nervous and didn’t think I had anything to contribute because I am a relatively new quilter,” Bonnie Kraft said, “Now I understand the project. Now I can’t wait.”

Each interview will last about forty-five minutes and is open to anyone who makes quilts. These tape-recorded interviews will become a part of the national Quilters’ S.O.S. - Save Our Stories (Q.S.O.S.) as well as being archived with the guild. Q.S.O.S. is devoted to documenting the history of quilts through tape-recorded interviews. It is one of many quilt preservation projects of The Alliance for American Quilts.

The information that is shared will be invaluable to future researchers interested in the history of quilting as understood through individual experience. Imagine how exciting it would be if we could listen to the words of quiltmakers who lived one hundred years ago. All the interviews and photographs will eventually be available on the Internet on The Alliance’s webpage <http://www.centerforthequilt.org/qsos/>.

The archival collection of tape-recorded interviews, transcriptions, photographs and notes compiled by SewBeautiful Quilt Guild will be sent to the Q.S.O.S. project chair for archiving with the Library of Congress American Folklife Center. They have agreed to house the archival collection. Duplicates of everything will be maintained by the guild.

“We are so excited and proud to be a part of this,” Sue Brown, guild president said. “Anyone interested in getting involved or just wants a better understanding can come to our meeting on October 30 at Name of location.”

For more information about Q.S.O.S., contact Karen Musgrave (000) 000-0000 or Julia Jones (000) 000-0000. If you are interested in being interviewed, please contact Beatrice Fox at (000) 000-0000.

-End-



## Appendix B: Sample Letter of Invitation

November 2, 2000

Dear

You have been recommended to us for an oral history interview by SewBeautiful Quilters Guild. It is our desire to record and preserve for posterity the memories of quiltmakers in our community. We hope that you will accept this invitation to be interviewed on our oral history day.

The tape-recorded interview will last approximately forty-five minutes. You are asked to bring a quilt or quilt related item, what we are calling your touchstone object, which has special meaning to you. This touchstone object will be the focus of our interview that will be in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. You and your touchstone object will also be photographed.

The enclosed schedule asks that you block off the times you are available. Please let us know if you need transportation. If you are unable to attend, please let us know if you are interested in being interviewed at a later date.

Once we hear from you, we will send a confirmation letter with the time for your interview, if transportation will be provided and directions. Please respond by (date).

If you have any questions, please call one of the committee members listed below.

Every quilt has stories to tell. We hope you will accept our invitation to share your stories.

Sincerely,

List committee members names and numbers

Attachment: Handout with more details about the project

## Appendix C: Sample Letter of Confirmation

Date

Dear (Informant's Name):

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed for The Alliance for American Quilts' project, Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories (Q.S.O.S.). This letter confirms our interview appointment for (date) at (time and place). The Q.S.O.S. project of documenting and preserving the history of living quiltmakers is long overdue. Your memories are unique and important to this historical archive. To help you better understand our mission, I am enclosing a brochure on The Alliance for American Quilts.

Please select a quilt or quilt related item that has a special meaning to you. We will use this "touchstone" item to begin our forty-five minute tape-recorded interview. After the interview, you and your quilt will be photographed.

While we will begin the interview by talking about your touchstone item, we will also talk about your involvement in quilting; your ideas about aesthetics, craftsmanship and design elements of quiltmaking; and the function and meaning in quilts in American life.

To help me better guide the interview, please fill out the enclosed "Quick Questions" form and return it to me. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to let me know. I can be reached at (phone number and e-mail address).

I look forward our interview and appreciate your contribution.

Sincerely,

Enclosures

## **Interview Guide**

Thank you for participating in Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories (Q.S.O.S.), a project of The Alliance for American Quilts. Q.S.O.S. is the largest grassroots oral history preservation effort of its kind. Our goal is the creation of a broadly accessible body of information about quiltmakers and quilting and make it available through the Internet.

The Alliance for American Quilts, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization since 1993, wants to ensure that this nation's quilt heritage is preserved, documented and widely shared.

To learn more about The Alliance for American Quilts and Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories log onto <http://www.centerforthequilt.org/qsos/>. Make sure you check out the Q.S.O.S. Manual to further understand.

### **Things to Know Before the Interview**

1. The tape-recorded interview is approximately 45 minutes long.
2. You are asked to bring ONE quilt or quilted item that is significant to you and preferably also made by you. We call this a "touchstone."
3. You will be asked to fill out and sign the following:
  - A permission form
  - A participant and quilt information form which includes the date your quilt was made, title, where it was made and dimensions
  - A "Quick Question" form
4. You will be photographed after the interview.
5. A sampling of the interview questions is available in the Manual.

### **During the Interview**

1. Your interviewer will make a brief announcement before the interview begins.
2. The main goal of your interviewer is to elicit information from you that allows us to see the world through your eyes so your interviewer should do very little talking.
3. Relax and talk as much as you want.
4. You may or may not have a scribe during your interview. The scribe's job is simply to take notes to make the transcription process easier. The scribe may ask you to clarify some things after the interview.

### **The Transcription Process**

1. The tape of your interview is copied and mailed to a transcriber, a volunteer.
2. Transcribing an interview can take anywhere from 6-10 hours (sometimes more) depending on the skill of the transcriber and the quality of the tape.
3. However, since most of our transcribers are busy volunteers, it can take six months to a year for your tape to be transcribed and sent to you for editing.

### **When the Transcription is Complete**

1. Two copies of the transcription (one for your records and the other to return) and a final permission letter will be mailed to you.
2. We ask that you review and return your corrected transcription as soon as you can.
3. If you will be delayed, please let your contact person know.
4. Please do not rewrite your interview. Check for facts; fill in missing information like last names, etc.
5. After the corrected transcription and final permission letter is sent to Karen Musgrave, it is checked one more time for correct formatting before being posted onto the website.
6. Once your interview is posted to the website, you will be notified by email, postcard or telephone.
7. Your interview and all related materials will be archived at the Library of Congress at the American Folklife Center.

### **Important Contact Information**

Karen Musgrave, Q.S.O.S. Chair and person who does the posting, [qsos@quiltalliance.org](mailto:qsos@quiltalliance.org)

### **Build the Vision with Us!**

If you share the vision of The Alliance for American Quilts and want to ensure that this nation's quilt heritage is preserved, documented and widely shared. If you want to extend a hand so that we might save another quiltmaker's story, please make a gift of support.

The Alliance for American Quilts  
125 S Lexington Ave., Suite 101  
Asheville, NC 28801  
[admin@quiltalliance.org](mailto:admin@quiltalliance.org)  
828.251.7073

Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories  
A Project of The Alliance for American Quilts

**Ethics Statement**

In keeping with The Alliance for American Quilts and Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories project's (Q.S.O.S.) concern for the rights of human subjects in research, all persons working on research projects associated with, or using the name Quilters' S.O.S-Save Our Stories will abide by the following principals (drawn from the American Folklore Society "Statement of Ethics" and the Michigan Traditional Arts Program "Professional Ethics in Folklife Research").

- (1) The interviewers' primary responsibility is to those they interview. When there is a conflict of interest, these individuals must come first. Researchers must strive to protect the physical, social and psychological welfare of their informants and to honor the dignity and privacy of those interviewed.
- (2) The aims of the Q.S.O.S. project should be communicated as well as possible to the informant.
- (3) Participation in Q.S.O.S. projects must be voluntary. Informants must be told in advance of any interviewing or information collection that their participation is voluntary and that they may choose not to participate or not to provide certain information.
- (4) Q.S.O.S. release forms should be used for all photo documentation and tape recording. Tape recording and photographs will only be made with the express written permission of the participants.
- (5) There shall be no exploitation of individual informants for personal gain.
- (6) The anticipated consequences of the research should be communicated as fully as possible to the individuals and groups likely to be affected.

---

To be signed by the researcher (interviewer): I have read the above statement and agreed to abide by it to the best of my ability.

Signature

---

Date

---

**Appendix E**

**The Alliance for American Quilts  
Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories**

**This project was sponsored by (Name of Guild or Organization).**

**INFORMANT TRACKING CHECKLIST**

Name of **Quiltmaker (informant)**: \_\_\_\_\_

I.D.# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of **Interviewer**: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of **Transcriber**: \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_ **Location**: \_\_\_\_\_

**Checklist:**

- The Interview on Tape
- The Scriber's Question List (if available)
- The Photograph of the informant with quilt & identification number.
- Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Sent typed Transcription for Approval by Informant (Date Sent: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Received Approved Transcription from Informant (Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Corrections to Transcription completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Release Form for permission to tape/photograph
- Participant and Quilt Information Form
- E-mail to Karen Musgrave (karenmusgrave@sbcglobal.net) Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Mailed Interview Materials to Karen Musgrave (Date: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Interview posted to the project's website Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview will be archived with the Library of Congress American Folklife Center.

**Mail items below to Karen Musgrave, Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories,  
1226 Whitingham Circle, Naperville, IL 60540-6928.**

- Hard copy of the final transcript
- The edited copy received from informant
- An Word document of the final transcript on a CD
- A labeled copy of the tape from which the transcript was made (digital on CD)
- The release and information forms
- Photographs either actual or on the CD

Appendix F

**Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories**  
**A Project of The Alliance for American Quilts**

**Quick Questions**  
*(to be asked prior to the interview)*

**Thank you for participating in Quilters' S.O. S. - Save Our Stories. The goal of this interview is to record your quilt stories in a friendly, relaxed way. We want your personality to shine through so you will hear as little of the interviewer's voice as possible. In order to know how to guide the interview, we ask you answer the following questions by simply circling either yes or no.**

Do you make quilts?	Yes	No
Do you make wearable art?	Yes	No
Do you sleep under a quilt?	Yes	No
Have you given quilts as gifts?	Yes	No
Are you self-taught?	Yes	No
Do you have quiltmakers in your family?	Yes	No
Do you belong to a guild?	Yes	No
Have you ever been a board member or chair of a committee in a guild?	Yes	No
Do you belong to a sewing group/bee?	Yes	No
Have pictures of you, your quilts and/or patterns been published?	Yes	No
Do you collect or sell quilts?	Yes	No
Do you have a collection of quilting or sewing memorabilia?	Yes	No
Have you ever owned or worked in a quilt shop?	Yes	No
Do you teach quilting?	Yes	No
If yes, have you traveled outside your hometown?	Yes	No
Have you ever won an award?	Yes	No
Have you ever participated in quilt history preservation?	Yes	No
Do you have a design wall?	Yes	No
Do you have a studio or sewing room?	Yes	No

ID# \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix G

## **Interview Quadrant Questions**

### **1. Discussion of the Informant's Quilt**

- Tell me about the quilt you brought in today.
- What special meaning does this quilt have for you?
- Why did you choose this quilt to bring to the interview?
- What do you think someone viewing your quilt might conclude about you?
- How do you use this quilt?
- What are your plans for this quilt?

### **2. Informant's Involvement in Quiltmaking**

- Tell me about your interest in quiltmaking.
- At what age did you start quiltmaking?
- From whom did you learn to quilt?
- How many hours a week do you quilt?
- What is your first quilt memory?
- Are there other quiltmakers among your family or friends? Please tell me about them.
- How does quiltmaking impact your family?
- Tell me if you have ever used quilts to get through a difficult time?
- Tell me about an amusing experience that has occurred from your quiltmaking (teaching)?
- What do you find pleasing about quiltmaking?
- What aspects of quiltmaking do you not enjoy?
- What art or quilt groups do you belong to?
- Have advances in technology influenced your work? If so, how?
- What are your favorite techniques and materials?
- Describe your studio/the place that you create.
- Tell me how you balance your time.
- Do you use a design wall? If so, in what way/how does that enhance your creative process? If not, how do you go about designing your quilts?

### **3. The Aesthetics, Craftsmanship, and Design Aspects of Quiltmaking**

- What do you think makes a great quilt?
- What makes a quilt artistically powerful?
- What makes a quilt appropriate for a museum or special collection?
- What makes a great quiltmaker?
- Whose works are you drawn to and why?
- Which artists have influenced you?
- How do you feel about machine quilting vs. hand quilting? What about long-arm quilting?

### **4. The Function and Meaning of Quilts in American Life.**

- Why is quiltmaking important to your life?
- In what ways do your quilts reflect your community or region?
- What do you think about the importance of quilts in American life?
- In what ways do you think quilts have special meaning for women's history in America?
- How do you think quilts can be used?
- How do you think quilts can be preserved for the future?
- What has happened to the quilts that you have made or those of friends and family?
- What do you think is the biggest challenge confronting quiltmakers today?

Appendix H



## Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories

### A project of The Alliance for American Quilts

#### Release Form

Thank you for participating in Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories, a project of The Alliance for American Quilts. By signing the form below you give your permission to include any tapes and/or photographs made during Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories in a public archive where they will be available to researchers and the public for scholarly or education purposes including publications in all media and exhibitions. By giving your permission, you do not give up any copyright or performance rights that you may hold.

I agree to the uses of these materials described above.

(Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

(Print Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Date) \_\_\_\_\_

(Participant ID Number) \_\_\_\_\_

(Interviewer's Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

(Print Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix IA

**Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories**

**A project of The Alliance for American Quilts**

**Release Form Under 18 year old**

Thank you for participating in Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories, a project of The Alliance for American Quilts. By signing the form below you give your permission to include any tapes and/or photographs made during Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories in a public archive where they will be available to researchers and the public for scholarly or educational purposes including publications in all media and exhibitions. By giving your permission, you do not give up any copyright or performance rights that you may hold.

I agree to the uses of these materials described above.

(Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

(Print Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Parental or Guardian Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

(Print Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Date) \_\_\_\_\_

(Participant ID Number) \_\_\_\_\_

(Interviewer's Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

(Print Name) \_\_\_\_\_

**Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories**

**A project of The Alliance for American Quilts**

**Participant and Quilt Information Form**

Participant ID Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant Contact Information: PLEASE PRINT**

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Address) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Telephone) \_\_\_\_\_

(E-mail) \_\_\_\_\_

**Quilt Information:**

Maker of Quilt: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Quilt: \_\_\_\_\_

Date made (approximately): \_\_\_\_\_

Where it was made: \_\_\_\_\_

Dimensions of quilt (height x width): \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix J

## Transcriber's Tip Sheet

**Please read the following before beginning the transcription process then again before you send it. Also review the transcription section of the Q.S.O.S. Manual.**

For questions contact Karen Musgrave at [qsos@quiltalliance.org](mailto:qsos@quiltalliance.org).

The Basic Rule for transcribing interviews is – **Get everything down exactly as it is on the tape.**

- Margins: One inch margins at left, top and bottom and at least half inch on the right side of the page
- Justification- Left
- Font: "Times New Roman," size 12 point
- Double spacing between each person's passages, otherwise single space.
- NO BOLD ANYWHERE!
- NO TABS ANYWHERE!
- No page numbers

### **Follow the following format to begin:**

The Alliance for American Quilts  
Quilters' S.O.S. – Save Our Stories  
Tape Number  
Name, Interviewee  
Name, Interviewer  
Name, Transcriber  
Event  
Town/City, State  
Date  
Time interview begins

- Each speaker's first passage regardless of when she/he speaks in the interview, use their full name and include their initials in capital letters, enclosed in parentheses. After the first passage, use only initials to indicate who is speaking so you don't have to write out their names again and again.

Examples:

Karen Musgrave (KM): When were you first introduced to quilting?

Mary Smith (MS): My grandmother made quilts.

KM: Where did she live?

### **Other important things to remember:**

- We recognize quiltmaker and quilting as words.
- Titles should have double quotation marks but quilt patterns like Log Cabin, Nine Patch, etc. do not.
- Use two dashes or hyphens to show where an informant breaks off or was interrupted.
- Single quotation marks are used when a speaker is quoting something or someone.
- Anytime there is a pause, the amount of time of the pause should be put into the transcription.  
Example: [pause for 10 seconds.]
- Magazine titles should be put into italic.

- If you cannot identify a person speaking, use Unidentified Person (UP).

### **Some Don'ts:**

- Don't record what you think the informant meant to say.
- Don't correct grammar, usage or sentence structure. We talk in phrases.
- Don't include 'uh's,' 'um's,' 'you knows,' or 'okay' at the beginning of a sentence or false starts.
- Don't represent dialect or local accents or mispronunciations by altered spelling.
- Don't use commas to signify pauses.
- Don't use exclamation marks. Underscoring can be used for emphasis if needed but keep this to a minimum.
- Don't use a series of spaced periods to indicate anything on the transcription. These are standard ellipsis marks indicating that something has been left out. The only exception to this is when the beginning of the interview was not caught on tape.
- Don't hyphenate words like hand quilting, machine quilted, wall hanging, etc. We also recognize quiltmaker and quilting as words.

### **Brackets:**

For all information on the tape that is not part of the interview itself enclose the information in brackets.

**Everything inside brackets except for names is in lower case, underlined and has a period at the end.**

Examples:

- [laughs.]
- [inaudible.]
- [speaks to her daughter who was seated at the interview table.]
- [KM and MS speak at the same time.]
- Naperville [Illinois.]

Uses for brackets:

- laughter, crying, etc.
- gestures
- mechanical problems, time out for breaks, tape turned off because of noise, etc.
- amended information like full names, state if a town is mentioned, etc.
- to explain that two people are talking at the same time
- to explain initials (Example *QNM* [*Quilter's Newsletter Magazine*].)

### **How to Handle Background Noises or Inaudible Passages:**

Many of the interviews have been conducted in public places so there may be noise or you may not be able to understand. Remember your job is to transcribe everything exactly as it is on the tape so if a loudspeaker announcement was made and can be heard, describe it as such [announcement over the loudspeaker].

If there is a passage or word that you cannot understand, try listening three times, then if you cannot understand it clearly, put [inaudible]. It can also be helpful to invite another listener or two to listen to the passages that you cannot understand. Also the informant will have the opportunity to fill in the passage.

Appendix K

## Sample Letter for Transcript Review

Participant ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Dear (Name of Interviewed Individual):

We are pleased to enclose two copies of the typed transcript of your tape-recorded interview with (name of interviewer) at the Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories (Q.S.O.S.) event, a project of The Alliance for American Quilts, held in October, 2000, at the International Quilt Festival, Houston, Texas. One copy is provided for your review and correction prior to Q.S.O.S. archiving the final copy of your transcribed interview. The second copy is for your records.

When you were interviewed for the Q.S.O.S. project, you were kind enough to give us your written permission to make the contents of your tape-recorded interview and photographs available for scholarly or educational purposes including publications in all media and exhibitions. Among other venues, transcribed interviews will be posted on The Alliance for American Quilts website located at <http://www.centerforthequilt.org/qsos/>. For that reason, we want to be certain that the final copy of your interview's transcription is as free from error as possible.

Please take this opportunity to review the transcription for "fact and tact." This means we ask you to pay particular attention to the way the transcriber interpreted the spellings of individuals' names, cities or towns, and any technical terms. We have had interviewees comment on the way their transcription does not flow in a way they would prefer, however, do keep in mind that the interview process is much different than the stand written word. Do keep in mind that the spirit of the interview is what we are striving to capture and that we are very pleased that your personality manifests itself in this interview exchange.

Mark any errors you find with a red pen (so we are sure to find them) and add a star in the left-hand margin next to the passage containing the error(s) to help us easily locate every correction.

Once you have indicated the corrections you wish made, please sign this document on the line below, indicating that you have reviewed the transcription and marked it for our attention. Please return your corrected copy in the SASE enclosed. The second copy of the transcribed interview is for you to retain for your records. You may find it helpful to mark your corrections on this second copy too.

Thank you so much for your willingness to participate in the Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories project, and to give a few minutes to making sure your tape-recorded interview is transcribed accurately. Insert contact information here.

Very truly yours,

---

Signature of Interviewee                      Date

Address of Informant

Appendix L

## Appendix M: Storage Life of Recording Media (unofficial)

The following information has been provided to give you an understanding of the storage life of the materials we are using.

### Paper

Newspaper	Less than 10 years
Common Stock	About 25 years
Acid Free	300+ years

### Recording Tape

Audiocassette	10-15 years
Reel-to-reel	30-50 years
Digital cassette	2-3 years

### Photographs

Color Slides	
Exposed	2-5 years
Covered	15-30 years
Properly stored	30-100 years
Color Prints	15-30 years
Black & White Negatives	50-100+ years
Black & White Prints	20-50+ years

Videotapes 10-15 years

Film Stock 50+ years

Computer Disks 5-10 years

CD ROMs 15-20 years

## Appendix N

### Archival Supplies and Suppliers

The following list has been compiled as an aid in locating supplies and does not constitute an endorsement of either particular companies or their products.

Conservation Materials, Ltd., 340 Freeport Blvd., Box 2884, Sparks, NV 89431,  
General supplies

Conservation Resources International, L.L.C., 800-H Forbes Place, Springfield, VA 22151,  
Tel: 800-634-6932, [www.conservationresources.com](http://www.conservationresources.com)  
Conservation supplies

Ford Conservation Center, 1326 South 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, Omaha, NE 68105-2044,  
Tel: 402-595-1180  
Conservation services, digital imaging

Gaylord, P.O. Box 4901, Syracuse, N.Y. 13321-4901  
Tel: 800-448-6160, [www.gaylord.com](http://www.gaylord.com)  
Archival and preservation supplies

Light Impressions Corp., P.O. Box 787, Brea, CA 92822-0787  
Tel: 800-828-6216, [www.lightimpressionsdirect.com/](http://www.lightimpressionsdirect.com/)  
General and Photographic supplies

Metal Edge, Inc., 6340 Bandini Blvd., Commerce, CA 90040,  
Tel: 800-862-2228, [www.metaledgeinc.com](http://www.metaledgeinc.com)  
Conservation supplies

Northeast Document Conservation Center, 100 Brickstone Square, Andover MA 01810,  
Tel: 508-470-1010  
Conservation services, preservation microfilming, photograph duplication

Preservation Products Unlimited, 6929 Seward Ave., P.O. Box 29109, Lincoln, NE  
68529, Tel: 402-467-2948  
Conservation supplies, moisture control, pest monitors

Rocky Mountain Conservation Center, 2420 South University Blvd., Denver, CO 80208,  
Tel: 303-7333-2712  
Conservation services

University Products, Inc., P.O. Box 101, Holyoke, MA 10140  
Tel: 800-336-4847, [www.universityproducts.com](http://www.universityproducts.com)  
Conservation supplies



## **Information Resources**

American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)  
[www.nashville.net/aaslh](http://www.nashville.net/aaslh)

American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, 101 Independence Ave, S.E., Washington, D.C.,  
20540-4610  
Tel: 202-707-5510, <http://lcweb.loc.gov/folklife/>

American Institute for Conservation of Historical and Artistic Works, 1717 K Street NW, Suite  
200, Washington D.C. 20006,  
Tel: 202-452-9545, [www.aicstanford.edu/geninfo/](http://www.aicstanford.edu/geninfo/)

The Getty Conservation Institute, 1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90049,  
Tel: 310-440-7325, [www.getty.edu/gci/](http://www.getty.edu/gci/)

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)  
[www.nara.gov/arch/](http://www.nara.gov/arch/)

Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections, P.O. Box 797, Washington, D.C.  
20044-0797 [www.spnhc.org](http://www.spnhc.org)

Midwest Conservation Center, 2400 Third Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55404,  
Tel: 612-870-3120  
Conservation information, education, newsletter

## **Specific Hints on Caring for Quilts**

Great Lakes Quilt Center, Michigan State University Museum Quilt Care  
[www.museum.msu.edu/glqc/quiltcare.html](http://www.museum.msu.edu/glqc/quiltcare.html)

Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, The Care and Preservation of Antique Textiles  
<http://www.hfmgv.org/explore/artifacts/default.asp>

International Quilt Study Center, Quilt Conservation Tips  
[http://www.quiltstudy.org/about\\_us/questions\\_answers/care.html?PHPSESSID=](http://www.quiltstudy.org/about_us/questions_answers/care.html?PHPSESSID=)

Smithsonian Textiles and Quilts  
[www.si.edu/resource/faq/nmah/textiles.htm](http://www.si.edu/resource/faq/nmah/textiles.htm)

## Appendix O: Bibliography

Much of the information for this manual came from source materials used by many field researchers, including:

Edward D. Ives, *The Tape-Recorded Interview: A Manual for Field Workers in Folklore and Oral History*. (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1974)

Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History* (NY: Tyayne Publishers, 1995.)

Other sources that were used are:

Cynthia Stokes Brown, *Like It Was: A Complete Guide to Writing Oral History*, (NY: Teachers & Writers Collaborative, 1988)

Sharon Peters, *California Heritage Quilt Project Phase II: Collecting Oral Interviews*, (CA: California Quilt Project, 1996)

Boy Scouts of America, *Train the Trainer*, (TX: Boy Scouts of America, 1993)

Patrick Murphy, *Eighty Exemplary Ethic Statements*, (IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998)

Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, (NY: Simon and Shuster, 1989)

American Folklore Society, 4350 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 640, Arlington, VA. 22203  
<http://afsnet.org/>

American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20540. Tel: 202-707-1590. Folklife: 202-707-2000. <http://lcweb.loc.gov/folklife/>

Peter T. Bartis, *Folklife and Fieldwork: A Layman's Introduction to Field Techniques*, (Washington, D.C.: American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, 1990)

Peter T. Bartis and Hilary Glatt, *Folklife Sourcebook: A Directory of Folklife Resources in the United States*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (Washington, D.C.: American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, 1994)