Dorothea Bleek Photographs Digital Imaging Project

1. Road Construction Ahead
Decide first digital imaging project will be an album of early 20th century black and white photographs taken by Dorothea Bleek.

2. Reduce Speed Ahead
Scan images (create master TIFF files) and capture data about each image, including notes made by Bleek on the back of the image. Data was initially transcribed by hand and later input into a MS Access database.

3. Winding Road
Learn about metadata principles and Dublin Core through research on the Internet and professional literature, discussions with colleagues and electronic mailing lists such as the EAD and DISA (Digital Imaging Project of South Africa) listservs.

4. Merge
Liaise with staff at the National Library of South Africa (Cape Town) to discuss best practice guidelines for working with image files.

5. Attention
Establish hierarchical file structure and file names.

6. People Working
Create derivative JPEG images: learn to work with scripts for creating thumbnails, enlargements and digital watermarking. Hyperlink the file names to the corresponding records in the MS Access database.
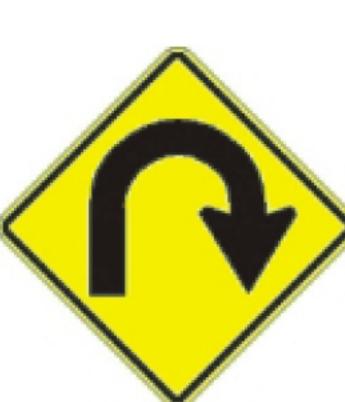
7. Merge
Liaise with teaching and research staff for background on the images and Bleek's life.

8. Two Way Traffic
Discuss progress and problems with colleagues at the University of Natal.

9. U-turn
Quality control is implemented and data capture errors are corrected.

10. Share the Road
Refer to published sources for help deciphering photograph captions in Bleek's handwriting.

11. Detour Ahead
Add additional fields to the MS Access database to record any inter-relationships between the photographs ("Same subject in") as well as selected publication information.

12. Bump
Learning XML proves slow going at first since it is not yet widely used in South Africa and reference tools are expensive. Investigate trial versions of XML Spy and XMetal before deciding to purchase XMetal.

13. Yield
Defer to the experts at UCT Libraries IT about backing up data to tape. Also discuss using PHP (or similar software) to query the MS Access database on the fly.

14. Bump
UCT Libraries IT discovers XMetal is difficult to purchase in South Africa due to confusion over distribution rights but eventually it arrives!

15. Detour Ahead
Learn tape backup procedures and establish best practice guidelines for non-networked tape back-ups.

16. Librarians Crossing!
Meet with other UCT Library staff to discuss the issues of digital imaging and the progress of the project. Learn of other UCT digital imaging projects in the planning stages. Next time, pool resources more!

17. People Working
Design introductory project web page in MS FrontPage software to include background information on Dorothea Bleek and her work. Resources include Bleek's hand-drawn map of San (Bushman) languages and a page from Bleek's notebook that describes taking one of the photographs.

18. U-turn
Problems arise with the relative path file names when transferred to the server. File names are corrected in MS Access database and XML records.

19. Evacuation Route
Discover XML pages cannot display in Netscape and only on Internet Explorer (IE) 5+. Some UCT Libraries staff PCs have IE 4 and cannot view the images. UCT Libraries IT upgrades software and a disclaimer is included on the project web site.

20. Yield
Technical problems arise when the XML pages are not recognised by the server when transferred using MS FrontPage. UCT Libraries IT investigates other FTP programmes.

21. Added Lane
Unveil and discuss the project with the local SAPCON (South African Preservation and Paper Conservation) group for feedback.

22. Go!
Official launch of Dorothea Bleek Digital Imaging Project web site on 11 June 2002!

23. Share the Road
Teach process to others at UCT Libraries and advise on other local projects.