P0052R1 - Generic Scope Guard and RAII Wrapper for the Standard Library

Peter Sommerlad and Andrew L. Sandoval 2016-02-12

Document Number: P0052R1	(update of N4189, N3949, N3830, N3677)	
Date:	2016-02-12	
Project:	Programming Language C++	
Audience:	LWG/LEWG	

1 History

1.1 Changes from P0052R0

In Kona LWG gave a lot of feedback and especially expressed the desire to simplify the constructors and specification by only allowing *nothrow-copyable* RESOURCE and DELETER types. If a reference is required, because they aren't, users are encouraged to pass a std::ref/std::cref wrapper to the factory function instead.

- Simplified constructor specifications by restricting on nothrow copyable types. Facility is intended for simple types anyway. It also avoids the problem of using a type-erased std::function object as the deleter, because it could throw on copy.
- Add some motivation again, to ease review and provide reason for specific API issues.
- Make "Alexandrescu's" "declarative" scope exit variation employing uncaught_-exceptions() counter optional factories to chose or not.
- propose to make it available for standalone implementations and add the header <scope> to corresponding tables.
- editorial adjustments
- re-established operator* for unique_resource.
- overload of make_unique_resource to handle reference_wrapper for resources.
 No overload for reference-wrapped deleter functions is required, because reference_wrapper provides the call forwarding.

1.2 Changes from N4189

• Attempt to address LWG specification issues from Cologne (only learned about those in the week before the deadline from Ville, so not all might be covered).

- specify that the exit function must be either no-throw copy-constructible, or no-throw move-constructible, or held by reference. Stole the wording and implementation from unique_ptr's deleter ctors.
- put both classes in single header <scope>
- specify factory functions for Alexandrescu's 3 scope exit cases for scope_exit.
 Deliberately did't provide similar things for unique_resource.
- remove lengthy motivation and example code, to make paper easier digestible.
- Corrections based on committee feedback in Urbana and Cologne.

1.3 Changes from N3949

- renamed scope_guard to scope_exit and the factory to make_scope_exit. Reason for make_ is to teach users to save the result in a local variable instead of just have a temporary that gets destroyed immediately. Similarly for unique resources, unique_resource, make_unique_resource and make_unique_resource_checked.
- renamed editorially scope_exit::deleter to scope_exit::exit_function.
- changed the factories to use forwarding for the deleter/exit_function but not deduce a reference.
- get rid of invoke's parameter and rename it to reset() and provide a noexcept specification for it.

1.4 Changes from N3830

- rename to unique_resource_t and factory to unique_resource, resp. unique_resource_checked
- provide scope guard functionality through type scope_guard_t and scope_guard factory
- remove multiple-argument case in favor of simpler interface, lambda can deal with complicated release APIs requiring multiple arguments.
- make function/functor position the last argument of the factories for lambdafriendliness.

1.5 Changes from N3677

• Replace all 4 proposed classes with a single class covering all use cases, using variadic templates, as determined in the Fall 2013 LEWG meeting.

• The conscious decision was made to name the factory functions without "make", because they actually do not allocate any resources, like std::make_unique or std::make_shared do

2 Introduction

The Standard Template Library provides RAII (resource acquisition is initialization) classes for managing pointer types, such as std::unique_ptr and std::shared_ptr. This proposal seeks to add a two generic RAII wrappers classes which tie zero or one resource to a clean-up/completion routine which is bound by scope, ensuring execution at scope exit (as the object is destroyed) unless released early or in the case of a single resource: executed early or returned by moving its value.

3 Acknowledgements

- This proposal incorporates what Andrej Alexandrescu described as scope_guard long ago and explained again at C++ Now 2012 ().
- This proposal would not have been possible without the impressive work of Peter Sommerlad who produced the sample implementation during the Fall 2013 committee meetings in Chicago. Peter took what Andrew Sandoval produced for N3677 and demonstrated the possibility of using C++14 features to make a single, general purpose RAII wrapper capable of fulfilling all of the needs presented by the original 4 classes (from N3677) with none of the compromises.
- Gratitude is also owed to members of the LEWG participating in the Fall 2015(Kona), Fall 2014(Urbana), February 2014 (Issaquah) and Fall 2013 (Chicago) meeting for their support, encouragement, and suggestions that have led to this proposal.
- Special thanks and recognition goes to OpenSpan, Inc. (http://www.openspan.com) for supporting the production of this proposal, and for sponsoring Andrew L. Sandoval's first proposal (N3677) and the trip to Chicago for the Fall 2013 LEWG meeting. Note: this version abandons the over-generic version from N3830 and comes back to two classes with one or no resource to be managed.
- Thanks also to members of the mailing lists who gave feedback. Especially Zhihao Yuan, and Ville Voutilainen.
- Special thanks to Daniel Krügler for his deliberate review of the draft version of this paper (D3949).

4 Motivation

While std::unique_ptr can be (mis-)used to keep track of general handle types with a user-specified deleter it can become tedious and error prone. Further argumentation can be found in previous papers. Here are two examples using <cstdio>'s FILE * and POSIX<fcntl.h>'s and <unistd.h>'s int file handles. See the following code examples on using unique_resource with int and FILE * handle types.

Both examples motivate the use case of the automatic conversion to use the return value of the factory as if it was the handle.

```
void demonstrate_unique_resource_with_stdio() {
  const std::string filename = "hello.txt";
    auto file=make_unique_resource(::fopen(filename.c_str(),"w"),&::fclose);
    ::fputs("Hello World!\n", file);
    ASSERT(file.get()!= NULL);
    std::ifstream input { filename };
    std::string line { };
    getline(input, line);
    ASSERT_EQUAL("Hello World!", line);
    getline(input, line);
    ASSERT(input.eof());
  ::unlink(filename.c_str());
    auto file = make_unique_resource_checked(::fopen("nonexistingfile.txt", "r"),
                (FILE*) NULL, &::fclose);
    ASSERT_EQUAL((FILE*)NULL, file.get());
  }
}
```

```
void demontrate_unique_resource_with_POSIX_IO() {
  const std::string filename = "./hello1.txt";
    auto file=make_unique_resource(::open(filename.c_str(),
                     O_CREAT | O_RDWR | O_TRUNC, 0666), &::close);
    ::write(file, "Hello World!\n", 12u);
    ASSERT(file.get() != -1);
  }
  {
    std::ifstream input { filename };
    std::string line { };
    getline(input, line);
    ASSERT_EQUAL("Hello World!", line);
    getline(input, line);
    ASSERT(input.eof());
  ::unlink(filename.c_str());
    auto file = make_unique_resource_checked(::open("nonexistingfile.txt",
                       0_RDONLY), -1, &::close);
    ASSERT_EQUAL(-1, file.get());
  }
}
```

We refer to Andrej Alexandrescu's well-known many presentations as a motivation for scope_exit. Here is a brief example on how to use the 3 proposed factories. One is mandatory, the others are optional but address Andrej's examples.

```
void demo_scope_exit_fail_success(){
  std::ostringstream out{};
  auto lam=[&]{out << "called ";};
  try{
    auto v=make_scope_exit([&]{out << "always ";});
    auto w=make_scope_success([&]{out << "not ";}); // not called
    auto x=make_scope_fail(lam); // called
    throw 42;
}catch(...){
    auto y=make_scope_fail([&]{out << "not ";}); // not called
    auto z=make_scope_success([&]{out << "handled";}); // called
}
ASSERT_EQUAL("called always handled",out.str());
}</pre>
```

5 Impact on the Standard

This proposal is a pure library extension. A new header, <scope> is proposed, but it does not require changes to any standard classes or functions. It does not require any changes

in the core language, and it has been implemented in standard C++ conforming to C++14, resp. draft C++17. Depending on the timing of the acceptance of this proposal, it might go into library fundamentals TS under the namespace std::experimental or directly in the working paper of the standard, once it is open again for future additions.

6 Design Decisions

6.1 General Principles

The following general principles are formulated for unique_resource, and are valid for scope_exit correspondingly.

- Simplicity Using unique_resource should be nearly as simple as using an unwrapped type. The generator functions, cast operator, and accessors all enable this.
- Transparency It should be obvious from a glance what each instance of a unique_resource object does. By binding the resource to it's clean-up routine, the declaration of unique_resource makes its intention clear.
- Resource Conservation and Lifetime Management Using unique_resource makes it possible to "allocate it and forget about it" in the sense that deallocation is always accounted for after the unique_resource has been initialized.
- Exception Safety Exception unwinding is one of the primary reasons that unique_resource is needed. Nevertheless the goal is to introduce a new container that will not throw during construction of the unique_resource itself. However, there are no intentions to provide safeguards for piecemeal construction of resource and deleter. If either fails, no unique_resource will be created, because the factory function unique_resource will not be called. It is not possible to use make_-unique_resource() factory with resource types, functors or lambda capture types as deleter objects where copying might throw.
- Flexibility unique_resource is designed to be flexible, allowing the use of lambdas or existing functions for clean-up of resources.

6.2 Prior Implementations

Please see N3677 from the May 2013 mailing (or http://www.andrewlsandoval.com/scope_exit/) for the previously proposed solution and implementation. Discussion of N3677 in the (Chicago) Fall 2013 LEWG meeting led to the creation of unique_resource and scope_exit with the general agreement that such an implementation would be vastly superior to N3677 and would find favor with the LEWG. Professor Sommerlad produced the implementation backing this proposal during the days following that discussion.

N3677 has a more complete list of other prior implementations.

N3830 provided an alternative approach to allow an arbitrary number of resources which was abandoned due to LEWG feedback

The following issues have been discussed by LEWG already:

- Should there be a companion class for sharing the resource shared_resource? (Peter thinks no. Ville thinks it could be provided later anyway.) LEWG: NO.
- Should scope_exit() and unique_resource::invoke() guard against deleter functions that throw with try deleter(); catch(...) (as now) or not? LEWG: NO, but provide noexcept in detail.
- Does scope_exit need to be move-assignable? LEWG: NO.

The following issues have been recommended by LWG already:

Make it a facility available for free-standing implementations in a new header
 <scope> (<utility> doesn't work, because it is not available for free-standing implementations)

6.3 Open Issues to be Discussed by LEWG

- Should we make the regular constructor of the scope_exit templates private and friend the factory function only? This could prohibit the use as class members, which might sneakily be used to create "destructor" functionality by not writing a destructor.
- Should we provide factories make_scope_success(ef) and make_scope_fail(ef) to enable Alexandrescu's three scope-exiting modes?
- Even though LWG didn't like the conversion operator of unique_resource, the authors believe it is valuable to be able to use the wrapper like it was the original resource, thus easing integration of unique_resource into existing code (see examples above).

7 Technical Specifications

The following formulation is based on inclusion to the draft of the C++ standard. However, if it is decided to go into the Library Fundamentals TS, the position of the texts and the namespaces will have to be adapted accordingly, i.e., instead of namespace std:: we suppose namespace std::experimental::.

7.1 Header

In section 17.6.1.1 Library contents [contents] add an entry to table 14 for the new header <scope>.

In section 17.6.1.3 Freestanding implementations [compliance] add an extra row to table 16 and in section [utilities.general] add the same extra row to table 44

Table 1: table 16 and table 44

	Subclause	
20.nn	Scope Guard Support	<scope></scope>

7.2 Additional sections

Add a a new section to chapter 20 introducing the contents of the header <scope>.

7.3 Scope guard support [scope]

This subclause contains infrastructure for a generic scope guard and RAII (resource acquisition is initialization) resource wrapper.

Header <scope> synopsis

```
namespace std {
template <typename EF>
class scope_exit;
template <typename EF>
scope_exit<EF> make_scope_exit(EF exit_function) noexcept;
template <typename EF>
scope_exit<see below> make_scope_fail(EF exit_function) noexcept;
template <typename EF>
scope_exit<see below> make_scope_success(EF exit_function) noexcept;
template<typename R, typename D>
class unique_resource;
template<typename R, typename D>
unique_resource<R, D>
make_unique_resource( R r, D d) noexcept;
template<typename R, typename D, typename RI=R>
unique_resource<R, D>
make_unique_resource_checked(R r, RI invalid, D d) noexcept;
```

}

The header <scope> defines the class templates scope_exit unique_resource and the factory function templates make_scope_exit(), make_scope_success(), make_scope_fail(), make_unique_resource() and make_unique_resource_checked() to create their instances. The usage of the RAII wrapper assumes that the resource type and the exit functions/deleter provided do not throw exceptions and that they are nothrow_copy_constructible. [Note: A user can use a ref wrapper in cases where the original types might not be copyable or might throw on copying to keep a reference of the corresponding lvalue. — end note]

7.3.1 Class template scope_exit [scope.scope_exit]

```
template <typename EF>
class scope_exit {
public:
  explicit
  scope_exit(EF f) noexcept;
  scope_exit(scope_exit&& rhs) noexcept;
  ~scope_exit();
  void release() noexcept;
  scope_exit(const scope_exit&)=delete;
  scope_exit& operator=(const scope_exit&)=delete;
  scope_exit& operator=(scope_exit&&)=delete;
private:
                       // exposition only
  EF exit_function;
  bool execute_on_destruction {true}; // exposition only
};
```

- ¹ [Note: $scope_exit$ is meant to be a general-purpose scope guard that calls its exit function when a scope is exited. end note]
- The template argument EF shall be a be a CopyConstructible (Table 21) function object type (20.9) for which, given a value f of type EF, the expression f() is valid. Copying an object of type EF shall not throw an exception.
- ³ If the exit function type EF is not a reference type, EF shall satisfy the requirements of Destructible (Table 24).

```
explicit
scope_exit(EF f) noexcept;
```

4 Effects: Constructs a scope_exit object that will call f() on its destruction unless release() was called prior to that.

```
scope_exit(scope_exit&& rhs) noexcept;
```

5 Effects: As if

```
exit_function = rhs.exit_function;
            execute_on_destruction = rhs.execute_on_destruction;
            rhs.release();
   ~scope_exit();
6
        Effects: As if
            if(execute_on_destruction)
              exit_function();
  void release() noexcept;
7
        Effects: execute_on_destruction=false.
           scope_exit factory functions [scope.make_scope_exit]
  The factory functions create scope_exit objects that run exit_function at scope exit
   under the following conditions unless release() was called on the returned object:
   make_scope_exit always, if scope is exited
   make_scope_fail if scope is exited by throwing an exception
  make_scope_success if scope is exited without any exception
<sup>2</sup> [Note: An exception thrown from exit_function when called from scope_exit's de-
  structor causes the program to terminate(). — end note
  template <typename EF>
   scope_exit<EF> make_scope_exit(EF exit_function) noexcept;
3
        The factory function creates a scope_exit object, that runs exit_function at
        scope exit unless release() was called before.
  template <typename EF>
   scope_exit<see below> make_scope_fail(EF exit_function) noexcept;
4
        Returns: As if
            make_scope_exit([=,ec=std::uncaught_exceptions()]
                if (ec < uncaught_exceptions()) exit_function();</pre>
              })
```

7.3.3 Unique resource wrapper [scope.unique_resource]

7.3.4 Class template unique_resource [scope.unique_resource.class]

```
template<typename R, typename D>
class unique_resource {
public:
  unique_resource(R r, D d) noexcept;
  unique_resource(unique_resource&& other) noexcept;
  unique_resource& operator=(unique_resource&& other) noexcept;
  unique_resource& operator=(unique_resource const &)=delete;
  unique_resource(unique_resource const &)=delete;
  ~unique_resource();
  void reset();
  void reset(R r);
  R release() noexcept;
  R const & get() const noexcept;
  operator R const &() const noexcept;
  R operator->() const noexcept;
  see below operator*() const noexcept;
  const D & get_deleter() const noexcept;
private:
  R resource; // exposition only
  D deleter; // exposition only
  bool execute_on_destruction; // exposition only
};
```

- 1 [Note: unique_resource is meant to be a universal RAII wrapper for resource handles provided by an operating system or platform. Typically, such resource handles are of trivial type and come with a factory function and a clean-up or deleter function that do not throw exceptions. The clean-up function together with the result of the factory function is used to create a unique_resource variable, that on destruction will call the clean-up function. Access to the underlying resource handle is achieved through a set of convenience functions or type conversion so that it can be used in place of the wrapped handle value. end note]
- The template argument D shall be a CopyConstructible (Table 21) and Destructible (Table 24)function object type (20.9), for which, given a value d of type D and a value

r of type R, the expression d(r) is valid and does not throw an exception, and copy construction of type D shall not throw an exception.

³ R shall be a CopyConstructible (Table 21), CopyAssignable(Table 23), and Destructible (Table 24) type. Copy construction and move assignment of D and R shall not throw an exception.

```
unique_resource(R r, D d) noexcept;
4
         Effects: constructs a unique_resource from r and d.
5
         Postconditions: get() == r. get_deleter() returns a reference to the stored
         function object d.
   unique_resource(unique_resource&& rhs) noexcept;
   Effects: Move constructs from the value rhs, then calls rhs.release().
   unique_resource& operator=(unique_resource&& other) noexcept;
<sup>7</sup> Effects: Equivalent to
        reset();
        resource = std::move(other.resource);
        deleter = std::move(other.deleter);
        execute_on_destruction = other.execute_on_destruction;
        other.release();
        return *this;
    ~unique_resource();
8 Effects: reset().
   void reset();
<sup>9</sup> Effects: Equivalent to
        if (execute_on_destruction) {
          execute_on_destruction=false;
          get_deleter()(resource);
        }
   void reset(R r) ;
10 Effects: Equivalent to
        reset();
        resource = move(r);
        execute_on_destruction = true;
   R release() noexcept;
^{11} Effects: execute_on_destruction = false.
^{12} Returns: resource
   const R& get() const noexcept ;
    operator const R&() const noexcept;
   R operator->() const noexcept ;
```

```
13 Requires: operator-> is only available if
   is_pointer<R>::value &&
   (is_class<remove_pointer_t<R>>::value || is_union<remove_pointer_t<R>>::value)
   is true.
14 Returns: resource.
   see below operator*() const noexcept ;
15 Requires: operator* is only available if is_pointer<R>::value is true.
16 Returns: *resource. [Note: The return type is equivalent to add_lvalue_reference_-
   t<remove_pointer_t<R>>. — end note]
   const D & get_deleter() const noexcept;
  Returns: deleter
   7.3.5
           Factories for unique_resource [scope.make_unique_resource]
   template<typename R, typename D>
   unique_resource<R,D>
   make_unique_resource( R r, D d) noexcept;
1 Returns: unique_resource<R,D>(r,d)
   template<typename R,typename D>
   unique_resource<R&,D>
   make_unique_resource( reference_wrapper<R> r, D d) noexcept;
2 Returns: unique_resource<R&,D>(r.get(),d)
^3 [Note: There is no need to overload on reference_wrapper for the deleter. — end
   note
   template<typename R, typename D, typename S=R>
   unique_resource<R,D>
   make_unique_resource_checked(R r, S invalid, D d ) noexcept;
4 Requires: If S is the same type as R, R shall be EqualityComparable(Table 17). Other-
   wise, the expression r==invalid shall be valid and return a value that is convertible to
   bool. Effects: As if
       bool mustrelease = bool(r == invalid);
       auto ur= unique_resource<R,D>(r, d);
       if(mustrelease) ur.release();
       return ur;
```

8 Appendix: Example Implementations

This implementation is incomplete and might not conform to the specification.

8.1 Scope Guard Helper

```
#ifndef SCOPE_EXIT_H_
#define SCOPE_EXIT_H_
#include <exception>
#include <utility>
// modeled slightly after Andrescu's talk and article(s)
namespace std {
namespace experimental {
template<typename EF>
struct scope_exit {
        // construction
        explicit scope_exit(EF f) noexcept
        :exit_function {f}
                static_assert(std::is_nothrow_copy_constructible<EF>{}, "must be copyable");
        // move ctor for factory
        scope_exit(scope_exit &&rhs) noexcept
                         :exit_function {rhs.exit_function}
        ,execute_on_destruction_flag {rhs.execute_on_destruction_flag}
                rhs.release();
        // release
        ~scope_exit()
        {
                if (execute_on_destruction_flag)
                         exit_function();
        void release() noexcept {execute_on_destruction_flag=false;}
        scope_exit(scope_exit const &)=delete;
        scope_exit& operator=(scope_exit const &)=delete;
        scope_exit& operator=(scope_exit &&)=delete;
private:
        EF exit_function; // exposition only
        bool execute_on_destruction_flag {true}; // exposition only
};
```

```
template<typename EF>
auto make_scope_exit(EF exit_function) noexcept {
        return scope_exit<EF>(exit_function);
template<typename EF>
auto make_scope_fail(EF exit_function) noexcept {
        return make_scope_exit([=,ec=std::uncaught_exceptions()]()
                  {if (ec < uncaught_exceptions()) exit_function();});</pre>
}
template<typename EF>
auto make_scope_success(EF exit_function) noexcept {
        return make_scope_exit([=,ec=std::uncaught_exceptions()]()
                  {if (!(ec < uncaught_exceptions())) exit_function();});</pre>
}
}
}
#endif /* SCOPE\_EXIT\_H\_*/
```

8.2 Unique Resource

```
#ifndef UNIQUE_RESOURCE_H_
#define UNIQUE_RESOURCE_H_
#include <type_traits>
namespace std{
namespace experimental{
namespace __detail {
template <typename D, typename R, typename=void>
struct provide_operator_arrow_for_pointer_to_class_types{}; // R is non-pointer or
pointer-to-non-class-type
template <typename DERIVED, typename R>
struct provide_operator_arrow_for_pointer_to_class_types<DERIVED, R,
        typename std::enable_if<std::is_pointer<R>::value
                && (
                                 std::is_class<std::remove_pointer_t<R>>::value ||
                                 std::is_union<std::remove_pointer_t<R>>::value )
                >::type >
{
        R operator->() const {
                return static_cast<const DERIVED*>(this)->get();
        }
};
```

```
template <typename D, typename R, typename=void>
struct provide_operator_star_for_pointer_types{}; // R is non-pointer or pointer-to-
non-class-type
template <typename DERIVED, typename R>
struct provide_operator_star_for_pointer_types<DERIVED, R,
         std::enable_if_t<std::is_pointer<R>::value,void*> >
{
        std::add_lvalue_reference_t<std::remove_pointer_t<R>>
        operator*() const noexcept {
                return * (static_cast<const DERIVED*>(this)->get());
        }
};
} // namespace detail
template < class R, class D>
class unique_resource
                 __detail::provide_operator_arrow_for_pointer_to_class_types<
                         unique_resource<R,D>,R>
                , __detail::provide_operator_star_for_pointer_types<unique_resource<R,D>,R>
        static_assert(std::is_nothrow_copy_constructible<R>{}}, "RESOURCE type must not throw
        static_assert(std::is_nothrow_copy_constructible<D>{}},"DELETER type must not throw
public:
        // construction
        explicit
        unique_resource(R r, D d) noexcept
                : resource{r}
                , deleter{d}
        {
        }
        unique_resource(unique_resource &&other) noexcept
        :resource(std::forward<R>(other.resource))
        ,deleter(std::move(other.deleter))
        ,execute_on_destruction{other.execute_on_destruction}
        {
                other.release();
        }
```

unique_resource(unique_resource const &)=delete; // no copies!

```
unique_resource& operator=(unique_resource &&other)
                noexcept(noexcept(unique_resource::reset()))
        {
                reset();
                deleter=std::move(other.deleter);
                resource=std::move(other.resource);
                execute_on_destruction=other.execute_on_destruction;
                other.release();
                return *this;
        unique_resource& operator=(unique_resource const &)=delete;
        ~unique_resource()
                reset();
        }
        void reset()
                if (execute_on_destruction) {
                        execute_on_destruction = false;
                        get_deleter()(resource);
                }
        }
        void reset(R r)
        {
                reset();
                resource = r;
                execute_on_destruction = true;
        R release() noexcept{
                execute_on_destruction = false;
                return get();
        }
        R const & get() const noexcept {
                return resource;
        operator R const &() const noexcept {
                return resource;
        }
        const D &
        get_deleter() const noexcept {
                return deleter;
private:
        R resource; // exposition only
        D deleter; // exposition only
        bool execute_on_destruction = true; // exposition only
};
```

```
//factories
template<class R,class D>
auto
make_unique_resource(R resource, D deleter) noexcept {
        return unique_resource<R, D>(resource,deleter);
}
template < class R, class D>
make_unique_resource(std::reference_wrapper<R> resource, D deleter) noexcept {
        return unique_resource<R&, D>(resource.get(),deleter);
template<class R,class D, class S=R>
{\tt auto}
make_unique_resource_checked(R r, S invalid, D d ) noexcept {
        bool mustrelease = bool(r == invalid);
        auto ur= unique_resource<R,D>(r, d);
        if(mustrelease) ur.release();
        return ur;
}
}}
#endif /* UNIQUE_RESOURCE_H_ */
```