PRESERVING YOUR PERSONAL COLLECTIONS

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Preservation

PHOTOGRAPHS & DOCUMENTS
HANDLING YOUR PHOTOS

- Why wear white gloves?
  - Oils on skin
  - Fingerprint damage
COMMON SENSE STORAGE

• Red rot is decaying leather from 1800s and early 1900s ledgers (often business)
• It is important to wrap these items in archival tissue or put them in their own separate box to prevent getting red rot on other artifacts.
COMMON SENSE STORAGE

• No tape
• This Civil War document was folded and those creases broke over time. Someone was trying to be helpful by taping
COMMON SENSE STORAGE

- No rubber cement
- Rubber cement goes on clear but over time yellows and damages whatever you had pasted
COMMON SENSE STORAGE

• No newspaper wrapping
  • Lignin from wood pulp used in newsprint and similar papers yellows quickly, becomes brittle, and can yellow your artifacts

• No cardboard boxes
  • Also contains lignin
COMMON SENSE STORAGE

- No acidic mats
- Use archival mat board, available at Pat Catan’s and most craft/framing stores
COMMON SENSE STORAGE

- No staples or paper clips
  - Staples and paper clips rust over time
- No rubber bands
  - Rubber bands stick to your artifacts as they decay, leaving sticky rubber
COMMON SENSE STORAGE

- Archival tape
- Archival folders and boxes
- Archival bags
- Acid-free tissue paper
• Be sure to include identifications on the back of photographs.
• Properly store them and make sure someone knows what they are (value as a family record)
• Make copies of the photos for other family to enjoy
• Copies may be used to write identifications on
  • This is extremely helpful at Family Reunions to ask family members to write in any identifications, dates, or locations for your photographs
WHERE DO YOU STORE PHOTOGRAPHS?

- Group by date, person, or topic in folders
- Place folders within a document box
- Inventories are helpful
- Include any additional biographical or genealogical information in the front of the box
HOW DO YOU STORE EARLY PHOTOGRAPHS?

- Find out what type of photograph you have
- Daguerreotype, tintype, ambrotype, glass plate negative
- Care for the photo and its case
DAGUERREOTYPE

- 1839-1860
- Shiny like a mirror
- Must tilt the photo to see it clearly
- These are one-of-a-kind photographs
- There is no negative to make additional copies
AMBROTYPE

- 1850s-1860s
- Similar to the Daguerreotype because it is a positive
- Photo on glass
- Looks like a negative until placed on a dark background
- More expensive than tintype, which would become more popular and affordable.
TINTYPE

- 1850s-1900s
- Tin metal used as base
- Subject to rust and damage from frames/cases surrounding it
- Should be stored in archival envelopes to prevent further handling damage
- Still popular into the 1920s and 1930s
ALBUMEN PRINTS

- Uses egg white in the emulsion
- Very sensitive to light, fade easily
- Can be photo prints, CDV (3x5) or cabinet cards (5x7)
- Carte-de-visite (CDV) were popular in the 1860s especially for soldiers
- Cabinet cards were larger and popular from 1870s-1900.
- Both CDV and Cabinet cards are photos on paper mounted to thick cards
Ph 1867.3
Ambrotype of woman
Sarah Naive Bennett
1852

Sarah Naive Bennett
wife of
Oliver Frank Bennett
mother of
Henry R. Bennett
Age 40
1862

Gift:

3 PHOTOGRAPHS--Daguerreotypes. G.P. Bennett
4 PHOTOGRAPHS--Ambrotypes. Frank Reed
no case.
5 PHOTOGRAPHS--Ambrotypes. (Perotype) cardboard.
6 PHOTOGRAPHS--Tintypes.
7 PH
8 PH

343-4
WHERE DO YOU STORE PHOTOGRAPHS?

- Best to store on the main floor
- Attic = heat in summer
- Basement = moist conditions
- Do your best to store them in 60-70 degree 50% humid conditions
- Why humidity? Too dry = brittle photos and documents
DIGITIZING YOUR IMAGES

- **Scanner**
  - Most only offer 8x10 scanners
  - Can get a portable scanner that stitches images together

- **Lightbox**
  - Affordable 8x10 or 11x14 to light your glass plates or film negatives
  - Then use digital camera to capture image, load into your computer and turn into positives.

- **Digital Camera on a Copy Stand**
  - Mount your camera directly above a photo or lightbox
  - Point and shoot has low resolution
  - DSLR has higher quality
Preserving TEXTILES
STORAGE

- Never seal your bag
- Archival boxes for dress
- Can hang durable garments on hangers (not metal)
- If you have to fold, limit the number
- Rugs and blankets are best rolled
- Garments are best stored flat
Preserving

HOME MOVIES & FILMS
ACETATE FILM DECAY

- Acetate films decay over time, breaking down and producing dangerous acidic conditions within the film can.
- Once a film reaches a certain acidity at its auto-catalytic point, the process accelerates until the film is completely lost.
- It is easy to tell if the films have "vinegar syndrome" (when a film is highly acidic and starting to decay).
Example of deterioration from an 1897 Edison nitrate film.
WHO CAN TRANSFER FILMS?

- Several online places offer services
- 4Starr Video in Massillon (330-830-0022)
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Timeliness
- Safe conditions - protect other collections
- Moving picture films and film photo negatives
WHAT PROGRESS HAS MASSMU MADE?

Moving picture film

- 89 films in collection
- All nitrate film
- 70 have been digitized
- More than 45 in freezer at 10 degrees
- More freezer space needed
- Many of these films available on our YouTube channel
Films of Charles and Lucy Myers, 1938-1940

Massillon Museum

Published on Dec 21, 2012
Charles and Lucy Myers took films throughout the years 1938-1940 in Massillon, Ohio, showing life in the town from farms to football fields.

Legacy of Steel: Interviews with steel workers of Stark County, Ohio (2004) by Massillon Museum
220 views

Skating on the Reservoir, Massillon, Ohio 1935 by Massillon Museum
773 views

Massillon: Your City at Work and Play 1940 by Massillon Museum
206 views

Massillon Museum 1972 Sidewalk Sale by Massillon Museum
270 views
WHAT PROGRESS HAS MASSMU MADE?

Massillon Independent photo negatives

- Photos from the newspaper taken 1946-1989
- 40,000 negatives total
- Volunteer Mark Pitocco has digitized more than 8,000 (20% complete)
- These images have been shared in a physical exhibit, a virtual exhibit, and on Facebook