

**PRESERVATION
OF
FAMILY COLLECTIONS**

Laryssa Duncan, Cambria County Library



Preservation of Family Collections

• Where do I begin?

Assess the contents of your collections

Do you have

- Photographs?
- Documents?
- Objects?

➤ **Each type of materials have different storage and preservation needs, but they do have a few things in common...**

Environment & Storage

- ❑ **Two major factors: environment and storage.**
- ❑ **Environmental factors such as temperature, humidity, dirt/dust and pests can play a role in the degradation of materials.**
- ❑ **Improper storage is also another factor. Not storing materials in a container or storing materials in acidic containers and containers that are too small or too big can also be damaging.**

Environmental Factors

- ❑ **Always try to store your materials in a cool, dry place.**
- ❑ **Do not store materials in places that have large fluctuations in heat and humidity such as attics, basements, garages or outbuildings. This can promote mold and mildew growth, also cause the materials to expand and contract.**
- ❑ **These places can also expose materials to harmful pests such as insects and rodents.**

Environmental Factors con't...

- **Also bird and rodent droppings that can be harmful to the materials and humans that come in contact with them.**

Storage

- ❑ **Store materials in containers that fit properly (not too big or too small) and that provide an adequate barrier to dirt and dust.**
- ❑ **Acid-free containers are the best choice, especially for storing documents and other paper-based materials.**
- ❑ **Avoid plastic containers—they do not allow air to circulate and contain harmful off-gases.**

Storage Con't...

- ❑ **Try to store photographs, documents and objects separately. They each have their own unique storage needs.**
- ❑ **Do not store larger objects on top of or next to smaller objects.**

Photographs



Dos & Don'ts

Do

- ❑ **Make sure they have proper support inside the container so they will not bend or curl.**
- ❑ **Choose a photo album without adhesive.**
- ❑ **Use photo corners.**

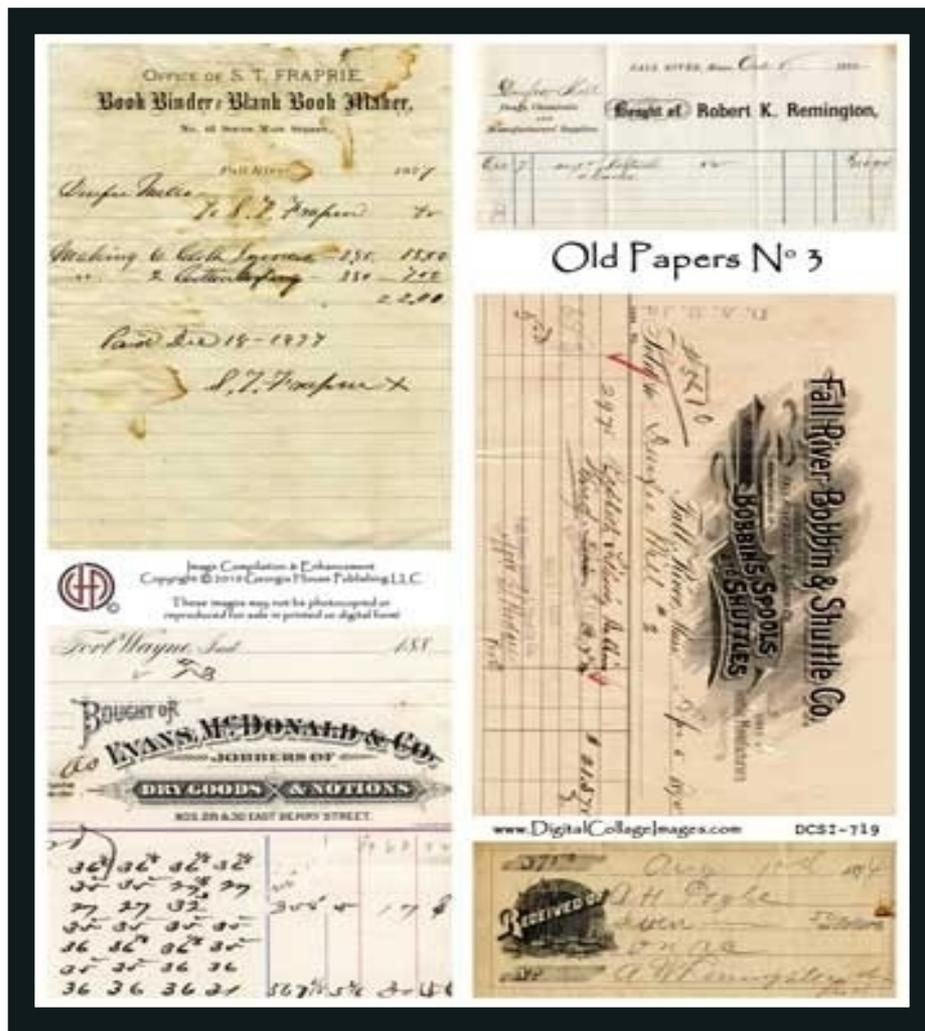
Don't

- ❑ **Store them in a shoeboxes.**
- ❑ **Store large photos upright.**
- ❑ **Expose them to long periods of light, especially sunlight.**

Storage Examples



Documents



Dos & Don'ts

Do

- **Store docs in acid-free folders or sleeves. This will give them protection and support.**
- **If docs are too large for folders, place layers of buffer paper in between.**

Don't

- **Store docs upright unsupported.**
- **Subject them to prolonged periods of exposure to light.**
- **Store acidic paper next to non-acidic paper.**

Storage Examples



Objects



Dos & Don'ts

Dos

- Store large objects individually.**
- Provide proper support when storing small objects together.**
- Use acid free wrapping.**

Don'ts

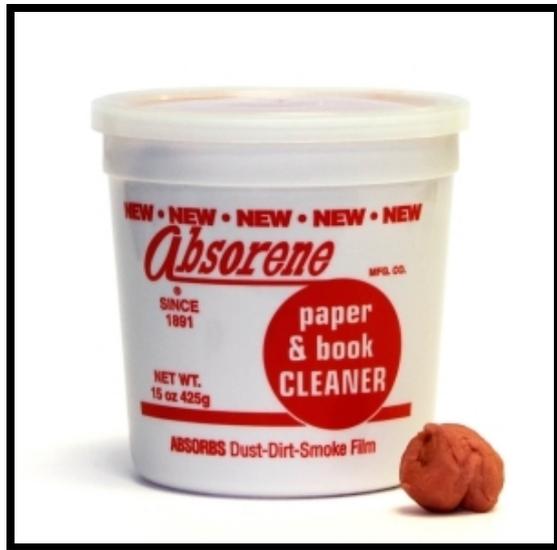
- Use newspaper to wrap objects.**
- Use bubble wrap or foam peanuts.**
- Store without support in between each object.**

Storage Examples



Cleaning Tools

- **Low-impact, safe cleaning without abrasives or harsh chemicals:**



Cleaning Tools con't



Microfiber cloth



Anti-static brushes

Resources

Supplies

- Talas**
<http://www.talasonline.com/>
- Lineco**
<http://www.lineco.com/>
- Michaels**
<http://www.michaels.com/>
- Amazon**
<https://www.amazon.com/>

Organizations

- CCAHA**
<http://www.ccaha.org/>
- NEDCC**
<https://www.nedcc.org/>
- Library of Congress**
<http://www.loc.gov/preservation/>