Preserving Family Treasures:
Personal Papers, Photos, Scrapbooks, and More

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Outline and Learning Objectives

- **Collection Evaluation**
  - Describe and assess archival materials found in family collections

- **Steps to Identify, Organize, Protect and Make Available**
  - Identify arrangement methods
  - Review storage supply by format
  - Discuss special preservation cases

- **Home Storage Best Practices**
  - Summarize causes of deterioration
  - Suggest safer storage practices
What do I do with all this stuff?
What do I do with all this stuff?

Evaluate

- Importance
  - Sentimental
  - Factually Important
  - Financially Valuable
- Condition
- Available Storage
Identify, Organize, Protect, Make Available
IDENTIFY, Organize, Protect, Make Available

Stage the collection
Survey the collection
Purchase supplies
Organize the collection
Rehouse the materials
Create a guide

Where to begin?
Identify, ORGANIZE, Protect, Make Available

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Archival Supply Companies

- Gaylord Archival
  - www.gaylord.com

- Hollinger Metal Edge
  - www.hollingermetaledge.com

- Talas
  - www.talasonline.com

- University Products
  - www.universityproducts.com
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Look For

- Acid-free
- Lignin-free
- Buffered
- Photographic Activity Test (P.A.T)
- Safe Plastics
  - Avoid polyvinyl chloride (PVC)
  - Use polyester, polyethylene or polypropylene
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• Processing
  • Preparing archival materials for use

• Provenance
  • The origin, custody and ownership of an item or collection

• Original Order
  • The organization and sequence of records established by the creator of the records
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• Record Group
  • A collection of records that share the same provenance or were created by the same person or company

• Series within a Record Group
  • File units or documents arranged as a unit because they relate to a particular subject or function, result from the same activity or have a particular form
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Sample Organization:

Gertrude Smith Papers
Series 1: Correspondence
  Subseries: Personal
  Subseries: Professional
Series 2: Vital Documents
  Subseries: Licenses
  Subseries: Deeds
  Subseries: Military Papers
Series 3: Photographs
  Subseries: Prints
  Subseries: Photo Albums
Series 4: Legacy Media
Identify, Organize, PROTECT, Make Available

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Staples
Identify, Organize, PROTECT, Make Available

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Tools
Identify, Organize, PROTECT, Make Available

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Flat Documents

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Identify, Organize, PROTECT, Make Available

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Newsprint
Identify, Organize, PROTECT, Make Available

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Scrapbooks
Identify, Organize, PROTECT, Make Available

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Scrapbooks
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Photographic Prints

universityproducts.com; talas.com
Identify, Organize, PROTECT, Make Available

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Labeling Photographs
Identify, Organize, PROTECT, Make Available

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Photo Albums

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Special Concerns
Identify, Organize, PROTECT, Make Available

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Legacy Media
Identify, Organize, PROTECT, Make Available

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Labeling
Identify, Organize, PROTECT, Make Available

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Labeling
Strengthen the collection
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Identify, Organize, Protect, MAKE AVAILABLE

Elements of a Collection Guide

- Name of the Collection (Record Group)
- Date Span
- Collection Creator Information
- Collection Information – box(es)
- Collection Information – people
- Provenance
- Box Description (Box 1)
- Folder level description (Box 1) (optional)
- Item-level description (Box 1) (optional)
Home Storage Environment

- Temperature and Humidity
  - Temperature around 65-70 degrees
  - Humidity around 35-45%
- Light
- Dirt and Dust
- Water
Sources and Resources

• Connecting to Collections Care
  • https://connectingtocollections.org/

• History Nebraska – Gerald Ford Conservation Center
  • https://history.nebraska.gov/conservation-center/

• Library of Congress
  • https://www.loc.gov/preservation/about/faqs/index.html

• National Archives and Records Center
  • https://www.archives.gov/preservation/family-archives

• Northeast Document Conservation Center
  • https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/overview

• Creating Family Archives by Margaret Note
  • https://mysaa.archivists.org/productdetails?id=a1B0b00000fsoIKEAU