



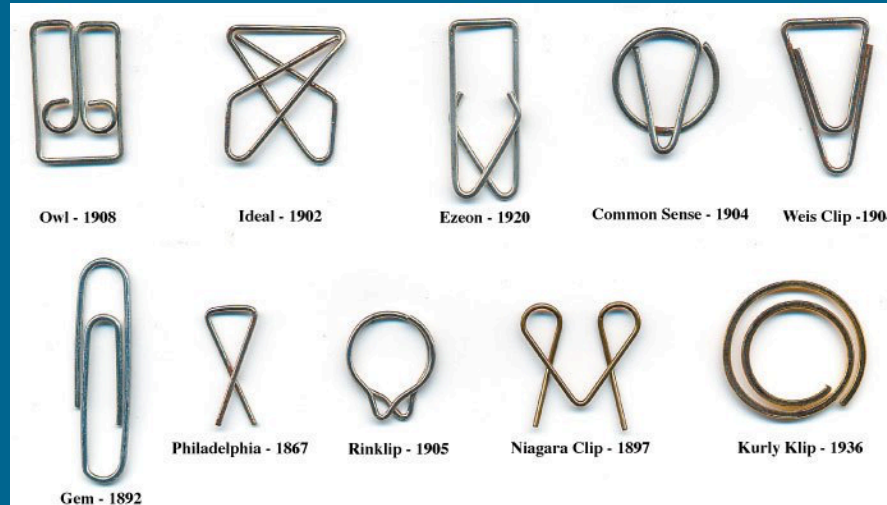
Caring for Archives: Fundamentals for Everyone



Fletcher Durant
University of Florida
Smathers Libraries



Let's Talk About Paper Clips and Staples



Source: Paper Clips Throughout History, pietistschoolman.com

Mantras for Preservation

Preservation is for access

Collection Care is a process, not an action

Good intentions need good practices

Every institution can improve

There is no one right way

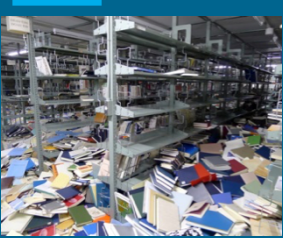
Risk Management



Source: "Balancing Act", Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History



Ten agents of Deterioration



Physical Forces



Water



Fire



Criminals and
Vandals



Contaminants



Pests



Light



Incorrect
Temperature



Incorrect
Humidity



Dissociation

Know your threats

Earthquake zones

Tornado alley

Flood zones

Hurricanes

Motion picture films

Oral histories

Photo morgues



Source: NASA

Disaster Plans

dPlan: <http://www.dplan.org/>

National Park Service Conserv-O-Gram:

<https://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/conserveogram/21-09.pdf>

C2C Webinars: <http://www.connectingtocollections.org/archiveresponseplan/>

National Heritage Responders: 24/7/365 call (202) 661-8068

<http://www.conservation-us.org/emergencies/national-heritage-responders>

Mess Kits: <http://www.smith.edu/libraries/info/preservation/messkits>

NYU's Recovery Procedures: http://guides.nyu.edu/ld.php?content_id=22309316

Collections Environment

The Ideal:

68 F (50F if high density storage)

35-55% RH

The Sustainable Environment

Avoid large daily swings, accept seasonal shifts (72F in summer, 66 in winter)

Keep RH below 65% to inhibit mold growth and pests and above 30% RH for vulnerable media

Environmental Monitoring

Understand collection risks

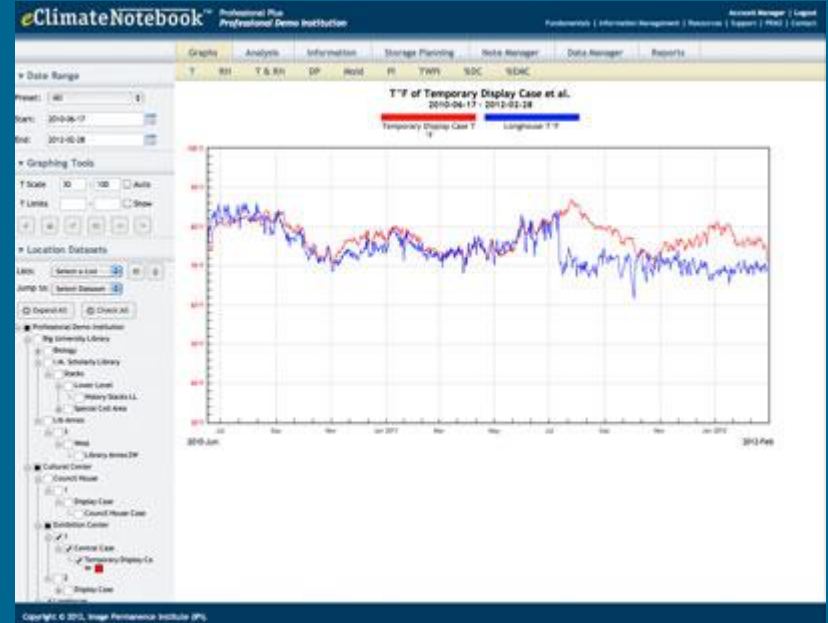
Plan for better storage arrangements

Avoid mold growth

Know when something breaks or changes.



Data Loggers



<https://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/conserveogram/03-03.pdf>

Integrated Pest Management

- Preventative long-term, low-toxicity pest control
- Focus on monitoring and proactively making spaces inhospitable
 - Reduce routes of entry
 - Control environment
 - Eliminate water sources
 - Reduce food sources
 - House plants, food waste, etc.
 - Routine housekeeping
 - Check **ALL** incoming collections

A photograph of a dense forest with sunlight streaming through the trees, creating a bright, glowing effect. The sun is positioned in the upper center, with rays of light radiating outwards. The trees are tall and slender, with green foliage visible in the background. The ground is covered in ferns and other forest floor vegetation.

**Light is your
enemy.**

But light is usually not that big a deal in archives

Light=Energy and energy can damage paper

- Blueprints

- Color photographs

- Plastics

- Colored paper

- Some inks

But light is usually not that big a deal in archives

In archives, light is primarily a threat to exhibits

- Avoid direct exposure of daylight to exhibit cases

- Rotate exhibits regularly

- Use replicas or surrogates where possible

Use curtains on windows

Storage Furniture



Never store collections on the floor

Powder-coated steel shelves. Avoid wood/fiberboard.

Shelves that fit your repository's standard box sizes.

Don't buy library shelving for archival boxes.

Shelves that maximize the useable square footage for storage.

Compact shelving is great.

Floor loads: 150 pounds per sq. ft

300 psf for compact shelving.

Housings

Record storage boxes? Manuscript boxes? Letter size or legal size? Paige or Hollinger boxes?

Acid free folders. Acid free boxes.

Every item in a folder. Every folder in a box or drawer.

Items fit the folders. Folders fit the box/ drawer.



Sample Selection of Standard Housings

Record Storage Box

Document Box

16x20x3" flat box

20x24x3" flat box

32x42x3" flat file cabinet

40x60x3" flat file cabinet

Policies

Policies should be put into place to guide and protect staff, collections, patrons, and the institution. They should be written down and available to all staff members. Policies can be bent or broken, but can also serve as justification in difficult decisions.

Security

Loans and Exhibitions

Handling

Event Planning and Space Rentals

Collection Development

Security

Where are collections stored?

Who has access to Collection Storage areas?

When do they have access?

How are collections physically secured?

Is the reading room staffed?

Are researchers allowed to bring bags and coats to their workspaces?

Is there a secure area for researchers to leave their bags and coats?

Is there an internal list of high value items?

Is it checked regularly against actual holdings?

Loans and Exhibits

Long-term or permanent exhibitions can severely damage collections.

Rotate exhibits or use facsimiles

Suggested exhibition lighting levels are 100 lux or lower. Light sensitive materials (blueprints, color photographs, colored papers, etc.) should be displayed at 50 lux or lower.

Loans and Exhibits

For outgoing loans

Signed loan agreement with responsible party

Proof of wall to wall insurance

AAM Facilities Report

Photographs of before and after condition

Handling

Wash hands before handling materials

One folder out at a time

No pens in collection areas

Oversize items should never be moved without assistance.

Do not write, lean, or place any object on the surface of any collection materials

No eating, drinking, or smoking near collections

Use gloves only to handle sensitive formats like photographs, films, and negatives

Moving Collections

Always

Be

Carting



Events and Space Rentals



Will collections be out and/or storage areas secure?

How to keep food out of collection areas?

Planning for garbage removal and clean-up immediately following event.

Collection Development Policy

Serves as a guide to preservation priorities.

Don't spend time/money/effort on materials that are not accessioned

Collection Storage Is Not for Clutter

Collection storage areas are for collections

Remove clutter and debris

Discard outdated supplies and materials

Return or dispose of deaccessioned/never
accessioned items

Move office supplies to other areas



Source: Wikimedia Commons

The Big NO'S

NO Food

NO Hanging Folders

NO Tape

NO Post-It Notes on Items

NO Staples or Paper-Clips (But you don't have to remove them either)

NO Stacking Boxes More Than 4 High

NO Thinking that the Problem Will Solve Itself

Every item a folder

Acid-free folder stock

Letter- or Legal-size to fit box (and to fit items)

Don't over fill folders

25-50 leaves per folder

Keep contents neat to avoid dog-ears and tears

Unfold and unroll documents when possible



Every Folder a Box

Acid-free box

Sized to fit folders/items

Don't over-fill boxes

Use “spacers” to prevent slumping



Source: Library of Congress

Every Box on a Shelf

Boxes should have permanent, labeled locations

Do not store on floors

Boxes should fit completely and securely on shelves. No overhang.

Do not stack more than 4 high

Do not stack different sized boxes



Source: Library of Congress

Oversize Flat Items

Map cases with 2" or 3" drawers

Every item/collection in labeled folders

Folders should be either full-drawer or half-drawer size

Avoid other sizes to prevent lumps and bumps

Leave ½-inch free at top of each drawer

Requires 2+ staff to retrieve items



Source: McMurray Stern

Oversize Rolled Items

Roll around acid-free core/tube

Wrap outside of item with paper or polyester

Tie with cotton tape/ribbon

Be sure to label it!

Rolled tubes can be stored upright or flat



Source: STASHC/NYU Libraries

Photographs and Sheet Film

Store paper sleeves or polyester sleeves

Keep cool and dry

Use gloves when handling media



Source: Vancouver Archives

Photographs and Sheet Film

Nitrate sheet film, 1910-1950

<https://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/MHI/AppendM.pdf>

Acetate sheet film, 1925-1970s or 80s

Vinegar Syndrome

Glass plate negatives, 1850-1920s

Fragile, individual four-flap paper wrappers

Store on edge with lots of padding

Slides in polyester sleeve pages or boxes



Source: Vancouver Archives

Film Reels

House in archival plastic cans and on plastic cores.

Include leader if possible

Label can and leader

Store flat

Keep cool and dry

Nitrate film reels, 1895-1950

More than 25lbs is Federally regulated

Acetate film reels, 1922-?

Microfilm may be acetate until ca. 1990



Source: Wikimedia Commons

A/V Tapes and Magnetic Media

Store fully rewound

Store standing on edge



Source: Wikimedia Commons

Books, Scrapbooks, and Bound Materials

Store books in archival collections spine down

In a folder

Store scrapbooks flat in a box



Source: Nate Stelner, Flickr

Framed Art and Photographs



Source: Wikimedia Commons

If possible, hang on wall or remove frame and glazing

If frame has value, store framed item separately

DO NOT STORE GLASS WITH OTHER COLLECTION ITEMS

Textiles

Store flat in acid-free box

Support and wrap in acid-free tissue



Source: National Postal Museum

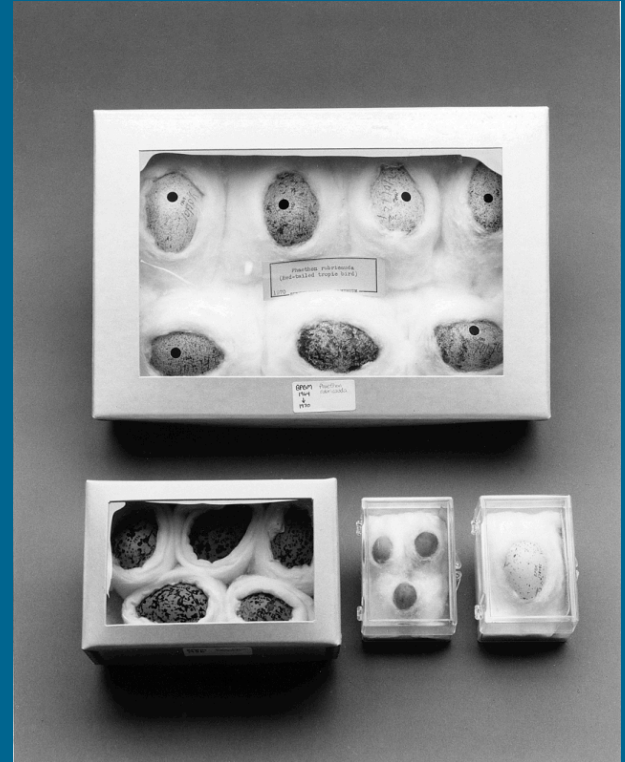
Realia, Objects, and 3-D Artifacts

Problematic, individualized solutions

Store separately from paper-based collections

<http://stashc.com/>

<http://www.re-org.info/>



Source: STASHC/Bishop Museum

Digital Preservation

“3-2-1 Rule”

- Make 3 copies

- Store on 2 different media types

- Put 1 in a different location

Be consistent and descriptive in naming files and folders

- If associated with archival collection be sure to include accession number

The cloud can be a piece of your preservation plan

- But be aware and wary of its limits

Questions?

Fletcher Durant
Preservation Librarian
University of Florida Smathers Libraries
fdurant@ufl.edu