**Conserving Your Family Records Source Sheet No. 40**

The City Archives carries out conservation treatments on records in its collections. Some of the basic techniques and processes that the Archives’ conservators use can be carried out at home by anyone who is interested in preserving their own family’s collections of archival materials. Here we provide some tips on how to care for and conserve these items in an archival standard scrapbook.

**Making an Archival Quality Scrapbook**

Don’t let your precious memories fade away. Because scrapbooks are often a mixed collection of items they can sometimes be difficult to assemble and store. Here are a few simple tips to help your newspaper clippings, ticket stubs, photographs and prize-winning blue ribbon happily coexist.

**Choosing a Suitable Format**

* Acid Free - if you are choosing a pre-fabricated scrapbook it is important that it be constructed from acid free materials, including both the cover and the pages.
* Expandable Binding – as your collection grows, so must your scrapbook. Many pre-fabricated scrapbooks have a fixed binding that will break down as items are added and the book’s bulk increases.
* Books with fixed bindings are often most suitable when it is only sheets of paper or other two-dimensional objects that are being added. Even then, it is important to only add items to one side of each scrapbook page. It is also a good idea to leave every few pages blank to insure the additions will not cause the book to bulge and damage the binding.

**Storage**

* Storing your scrapbook – it best to store your book flat on its back rather than up on its end. The additional weight of your collection can cause the pages to sag and eventually tear. An acid free box of similar size will give your scrapbook additional protection from light and dust. If the book must be stored upright on its end, make sure it stands between like sized books to give additional support.
* Find a place that is cool and dry – avoid your garage or your garden shed.

**Putting it all Together**

* Attaching your Collection – many of the things we would typically use to attach items to a page can be very harmful. Scotch™ tape, staples, glue, pins and paperclips are all items that can be detrimental to your collection.
* Most stationary and art supply stores will carry a variety of materials that should be used instead. Look for archival quality document repair tape or acid free plastic tapes. Other acceptable items include acid free photo mount corners, inert plastic paper clips and acid free adhesives.
* Avoid staples and any other metal materials as they can rust if high humidity is introduced to the environment.

**Recommendations and Solutions**

* Consider a three-ring binder with acid free plastic sleeves and pages. This will make for easy additions, changes and necessary expansion. Your binder or group of binders can then grow along with your collection.
* Store you scrapbook somewhere central in your home where fluctuations in environmental conditions are kept to a minimum.
* Purchase only acid free materials for your scrapbook. These are commonly available at most stationary, art and photographic supply stores.
* Remember - no pins, no staples, no paper clips and no acidic tapes or adhesives.

**Further Information**

**City Archives:** Topham Mall, off Currie and Waymouth Streets, Adelaide 5000

**Counter / telephone enquiries:** 9**.**00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

**Search Room open for public research:**10.00 am to 4.00 pm Tuesday to Thursday

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