

The California Preservation Program
Presents

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PRESERVATION BEST PRACTICES

SESSION 3: COLLECTIONS CARE: HANDLING, ACCESS, STORAGE, AND EXHIBITION

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Today

- Handling
- Access
- Storage
- Exhibition





Handling and Access

Poll



Handling and Access: Getting Started

There are written handling guidelines for both staff and researchers



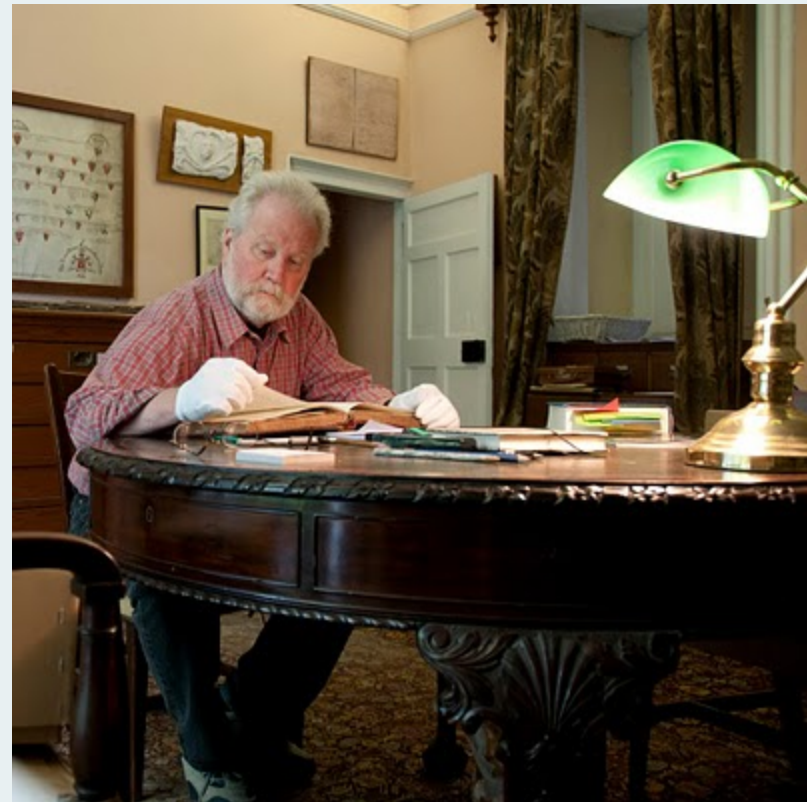
Handling Procedures

□ Staff

- ▣ Handling
- ▣ Moving
- ▣ Carts
- ▣ Transportation

□ Researchers

- ▣ pencils
- ▣ limit # items
- ▣ gloves with photographs
- ▣ lockers
- ▣ monitor



sherwords.blogspot.com

Mishandling



Handling and Access: Getting Started

Preparation for Handling Objects

- ❑ Wash hands and dry thoroughly
- ❑ Remove jewelry (bracelets, rings, large belt buckles, etc.) and name badges.
- ❑ Remove items from top pockets



Handling and Access: Getting Started

Gloves are available for use as necessary



<http://www.sharifphotographic.co.uk>

Handling and Access: Getting Started

Carts are available to move collections throughout the building



Courtesy Athenaeum of Philadelphia

Handling and Access: Getting Started



Landing spaces are available in collections storage spaces to aid in retrieval and return to storage

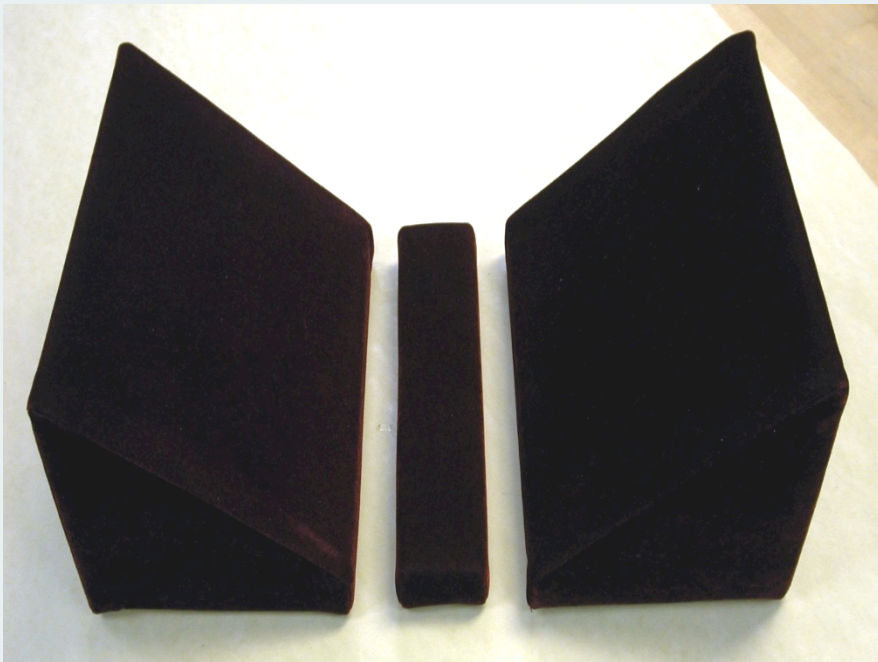
Handling and Access: Getting Started

Staff members are trained in appropriate handling techniques



Handling and Access: Good

Mounts and supports are available to staff and researchers using the collections



Handling and Access: Good

- A system is in place for reporting and recording damage to collections materials
- Enclosures are marked for collections that are fragile and/or require special handling instructions
- Only specially trained staff move collections materials
- Access to fragile materials is limited until rehousing or conservation treatment can be completed

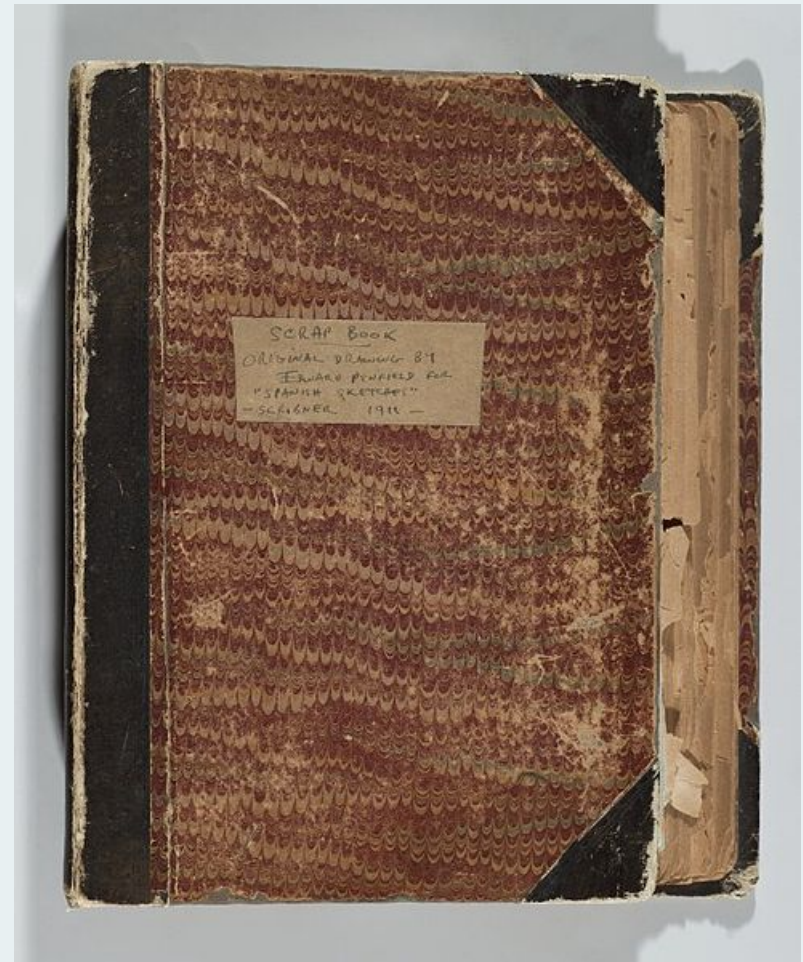


Image via the Brooklyn Museum

Handling and Access: Better

- ▣ Collections materials are in protective enclosures for transportation, handling, and research
- ▣ Conservators and art handlers are consulted and retained for moving large, awkward, or particularly fragile materials



Archival Polyester L-Velopes,
<http://www.universityproducts.com>



Collections Storage

Poll



Collections Storage: Getting Started



There is sufficient
space to store all
collections materials
according to
established standards

Image by keightdee, www.flickr.com



Collections Storage: Getting Started

- ▣ Shelving is in place and all collections are stored at least 3 inches off the floor
- ▣ Non-collections materials are not stored with collections materials



Collections Storage: Getting Started

Collections are housed using conservation-grade materials

What does “archival” really mean?

- Buzz words to look for:
 - Acid-free
 - Lignin-free
 - Buffered



Photograph courtesy of Joan Irving, Winterthur

Collections Storage: Getting Started

Avoid inappropriate fasteners and adhesives



Collections Storage: Getting Started



- ▣ Aisles are of sufficient width and are clear of collections materials
- ▣ Materials can easily be retrieved from shelving and necessary step stools and ladders are available

<http://www.archives.gov/preservation/storage/underground-facilities.html>

Collections Storage: Good

- Storage furniture is made from powder coated steel and accommodates collections of various sizes and shapes (rolled, oversized)

- There is room for collections growth



www.museum.spacesaver.com

- Subject specialists and conservators are consulted regarding optimal storage for collections materials

Collections Storage: Good

Collections materials are stored by format



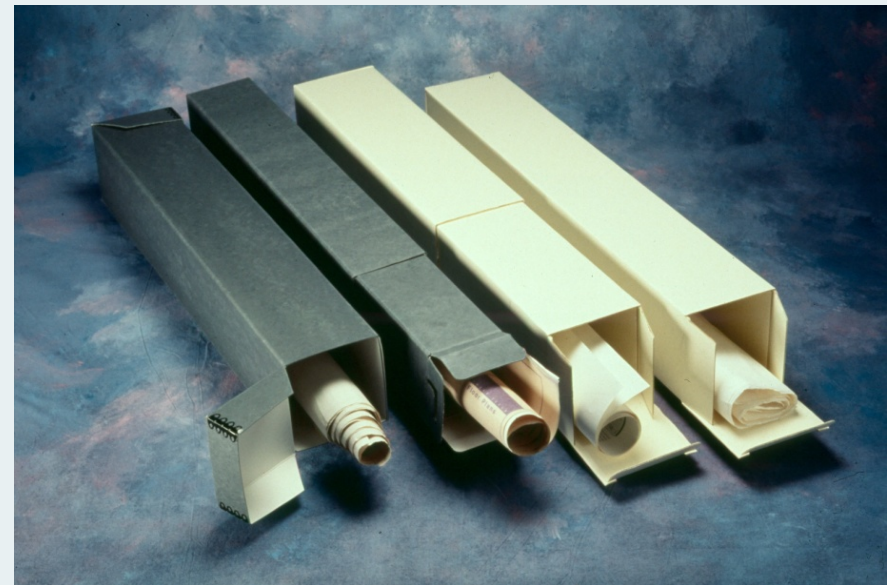
Images from the National Film and Sound Archive, Australia

Collections Storage: Good

Collections housing is refined and all materials are secure within boxes/enclosures



University Museum of
Archeology and Anthropology



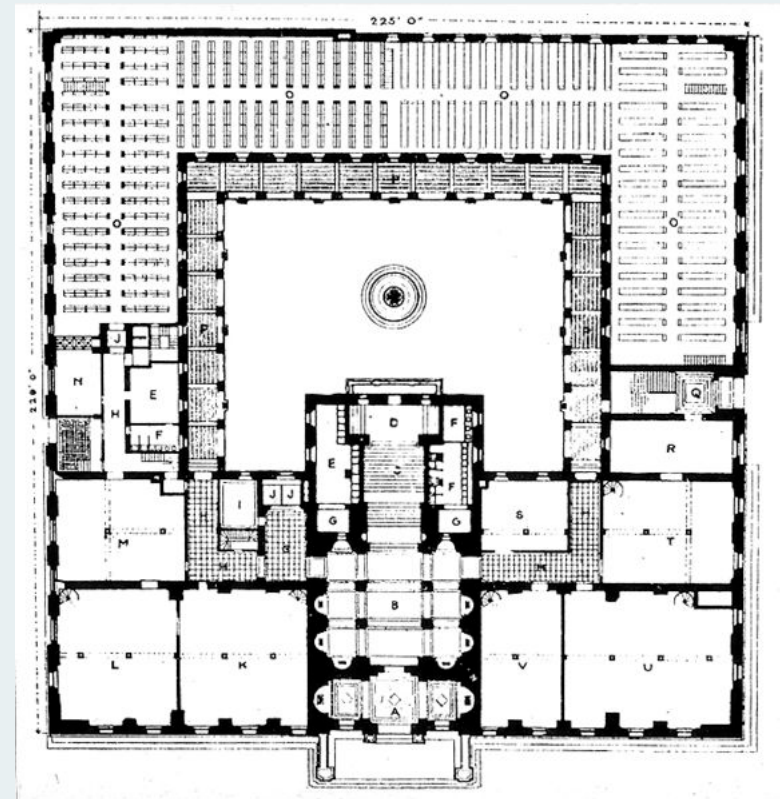
Single Roll Storage Boxes,
www.hollingermetalede.com



Photographs courtesy of Joan Irving, Winterthur

Collections Storage: Better

- ▣ Collections pieces are stored on or with specialized mounts that can be used for access and/or exhibition
- ▣ A space plan has been conducted to ensure that the space is being used at its maximum capacity



Collections Storage: Better

- Specialized storage environments are in place for collections materials with specialized needs
- Storage enclosures are regularly inspected to ensure they are still meeting the needs of the collections



Image via the National Park Service



Exhibition

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Exhibition: Getting Started



rowanwilliams.archbishopofcanterbury.org

- Materials that are fragile or in poor condition are not placed on exhibition
- Only conservation-grade materials are used for exhibit mounts and mounts fully support the object on exhibit

Exhibition: Getting Started

- ❑ Food and drink are not permitted in exhibition areas and galleries are not used as special events spaces
- ❑ Exhibit cases are secure and are not harmful to collections materials
- ❑ Sensitive materials on exhibition are regularly rotated



Exhibition: Good



Gleeson Library at USF, www.flickr.com

- ▣ Materials on exhibit are regularly checked for condition during the exhibition period
- ▣ Advice regarding mounts and appropriate exhibition methods is sought from qualified specialists
- ▣ Lighting levels can be, and are, adjusted to meet the needs of specific materials

Exhibition: Good

- Cases are designed to maintain specific environments for the collections
- Condition reports are completed for materials before and after exhibition



L Style Standard Case with Rolling Deck
www.smallcorp.com

Exhibition: Better

An exhibition policy is in place that outlines guidelines for length of exhibition, lighting, and mounts



Exhibition Policy

- Selection
- Length of time on display
- Light
- Support
- Security
- Housekeeping



Seattle University Law Library

Exhibition: Better

- ▣ Records are kept for length of time and light levels for each collections piece placed on exhibition
- ▣ All collections materials to be exhibited are examined, treated (if needed) and mounted by a conservator who is part of the exhibition team
- ▣ Plans for what materials will be exhibited are made at least one year in advance so mounts and conservation treatment can be planned



Image via Artifact Advocate

Thank you and Questions

Questions about
collections care?

Contact the California
Preservation Program
info@calpreservation.org



Next Session

Session 4: Planning and
Prioritizing
December 19, 2013



<http://www.semwisdom.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/data-analysis-cartoon-1.gif>

California Preservation Program



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CalPreservation.org

Helping preserve heritage collections