

University of Kentucky

From the Selected Works of Ruth E. Bryan

July 15, 2023

preserving_family_treasures_2023_07_13.pdf

Ruth E Bryan



Preserving Family Artifacts

Ruth E. Bryan
University Archivist
University of Kentucky Libraries

Casey County Public Library

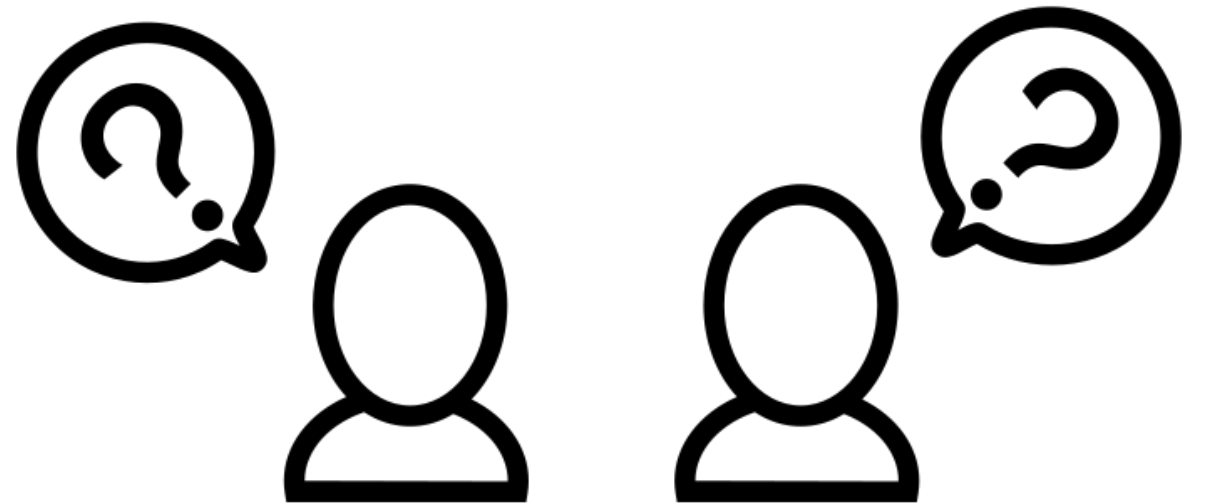
July 15, 2023

Presentation Outline



- ✓ Presentation (about 30 minutes)
- ✓ Q&A/Discussion

What does “Preservation” mean to you?

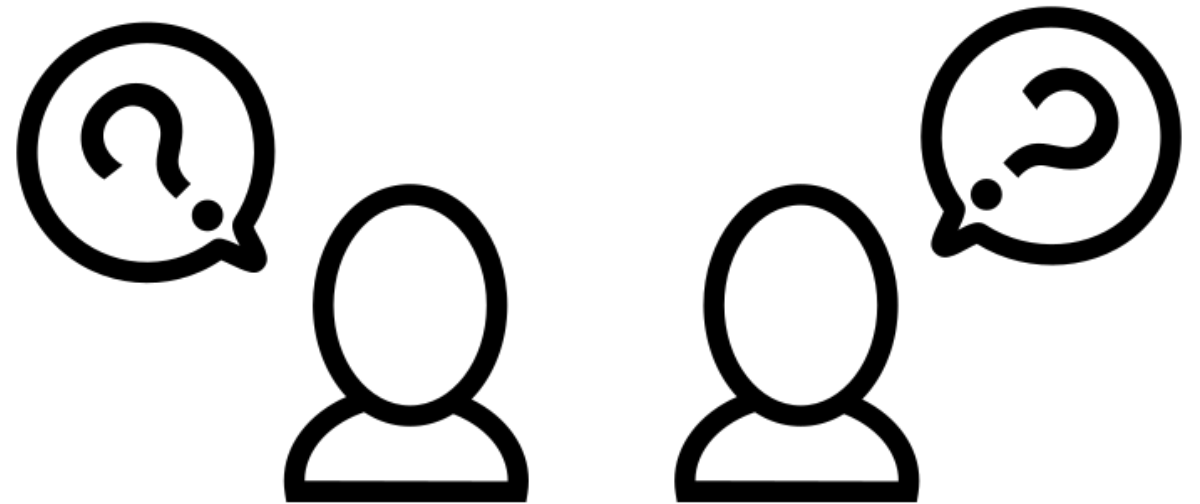


Created by Silviu Ojog
from the Noun Project

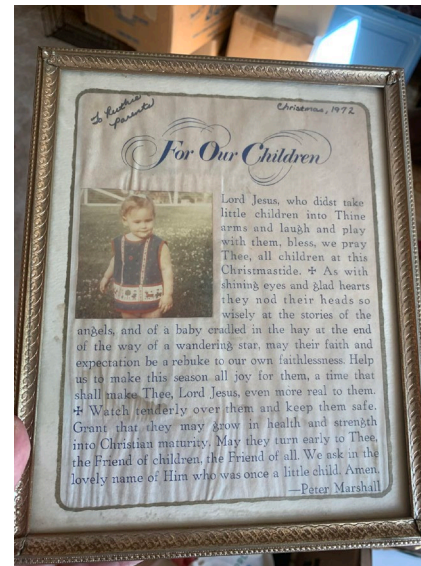
Preservation

- Stabilization of physical/digital item
- To last as long as possible
- Pro-active
 - Decisions
 - Time, energy, money
- Preservation ≠ Display
- Preservation ≠ Conservation

What artifacts do you have?



Created by Silviu Ojog
from the Noun Project

2023 Cha...
102

2023 Frie...
3



2023 300...
49



2023 Chuck
6



2023 Pets



2023 Family
25



2022 Chu...
1



2022 300...
5



For Riley ...
38



New Gran...
8



For Zhihui...

2022 Chuck
6

2022 Family
118



2021 Chu...
6



2021 300...
5



Ruth docu...
14

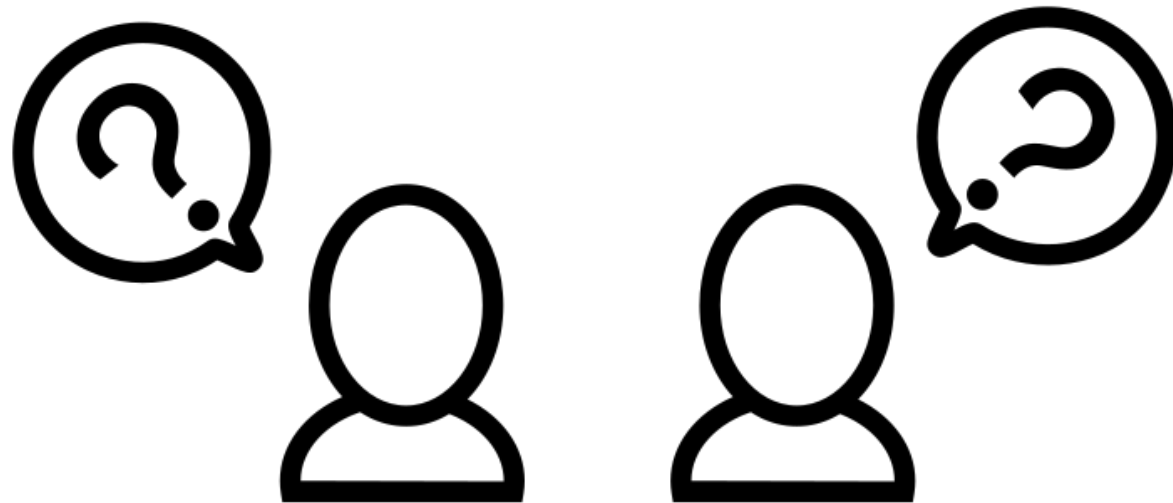


2021 Frie...
5



2021 Ruth
15

What are your artifacts made of?

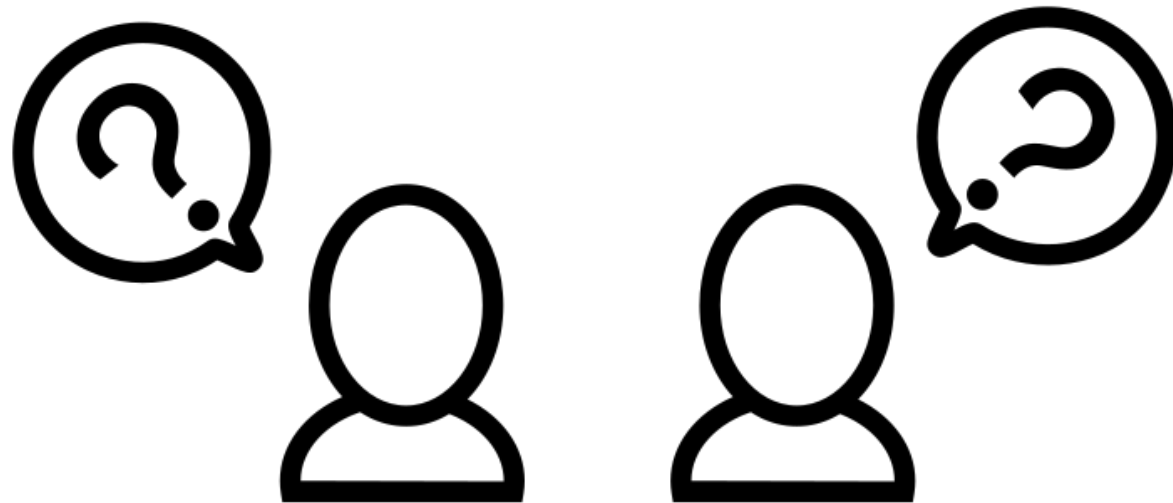


Created by Silviu Ojog
from the Noun Project

Materials: more or less fragile

- Paper (plus photo-sensitive layers)
- Fibers (natural and human-made)
- Leather
- Woods
- Plastics
- Metals
- Ceramics
- Glass
- Paints and lacquers
- (Bytes)

How are you caring for your artifacts currently?



Created by Silviu Ojog
from the Noun Project

Basics

- STORE where you live (consistent temperature/humidity)
- PROTECT (against light and dust, heat)
- Support
- Air circulation; no lamination; no plastic
- Clean hands; clean storage areas
- Use nitrile gloves with images, metals, wood, leather, textiles
- Use pencil (Sharpie if necessary); no regular tape or glue

Basics

- Make copies
- Display duplicates
- Display originals out of direct light; dust frequently (and rotate)
- Keep originals safe
- Machine-readable formats take more resources
- Digitization ≠ Preservation
- Online may not ≠ Preservation

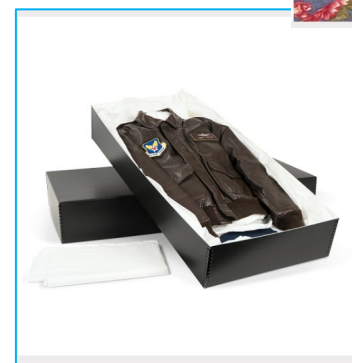
Storage

- Places where humans are comfortable
- NOT: damp, hot, dusty, pests, no climate control
- NOT: in direct sun/light
- Be aware of possible hazards
- If possible: sturdy, metal shelving
- Archives environments: 35-50% RH; 35-65°F



Protect and Support + Air Circulation

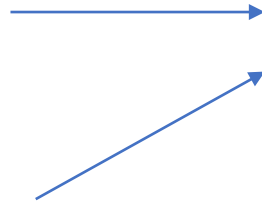
- Boxes, folders, sleeves, cardboard supports/box covers
 - Ideal: pH-neutral (acid-free [lignin-free])
 - Ideal: passed Photo Activity Test (P.A.T.)
- Cotton bond paper (interleave, wrap)
- Covers and foam (cotton/linen, Volara[®], Tyvek[®])
- Padded hangers, tissue paper
 - (buffered: cellulose-based like linen and cotton)
 - (unbuffered: protein-based like wool, leather, silk, or unknown)
- Tubes/rolled storage
- Book cradles



Supply companies

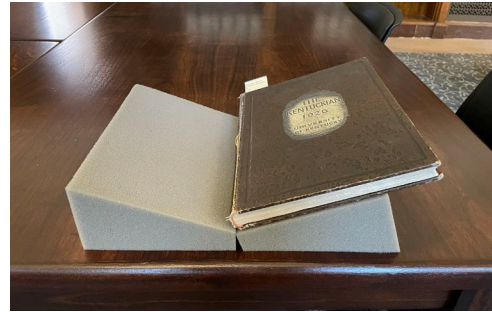


Protect and Support examples



- ✓ Store in folders flat or upright in a box.
- ✓ Photographic prints: Can put items in sleeves (paper or Polypropylene).
- ✓ Filing cabinet is OK but not ideal.
- ✓ No slumping! No stuffing!
- ✓ There are specialty supplies for special photographic formats.

Protect and Support examples

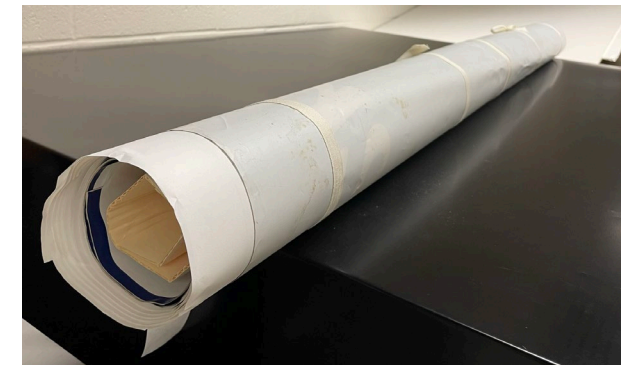


- ✓ Store spine down in a box or upright or flat on a shelf
- ✓ Must be completely upright or completely flat.
- ✓ Pull off shelf from the back.
- ✓ Use book cradle to read.
- ✓ Can make or buy boxes for extra support.
- ✓ Can wrap to keep out light and dust.

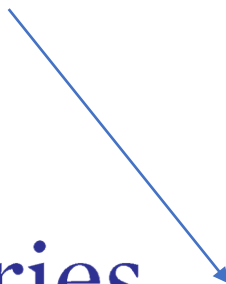
Protect and Support examples



- ✓ Flat or hanging storage depends on garment or textile (structure and condition).
- ✓ Support drape and folds.
- ✓ Use padded hangers and appropriate tissue (buffered or un-buffered).
- ✓ No stuffing! Use cotton/linen cover on garment rack.
- ✓ Can roll large items on tubes interleaved with cotton/linen fabric.

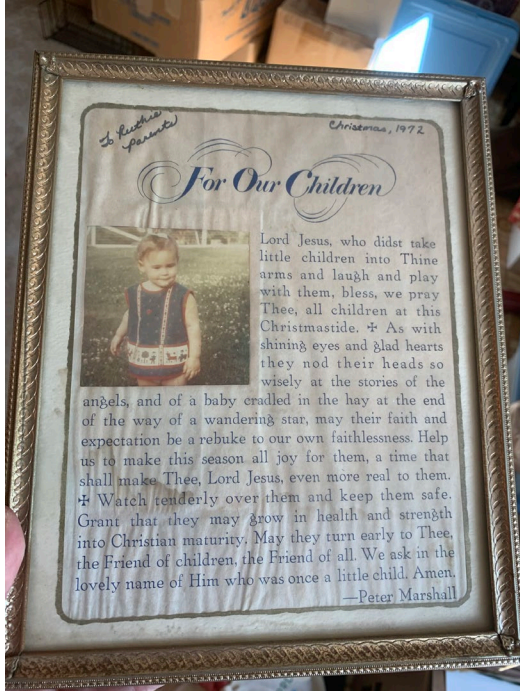


Protect and Support examples



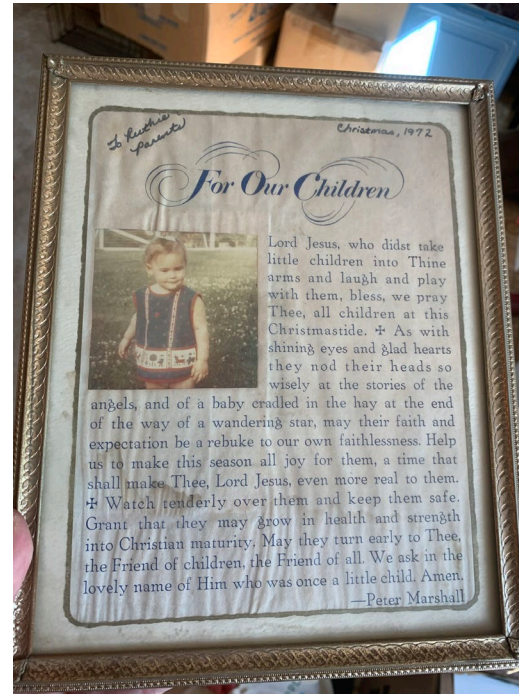
- ✓ Store on shelves or in boxes with (Volara®) foam supports or inserts.
- ✓ Support any loose or dangling parts.
- ✓ Use appropriate tissue to wrap (buffered or un-buffered).
- ✓ No stuffing! Use cotton/linen/(Tyvek®) cover to keep off light and dust.

Copies



Original: Take out of frame. Put in folder in box on shelf in good storage.

Or, if large, create supportive container and store flat in good storage.

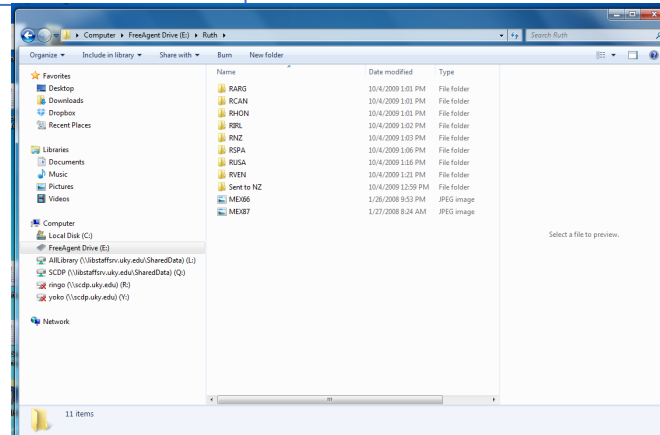
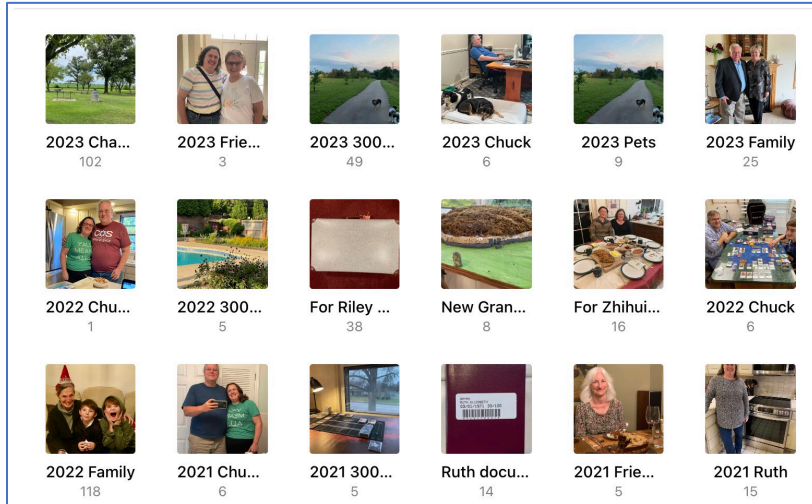


Copy: Display

✓ If must display original, keep out of direct light and cover with U-V protected glass/Plexiglass.

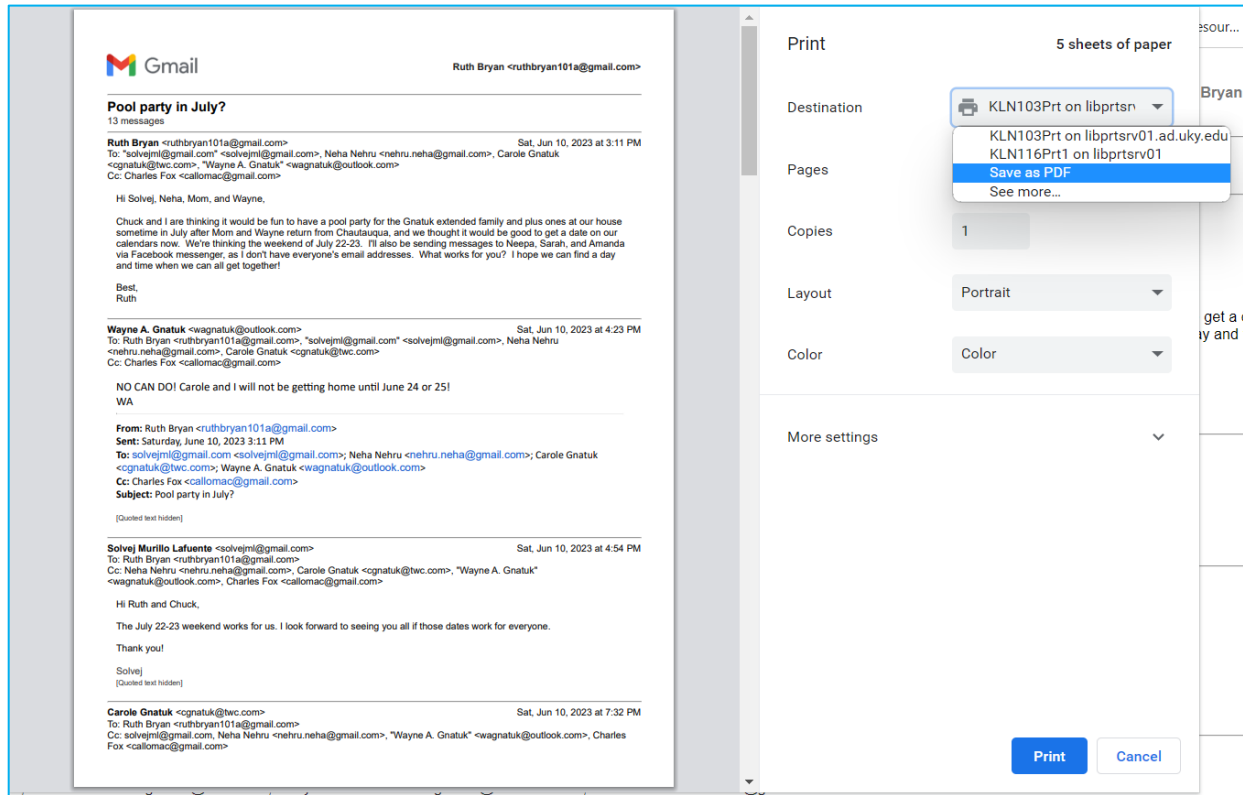
✓ Frame with pH-neutral boards and tape.

Born-digital Copies



- ✓ Save born-digital photographs and video on multiple external hard drives and/or on more than one Cloud platform (Google drive, Dropbox, iCloud, etc.).
- ✓ Consider how to group and sort. Consider a simple, consistent file naming pattern.
- ✓ For very special video, consider using highest-format setting on recorder or phone.
- ✓ For very special photographs, make prints or photo books; store in boxes, folders, on shelf in good storage.
- ✓ Sharing online does not preserve the image or video.

Born-digital Copies



- ✓ Save other important digital documents like text, spreadsheet, or email in PDF format.
 - MS Word → PDF
 - MS Excel → PDF
 - MS PPT → PDF
 - Email → PDF
- ✓ Save in multiple locations on multiple external hard drive and/or on more than one Cloud platform (Google drive, Dropbox, iCloud, etc.).
- ✓ Consider how to group and sort. Consider a simple, consistent file naming pattern.
- ✓ For very special/important documents, print out. Store in boxes, folders, on shelf in good storage (filing cabinet also OK).

Digitization—Keep Originals



- ✓ Digitize for access and sharing.
- ✓ May need to weed/make decisions.
- ✓ Ideal: Save at least one copy in a high-resolution/lossless format: Images use the TIFF format (uses a lot of space).
- ✓ Save in multiple locations on an external hard drive and/or on more than one Cloud platform (Google drive, Dropbox, iCloud, etc.).
- ✓ Consider how to group and sort. Consider a simple, consistent file naming pattern.
- ✓ Keep originals in good storage in boxes, folders, or sleeves.

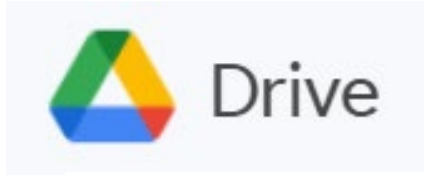
Digitization—>Keep Originals



- ✓ Digitize for access and sharing.
- ✓ May need to weed/make decisions.
- ✓ Idea: Save at least one copy in a high-resolution/lossless format (uses a lot of space):
 - Audio—WAV
 - Video—MPEG-4, H.265 (but, there are many)
- ✓ Save in multiple locations on an external hard drive and/or on more than one Cloud platform (Google drive, Dropbox, iCloud, etc.).
- ✓ Consider how to group and sort. Consider a simple, consistent file naming pattern.
- ✓ Store original open-reel flat in good storage (possibly in boxes).
- ✓ Store original cased reel on its side in good storage (possibly in boxes).

Digital tools

- ✓ Cloud storage and External Drive (check drive every year; replace every 5 years):



- ✓ Make a note of what's stored where.
- ✓ Maybe make a list/inventory.

- ✓ Password managers:



- ✓ Automated backups:



Time Machine (Macs)

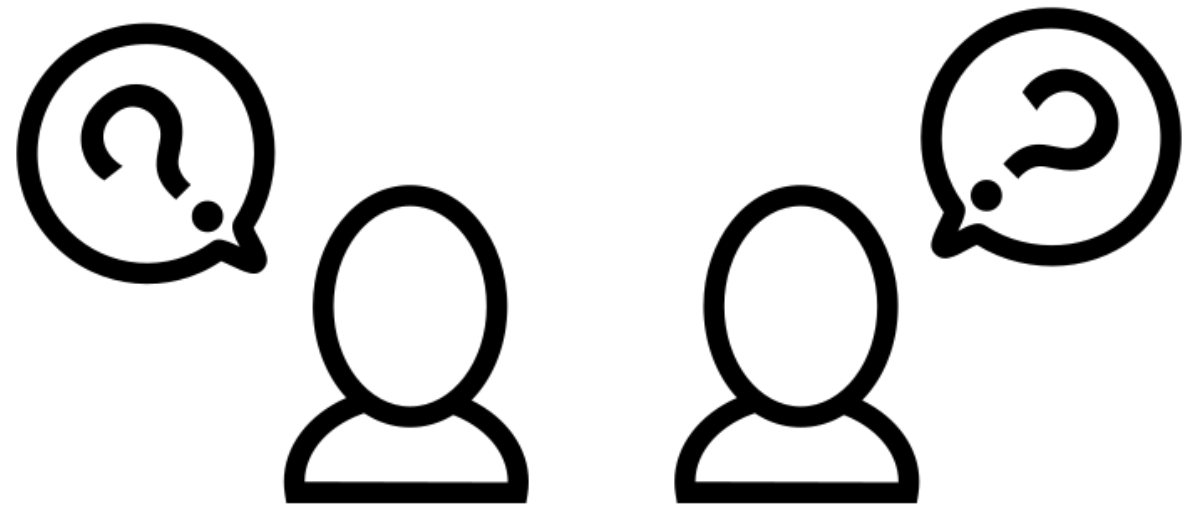
- ✓ Photo sharing/books/prints:



Preservation Information Sources

- Smithsonian: “Tips for Preserving Your Family Treasures”
 - <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/tips-preserving-your-family-treasures>
- Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) Preservation Leaflets
 - <https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/overview>
- Heritage Emergency National Task Force: “Resources for Protecting and Saving Family Treasures and Historic Properties”
 - <https://cool.culturalheritage.org/byorg/hp/PROGRAMS/TFPublic.html>
- National Parks Service Conserve-O-Grams (more detailed)
 - https://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/conservedogram/cons_toc.html

Q&A/Discussion



Created by Silviu Ojog
from the Noun Project

ruth.bryan@uky.edu



Boxes everywhere!