METHODS FOR ORGANIZING, CATALOGING, AND DEVELOPING METADATA FOR FAMILY HISTORY PHOTOS

Rita J. Nix, BAAS

University of North Texas

College of Information

Department of Library and Information Sciences

INTRODUCTION

Tucked away in attics, closets, drawers, boxes, and trunks are the memories of our families.

It is the purpose of this presentation to inspire you to find those hidden treasures, identify them, and preserve them for future generations.

FIRST STEPS

Visit Elder Family Members

- ❖ Visit
- ❖ Call
- ❖ Write letters
- ❖ Facebook
- ❖ Email

Locate Photos

- ❖ Ask who and where
- ❖ Place in chronological order
- ❖ Write names, dates, places reverse of photos in pencil
- ❖ Scan photos, if possible
- ❖ Copy documents too

After gathering information

Sort by family

- ❖ Use unique initials

- ❖ For example: S, J, N, F

- ❖ Or Sm, Sch, N, F

- ❖ Use what makes sense to you and works best for your family

Alpha numeric system

- ❖ Number the generations

- ❖ Number family members

- ❖ Use S & B for sister, brother

- ❖ Use W & H for wife, husband

- ❖ or in some cases W1 & W2

CLASSIFICATION

❖ Classification is systematically identifying and arranging materials by category, methods, and rules of a classification schema

❖ Numbers are assigned by a set of rules

❖ Be consistent

❖ Make it as easy to follow as possible

RULES

- ❖ Develop your rules based on what makes sense to you

- ❖ List and identify each component

- ❖ Keep a key of all abbreviations with the file

- ❖ Memory will fail on occasion and later on family will need to know

- ❖ Share the information now with interested family

- ❖ Think about coming generations and passing on the legacy

METADATA

❖ Date of photo or close estimate (label as "ca" or 188? Or

    18??)

❖ Last name

❖ First name

❖ Middle name

❖ Nick name ("Uncle Bud" or "Jeannie" or "Bobbi")

❖ Age in photo

Additional Metadata

- ❖ Birthdate – be consistent with date system mm/dd/year

- ❖ Marriage date (church & location, officiant, etc.)

- ❖ Military service: branch, war, location, etc.

- ❖ Death date

- ❖ Record number

- ❖ If a building, list address, use (church, store, school, etc.)
    or significance "Grandpa John Smith's barn"

Digital Preservation

- Stay current
- Outdated storage media
- Transfer or up grade often
- Always back-up items
- Store back-ups with family in other locations
- Keep liquids & food away
- Be aware of plumbing
- Magnets can erase or damage some media
- Heat, humidity, & light
- Retain an original unretouched copy

Care for Originals

❖ Choose an appropriate acid-free archival storage container

❖ Store in a cool, dry, and dark place

❖ Treat area to be certain no insects or rodents invade

❖ Check on the materials every few months to inspect for damage

Shadow Box Display

Creative and useful way to enable children to visualize their ancestry

Scan and print copies of old photographs

Label with names & record

Photobucket or similar

Untouched original

Enhanced image

Sources

❖ **Photobucket**

❖ http://s1166.photobucket.com/user/ritanix/media/555

bb6a2-9041-40de-bc77-

2b45a3f1d986_zps8d0454eb.jpg.html?sort=6&o=2

❖ **Shadow Box:** http://craftysisters-nc.blogspot.com

/2010/06/my-family-tree-shadow-box.html

Contact Information

Rita J. Nix

ritanix@gmail.com