Historical Photo Preservation

By Carey Jones

Port of Bellingham

Develop a best practice around historical photo perseveration

#1

Identify and inventory your photos

#2

Decide which photos are transitory and which need to be retained

#3

Organize the remaining photos

#4

Make a backup file for your photos

#1

- Identifying begins with taking an inventory of where you have pictures.

- Are they still on a camera(s), computer(s), paper, or cell phone(s)?

- Identifying where your photos are located is the first step to getting a handle on preserving them.

- Decide which photos are the most important. Digital photography makes it easier than ever to keep every picture you take, but that's not always a good thing, especially if you've got similar pictures with only slight variations. A smaller collection of essential photographs is easier to maintain and locate, so don't be afraid to consolidate.

- If you do get rid of copies, make sure to keep the one(s) with the highest resolution.

- Paper photos not yet in digital form will need to be individually scanned in. Once paper photos have been scanned in, you have two options (1) destroy paper copy or (2) store paper photos by layering them between acid-free paper in metal file cabinets or acid- free cardboard boxes in a heated storage area.

#2

#3

- You will need to keep your photos organized by developing a catalog system for locating individual photos. This can be time consuming but assures the photos can be accessed in the future. Give each photo a descriptive file name: Date, Subject, & Tags Keyword(s). Another best practice to consider is storing digital copies of photos in a shared digital location where any port employee can easily find a specific photo.

#4

- Finally, it's important to ensure your photos have a reliable back up. At the Port of Bellingham, we use Laserfiche. Employee(s) should oversee managing historical and recent photos—this person may be the same as your Public Records manager, working in tandem with other departments or people within your port.

Resources

Also reach out to your local museums, historical societies, universities and libraries.

- <u>Washington State Archives</u> has 4 branches that support our state:

- Northwest Region (360) 650-3125

- Puget Sound Region (425) 564-3940

- Southwest Region (360) 753-1684

- Central Region (509) 963-2136

- Eastern Region (509) 235-7508

- Records Management help: https://www2.sos.wa.gov/archives/recordsmanagement/managing-port-district-records.aspx

- Free online training classes: https://www2.sos.wa.gov/archives/recordsmanagement/online-training.aspx

- Northwest Region- Clallam, Island, Jefferson, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom counties.

- Puget Sound Region- King, Pierce, and Kitsap counties.

- Southwest Region- Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Skamania, Thurston, and Wahkiakum counties.

- Central Region- Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, and Yakima counties.

- Eastern Region- Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, and Whitman counties.

- Annual Grant Funding Programs: https://www2.sos.wa.gov/archives/recordsmanagement/local-records-grant-program.aspx