Preserving the Past for the Future: An Introduction to Archives
Topics for Discussion

• Defining “Records”
• Life Cycle of “Records”
• Provenance and Original Order
• Preservation
• About the Idaho State Archives
• 50-907
• Other Resources
Defining “Records”

• the holdings of an archival repository.
• groups of collected items, significant and important because of their relationship to one another.
• all books, papers, maps, photographs, machine readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by an agency of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the agency because of the informational value of data in them.
“Life Cycle” of Records

The "life-cycle" concept of the records management-archives relationship is based on the premise that it is possible to divide the life of a record into eight distinct, separate stages, starting with a records management phase consisting of:

• creation or receipt of information in the form of records
• classification of the records or their information in some logical system
• maintenance and use of the records
• disposition through destruction or transfer to an archives
This is then followed by a second, archival phase consisting of:

• appraisal, selection and acquisition of the records by an archives
• arrangement and description of the records in inventories and finding aids
• preservation of the records through storage and housing, conservation and/or reformatting records for access i.e. microfilm or digitization
• reference and use of the information by researchers and scholars
Provenance and Original Order

The principle of **Provenance** was developed in France in the 1840s.
- Archives of a given records creator must not be intermingled with those of other records creators.

**Original Order** was developed in Prussia in the 1880s.
- Records should be maintained in the order in which they were placed by the agency, organization, individual or family that created them.
6 Preservation Factors

- Temperature
- Humidity
- Light
- Pollutants
- Handling
- Pests
### Temperature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended</th>
<th>Ideal</th>
<th>Warning Signs of Damage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>68° F</strong></td>
<td><strong>Between 60-70° F</strong></td>
<td>Temperature fluctuation can cause cracking, warping, fading and sticking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Humidity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended Ideal</th>
<th>Warning Signs of Damage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45% RH&lt;br&gt;Between 40-50% RH (relative humidity)</td>
<td>Humidity fluctuations can cause mold/mildew, discoloration, sticking and can attract pests</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Light

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended/Ideal</th>
<th>Warning Signs of Damage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Some scanning/copying okay  
Keep documents/photos away from artificial lights or sunlight | Light exposure can cause fading, discoloration and embrittlement |
### Pollutants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No smoking, drinking or food around the materials; store in proper storage</td>
<td>Dust, dirt and smoke can attract pests, cause staining or become a permanent fixture on the materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Handling

<table>
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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use cotton, lint-free gloves or clean/dry hands (no lotions)</td>
<td>Mishandling of materials can lead to deposits of dirt or oil that can attract pests, leave fingerprints or cause staining</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Pests

<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep storage and work areas clean; do not store collections in basements, attics, garages or near external doors</td>
<td>Presence of pests in materials can cause staining, holes and excrement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preservation: How to Avoid Risks

- Store materials in a stable environment ideally between 60°-70° F & at 40-50% relative humidity - above ground interior rooms
- Avoid high heat or moisture - both can accelerate chemical processes that can damage the materials – as well as light
- Use appropriate sized enclosures, such as a folder, box or portfolio that will provide physical protection as well as protection from light and dust and made from acid-free, lignin-free paper and buffered (unbuffered for blueprints) made from cotton or highly purified wood pulps.
The number one defense against preservation risks is storage, the building or room which the records are housed.
Avoid basement and attic like environments, areas which fluctuate with temperature and humidity, areas near food or external doors welcoming pests, avoid windows and rooms used for other purposes, this increases light damage
Preservation: Acid-free Products

Use acid-free, lignin free, buffered storage products for all paper documents and store materials flat (blueprints are the only exception, they should be in unbuffered storage)
Preservation: Photographs

Paper enclosures that are made from a high quality, non-acidic, lignin-free paper (buffered or unbuffered) made from cotton or highly purified wood pulps can be used, but do not use buffered paper for storage of color photographs or blueprints.
Preservation: Photographs

Look for plastic enclosures like sleeves made from uncoated pure polyethylene, polypropylene or polyester (also called Mylar D or Melinex 516)

Remember **encapsulate**, do not **laminate**!
Preservation: Plastics to Avoid (Bad Plastics)

- Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC)
- Polyvinylidene (PVDC)
- Polyvinyl acetate (PVA), can be found in adhesives and paints
- Acidic polyesters
- Polyurethane foams
- Chloroprene (e.g. Neoprene®)
- Urea formaldehyde panels (such as Gator Foam®)
Avoid use of glue, rubber cement, tape, post-its, rubber bands, staples or paperclips
Idaho State Archives

- Founded in 1881 as the Historical Society of Idaho Pioneers
- Became a state agency, the Idaho State Historical Society, in 1907
- In Chapter 161 of the 1947 acts of the State of Idaho, the Idaho State Historical Society was assigned “state archival authority”
Idaho State Archives

- 123,000 cubic feet of permanent records
- 20,000 books & periodicals
- 40,000 rolls of microfilm
- 26,000 maps
- 827 manuscript collections (4,200 cubic feet)
- 1 million + photographs
- 2,700 oral histories
In 2015 the Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS)- Idaho State Archives (ISA) consulted with the Association of Idaho Cities to amend Idaho statute 50-907 regarding the classification of municipal records.

Notable changes are the ability of cities to now destroy permanent, non-historical, records which have been reformatted i.e. photographed.

Cities still must provide notification to ISHS- ISA before destroying any permanent record for historical review by ISHS- ISA.

Notice to ISHS- ISA is no longer required prior to destruction of semi-permanent and temporary records.
The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) maintains a Conservation Services Referral System, guidelines for selecting a conservator and providing lists of conservation professionals grouped geographically, by specialization and by the type of service.

http://www.conservation-us.org/about-conservation/find-a-conservator#.VD28rbB4oZ0
WESTPAS in Idaho: October 2016

Western States and Territories Preservation Assistance Service (WESTPAS) presents:
— Two-Part Workshop —

Protecting Cultural Collections: Disaster Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery

Part 1: ON-LINE WEBINARS – Prevention & Preparedness
(2.5 hours of archived webinars)

Part 2: IN-PERSON WORKSHOP – Response & Recovery

Registration is required: http://tinyurl.com/ot4kve2
Questions?

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http://www2.archivists.org/glossary#.Vv6zB_krLct