

Archiving to do # 3

This is my third of these articles in the series
April 2004

Also available in PDF format from my Web site

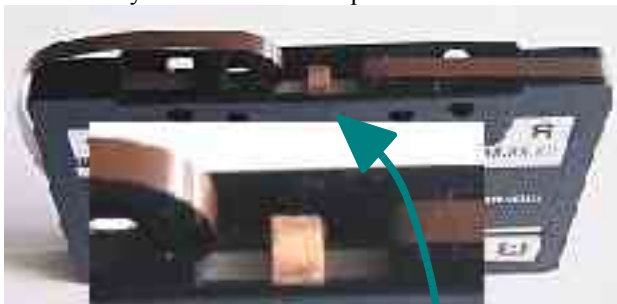
New Technology, Not Yet

I'm not going to talk about the new technology available to us just yet. To save/archive/store data on all sorts of new devices. Most to be carried out by professional people and by anyone who has the equipment in a hobby/private situation. Quite a few people who have a computer now have a CD Writer, aka burner installed on the computer, including myself. I would like some feedback from people who can help or suggest anything in what I have spoken about so far.

Although I have been involved with computers for nearly three decades, just now I want to talk about archiving things, data that we all have that does not involve owning a computer.

Cassette Tapes

Age can catch up with the common cassette tape whether they be sound or data tape cassettes.



Most people have had the experience of the sound being soft or wavy, varying in volume when playing a

sound cassette. The problem could be caused by the felt pressure pad that presses the tape against the tape play/record head being missing. It has fallen off. Here is a cassette tape that I have pulled some of the tape out and folded it back to show the reader the little felt pad that presses the tape against the record/play head in the machine.

This little felt pad is about 5mm X 8mm and about 3mm thick. After some years this felt pad becomes unstuck from its springy metal piece so that the tape is not held firmly against the tape so the sound could be non-existent or very wavy in volume. By wavy I mean the tape can be held reasonably close to the record/play (P/R) head depending on the tension of the tape. If this happens to you put the player in stop mode and eject the tape. Pull some of the tape away from that area and see if the little brown felt pad is in the correct position. It could be missing. It could be anywhere. Do not despair because another felt pad could be taken from another unused tape. The felt pad is glued to a little strip of flexible metal which can be removed from the unused tape to facilitate the removal of the pad.

8 track Cassette

There was another tape cassette which didn't gain much acceptance due to technological problems. The format was most popular in cars, buses and trucks. It was a continuous tape, the cassette was inserted in only one way into the receiver. Here is a photo of a player in a Chevrolet car, a red one. I doubt whether anyone has any such tapes with sounds worthy of archiving of a personal nature. There would be popular music that some may like to archive so I suppose someone could do this work. I did service perhaps ten players in the late 1990s but never owned a player.



CD Storage

As I mentioned in earlier ATD articles, all items, 78 records, vinyl records, tapes and CDs must be stacked in a vertical position. Here is a picture of how not to store



items, in this case CDs as on the left of the picture. On the right side most of the CDs are correctly mounted in the vertical position.

Restoring Old Photographs

The title should include "and Not So old photos".

Because even photos that were taken only a few decades ago can fade. This applies mainly to colour photos. At the end of 2003 Marie and I noticed that three colour photos we took of our children in the 1960s had faded badly. They had lost most of the colouring. So I set about restoring three of them. The first one here is of our daughter Maria taken in 1964.



A very bleached photo.

Below is the result after I edited it using The GIMP, my image editing application. The shrub in the background is green again. Maria's skin is close to what it should be and her birthday cake with one candle is pink.



The second one is of Maria again, this time in 1971 when she was eight years old.

This one still had some colour but faded nevertheless. There were two parts where the photo stuck to the frame glass which show as white.

See the difference after I edited it. They are both in the same frames on display.

So we need to be vigilant and check if any of our photos and other items are have faded. This is not such a problem with old black and white photos as the chemicals used were/are more stable. I think that's the term used.

I don't expect many people will be able to do such editing, even those who do possess a computer. It can be done professionally. More about this later.



Artist's Items

The same suggestions apply to the paper, mats, backing materials as with other mediums, that is acid free. One choice of paper for pastel artwork is Art Spectrum Pastel Paper which is acid free. It has a toned gesso silk screened onto the surface. This gives it a durable surface that is of a fine texture and can be reworked with dry or wet art materials.

Mats should be made of all rag material/board since other materials could cause staining to occur.

Acrylics and watercolour paintings on paper are usually framed behind glass or Plexi-glass which helps to preserve them. If the art is situated in a fairly brightly lit room/area then the use of U.V. Filtering glass or Plexi-glass is recommended. The mat keeps the artwork or photograph away from the glass which expands and contracts with varying temperatures. I suppose if the photos that I restored in the column on the left had special glass in the frames then they would probably still be in their original state.

Photographic Film

At present 2004, the sale of digital cameras is greater than the sale of conventional cameras, whatever they are. The earliest images captured were called Daguerretype invented by the French in 1839. It used a polished silver plated sheet of metal. The Daguerretype has to be held at various angles to be able to see the image which are quite sharp and detailed.

I don't think many people would have these in their possession but it's worth mentioning some of these antique photographic processes. Even the not so old box camera which used roll film 120 size would be a rarity now.



If I remember correctly the 120 film was available in 12 shot rolls.

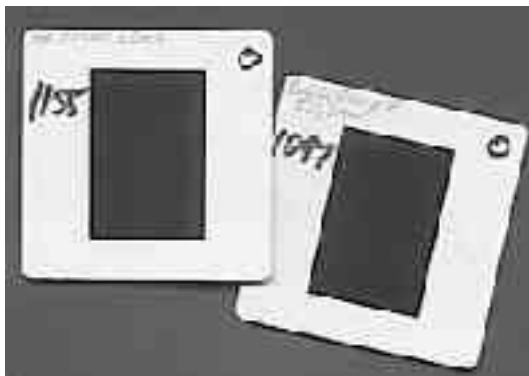


35 mm Slides

Now I'm getting down to "tintacks" in regards to this photo format. I think we all would have some of these that we would/should archive. I have checked a couple photograph places in Brisbane to find out what one would need to pay to have each slide scanned and saved onto CD ROM. For slides that are mounted prices ranged from \$1.00 to \$3.00 each, expensive. It is a time consuming job so costs are high. When I get some more prices from other places I will print a list.

Of course for people who have an image scanner of some sort that will scan slides they could do that part themselves. The next job is to name each slide and save on the computer's hard drive or CD ROM.

I have a flatbed colour image scanner but can not scan slides.



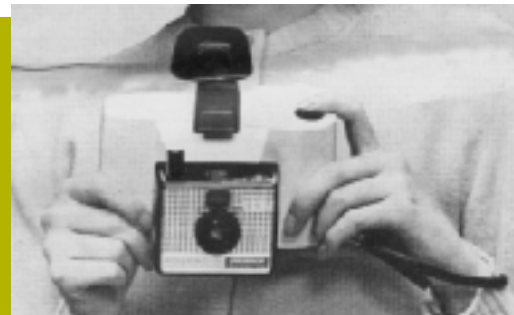
The picture here is of a rather expensive slide scanner.



It may not be available now, ten years later. Also flat bed scanners can be used if they are designed for such work.

Polaroid

Remember the Polaroid Land instant cameras? I bought one of the very first cameras about 1960 which was a black & white camera. It appears that the prints do not last for many years although I have some that I took after 1960 with the model 20 which seem OK but I remind the reader that they are black & white.



The Polaroid Model 20 camera

It was a cumbersome camera where the user pulled the paper with the image imprinted on it out at the back then rubbed a special fixing liquid and not touch it until it dried which took about a minute. Other Polaroid cameras were built afterwards with new features and colour prints. There were no negatives if I am correct produced with any of the early Polaroids.

Movie Film

I do not have any movie film at all but there must be some people who do and need/want to archive some or all of the film/s. I do not know how this is done as yet. I do have a friend who archives from Video tapes who I will contact some time. I do know that there are video capture cards that can be installed into computers but I don't know what is done. Of course again there are professional firms who do this at a cost. More about this later.



Video Tapes

In particular VHS and Betamax. These were the two home video tape formats that were used, or I should say VHS is still used. There was a video formats “war” for a few years and VHS won. Same again, those with the correct equipment can archive these formats.

I have archived sound only from VHS tape onto CD without too many problems.

Here is a photo of a Betamax tape cassette which is smaller than the common VHS tape cassette. The Betamax format was released by Sony in 1975.



Vinyl Records

Most people have these records which we call LPs in regards to 33 1/3. 45's were known in earlier times as EP meaning Extended Play. I mentioned in an earlier that I had recorded many years ago onto cassette tape our wedding which was recorded in 78RPM format records at the wedding. The image here is the label on the centre of the record. I have just archived the data/sounds from those cassette tapes onto CD ROM. I will explain later how I did it.



Portable Document Format aka PDF

If the reader has downloaded this from my Web site then you would be looking at a PDF format document.

PDF and X/HTML seems will be the common platform for data exchange in the near future. This is a format which applies to the computer world. So people can read the text and see the images made by someone using a different computer platform, or the same platform. The originator/publisher of the document may be using an Apple computer to write said document which can be read by someone using a computer using Linux, UNIX, or MS Windows. The same applies if it is published on a MS Windows system. A person using an Apple computer can read the document. The receiving computer must have the software application that will read/see the PDF installed. In regards to the receiver using MS Windows then the reader would probably use Adobe Acrobat Reader.

In Linux Mandrake I can use about three different readers, two being gPDF and gv.

The reader is similar to a person translator, translating from a person speaking French to a person who can only understand and speak Spanish.

PDF readers can only display the document and usually print it. The PDF document can not be edited/alterd by the receiver, the PDF reader. There are variations to this but I won't go into those here.

I will be talking more about PDF in later *Archiving to do* booklets.

Laminating

Laminating is a no no.

I didn't know that laminating an item could cause damage to it until I researched archiving. Laminating machines are on sale in various big chain stores which makes it so attractive to do the job oneself. Once an article, a photo, a document, a certificate etc is laminated damage begins immediately. The acid sealed inside and the plastic start to deteriorate the item and is irreversible. It goes without saying that applying heat to an item will start the ageing process quicker. There is another way which is called encapsulation. The item is encapsulated between two sheets of polyester. I hope to have more information about this encapsulation process at a later date.

That's all for this *ATD*. JCED

This “Archiving_to_do_3.sxw” was built up using OpenOffice.Org which I refer to as “OOO”. OOO is an Open Source application which is a free Office Suite that I use in Linux Mandrake and MS Windows 98.

The file is Exported as a PDF directly from OOO. John C.E.D'Alton.

This is a PDF

My Web site URL is;
www.paradox.com.au/~jcdalton/hobartjohn1.htm