

# FROM THE ARCHIVES

It doesn't take much to remind you how very precious your photographs are to your memories! We base a lot of what we know on photos of the historic past and present, so why should your own life be any different? Don't let your memories tarnish over time by not keeping them safe and sound in the digital age. Bring them to Fitzies, we know how to treat them with TLC – so you and your family can enjoy them for generations to come.

## MY PHOTO'S ARE ALL IN ALBUMS, WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?

Unfortunately albums that were made over 10 years ago weren't safe to keep your photo's in!

**The late 1800's to mid 1900's** - albums were usually made of cloth or embossed leather, with the later stages being leather and different plastics. For many years photographers were gluing the photographs to the black pages until the usage of corner mounts made it very easy to insert and remove photographs. Although this was easier, the album and pages themselves were the problem in the preservation of photographs.

Some of the reasons that this paper was very bad for storage was that it contained a sizing chemical which had a high acidic content and the black paper was dyed with destructive agents. In addition to the paper problem itself, some of the glues used had a high acidic content as well. With the backs of the photographs being attacked by all this acid and other chemicals, the front of the photographs frequently came in direct contact with the black paper from the adjacent side of the album when the page was closed, allowing even more damage.



**The mid 1980's to 2001** - album manufacturers came out with a new product called 'Magnetic Pages'. These were made from a thick paper stock and coated with glue strips. There was a Mylar plastic covering both sides of this stock and it was claimed that this was a good way to preserve photographs. After being on the market for about fifteen years, conservators recognized that the glue being used had a very high acidic content.

So much so, that after only 10-15 years in storage, new photographs were starting to show signs of deterioration. The acid was eating through the backs of the photographs and the Mylar was sealing in the acidic fumes causing a deterioration on the image side as well.

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## MY NEGATIVES AND SLIDES ARE ALL IN THEIR ORIGINAL CASES, DO I NEED TO ARCHIVE?

When it comes to your originals, you really don't want to take any risks in regards to archiving them. They may be stored in packages of old "negative envelopes" which are beginning to become frail, brittle and molding and in turn the negatives begin to break down with a "chemical" dust in some of the envelopes.

Even if your negatives or slides are properly placed within archival sleeves, you also need to take into consideration where they are being kept. Are they in wooden or cardboard boxes, maybe plastic containers? All of these options, although they may sound safe, are in fact not, as the majority will contain acid, which in turn could be detrimental to your negatives and slides.

The best option to store them is in a dark, cool, and dry place - not on concrete.

A fire safe storage container is the best choice, but not essential - just make sure that you purchase a container that is Acid Free!



## SO WHAT DO I DO WITH THE CD FITZGERALDS WILL GIVE BACK TO ME?

Just because you have your prints, negatives or slides digitised - doesn't mean you're out of the woods yet! When we give you back your scanned images on disc, we recommend you also treat it like a 'digital negative'. As digital technology is growing at a rapid pace, it's hard to know where we will be in terms of archiving in the next 10 years. So keep them safe!

We can make multiple copies of the disc for you - to pass on to relatives and friends and we also encourage you to pass on as many of the photos as you can - get re-prints from the disc so you have extra copies - do everything to make sure that you are spreading your digital negatives around. So at the end of the day, if something happens to your photographs or digital negatives - you can always grab them off another relative or friend who you gave them to previously.

Happy Archiving!