

Re: Looking for suggestion on how to organize a chest of photos, slides , negatives spanning 30 years

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- *From:* Phil Stripling <philip@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 27 Mar 2006 22:54:31 GMT
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In article <CzTVf.5344\$mo.5211@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>, brian <brian__corbin@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

My original thoughts are to get a few surplus filing cabinets to hold the materials in manila folders but it sounds like that may not be a good idea as most articles I've read some articles that suggest 3 ring binders and special acid free materials.

My vote would be for a filing cabinet, as it provides easier access to the materials.

Three-ring binders can be a problem. If you store the binder upright (the spine vertical), the pages slump after awhile, giving the negatives and prints a more or less permanent curl. If you use three-ring binders, store them so that the spine is on top, so that the pages hang straight down from the rings.

Whatever you choose, be very careful that the negatives and prints do not curl. Many places sell plastic sheets that hang from a rod, a la suspension files. Make sure the seller claims fume-free, archival plastics.

I've also been looking for some sort of computer database software to index everything and only found reference to one specific program for this purpose called Camera Collector but it sounds like it may be more oriented towards camera hardware not prints and negatives.

I rolled my own database with a database program. See below.

Any suggestions on a numbering scheme. Do I worry about filing things

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chronologically. I'm thinking that a good index would make this unnecessary.
Any suggestions from some one who have been down this road would be appreciated.

These are questions you have to answer. You may decide to find your photos by date, but others may be interested in topic. If you set up your own database, you can have it both ways. I do suggest assigning an individual number to each piece (negative, print, transparency). I think a searchable database would be easier for you and others to use than shoehorning stuff into a spreadsheet, but if that's what floats your boat, go with a spreadsheet. Databases are made for searching; spreadsheets are made for adding and subtracting.

I urge you to put something together, though. Your photos have archival uses which you've never considered. They show the history of automobiles, of costumes and jewelry, of architecture, and much more than just people you may have been related to.

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