

Special Collections Processing for Finding Guides



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Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to bring consistent practices to the San Diego Air & Space Museum's Library & Archives collections. This brief will serve as a training tool and reference source for the Library & Archives staff, students, interns, and volunteers in regards to Special Collections processing and finding guide development. It consists of concise summaries of archival principles and standards, but does not serve as a replacement for the Archives Processing Manual, which should be referred to for further information.

As of February 2013, a project is underway to create finding guides for the Library and Archives' Special Collections. This is a concise guide to help standardize the finding guides and reprocessing practice for 180+ collections.

Finding Guides

Finding guides are descriptive tools. They outline the physical and intellectual control placed on the records in a given group or collection. They are a way to gain the most direct access into archival records and when using a finding guide, researchers will utilize its major sections: Scope & Content, Important Subjects, History, Materials.

Condition Reports

A secondary portion of this project is to rehouse the collections and make certain they are organized and arranged in a manner adherent to current archival practice. This means that some collections will need to be arranged and rehoused. All Special Collections processed must also have a Condition Report. A Condition Report will inform the head archivist about collections that may need conservation work or special care.

Processor

Processing a collection can be a daunting task, therefore, it is important to examine the collection and gather as much information about it as possible. The processor's job is two-fold, containing both a physical and intellectual component.

Firstly, the processor must physically organize and manage the collection. Given the diverse format and content of archival collections, this may pose a challenge. This manual intends to provide practical guidelines for consistently handling the most common formats.

Secondly, the processor creates intellectual control over the materials by describing them in a manner that is consistent with international archival standards. In creating a detailed finding guide for the collection, the processor provides a description of the materials in order to make them searchable and useable.

This manual addresses Special Collections:

Special Collections: The Archives' Special Collection consists of both personal and organizational papers from Ryan Aeronautical, Consolidated/Convair, Pacific Southwest Airlines (PSA), Charles Lindbergh, T. Claude Ryan, Reuben H. Fleet, Jacqueline Cochran, and others.

The Museum's collections are held in trust for the public; every reasonable attempt will be made to keep significant materials accessible and to maintain the highest ethical standards in the preservation and interpretation of its collections. The Museum assumes complete and unrestricted title to items accessioned into the permanent collection. The care and safety of collections shall be the responsibility of the Museum.

Step One: Selecting a Collection and Setting Up Your Work

When developing a finding guide (or finding aid) for a collection, identify which collections already have Finding Guides, summaries, or neither. Currently, collection summaries are to be used only as a basis for a Finding Guide and will eventually be phased out by the Library & Archives.

A master list of collection can be found in the Special Collections folder of the Photodrobo server. This is subject to change, however the appropriate staff member will have a printed list of collections in need of Finding Guides.

All work should be saved Under Network > Photodrobo > Photos > SPECIAL COLLECTIONS > New Documents. In this folder you will find places to save your work in progress as well as all of the digital templates you should be using and a copy of this manual. Save your own copy of the template (with the Collection name) and work on it there.

Examining and Handling the Collection

If the collection has been accessioned and is accompanied by an inventory, familiarize yourself with its contents and any insight it may offer about the creator and contents. If, however, there has been no formal information gathered about the collection, follow these steps:

- ***Where did these materials come from?*** Identify the office of origin or the creator/owner. If there are communications between the Museum and the donor in the collection, set them aside. Once identified, gather some background information about the company or individual through various sources including the Internet, newspapers, and other familiar trustworthy sources. Gather enough to provide a picture of the creator/owner and an idea of what the materials are about. (Note that it is a good idea to make copies of the information you are gathering to help future researchers using the collection.)
- **Physically examine the collection.** *How big is it? What do the materials look like?* As you examine and familiarize yourself with the collection, be aware of any preservation concerns and who they should be addressed. The contents of the collection itself will often provide a great deal of insight for developing the finding guide.

- Create a **rough inventory** of the collection's contents. This will help identify series, or how items will be logically grouped. A detailed list of every folder is not necessary, but rather the general contents of each box.
- **Identify the supplies needed to process the collection.** All collections require acid-free folders, archival quality photo sleeves, acid-free envelopes, and boxes in order to house materials. Be sure enough supplies are available. Similarly, toolkits have been created with the supplies necessary for collections handling. The appropriate staff member will go over these tools with you.



Tool boxes and supplies can be located on the back shelves of the Library.

Physical Considerations

One of the most enjoyable aspects of archival work is the variety of formats and materials encountered while processing collections. Depending on the supplies available, there are several approaches you can undertake with the following types of material:

Paper

Paper is composed of organic materials and is subject to deterioration depending on its components and environmental conditions. As a result of increasing demand, the quality of paper decreased significantly after the American Civil War. The occasional use of highly acidic newsprint in offices between 1920 and 1950 presents a particular preservation concern.

Handling Paper

- Hands should be clean.
- Use a pencil.
- If there are staples, refer to the appropriate staff member. Remove paper clips carefully – use a sheet of acid-free paper to keep items together.
- Avoid using post-it notes. If you find them in the records, transcribe the information on a separate sheet of archival paper.
- Avoid adhesive tape. When encountering it on paper records, only remove it if it comes off easily.

Acidic Paper

- Paper with a high level of acidity is easy to spot. It has the following characteristics:
 - yellowed
 - brittle
 - over time, it has left a yellowed impression on the materials surrounding it

- The best approach is to photocopy acidic paper and newsprint onto archival quality paper.

Other Considerations

- Folded papers
 - Letters enclosed in an envelope, oversized documents and other records that are folded should be carefully unfolded to prevent future tearing. If papers easily unfold, gently smooth them before placing them in acid-free folders.
- Oversized papers
 - Oversized materials, regardless of their format, should be separated and placed in corresponding folders, boxes, and cases to prevent damage.

Enclosures

- As a general rule, all non-archival enclosures are potentially hazardous. For this reason, papers should be removed from binders, folders, plastic sleeves, and other commonly-found office supplies.

Binders & Staples & Paper Clips

- The acidic nature of paper boards combined with the metal clasps that tend to rust, pose dangers to paper and should be discarded. Remove all metal and plastic clips.
- Staples should be removed from papers. Have the appropriate staff member instruct you in staple removal, so the paper is undamaged. On a strip of archival paper. Write the number of pages and general content of the documents that were bound, then fold it around unclashed items.

Plastic Sleeves

Do not assume that plastic is harmless to paper. Archival quality plastic enclosures consist of:

- Polyester, Polypropylene, Polyethylene.
- Avoid PVC or vinyl. If not sure, discard the original plastic and replace with archival enclosure.

Photographs

Photographs and negatives require special handling different from paper. In addition, encountering photos and negatives within a collection, decide upon where they will fit within the organization. Sometimes there will be enough photographs to constitute a series. Other times, they will be associated with textual documents and will need to be filed together.

Handling

- Use cotton gloves.
- Place negatives in protective sleeves made of archival quality envelopes.
- Place printed photos in protective sleeves of archival quality plastic.
- If you must write on the print, use a soft lead pencil and make notations on the back, ask appropriate staff member for supplies.
- If photographs are attached to paper or enclosed in a scrapbook, see the appropriate staff member.
- If you encounter fragile photographic materials, consult the appropriate staff member regarding handling and storage requirements.

Scrapbooks

Scrapbooks are often an ubiquitous collage of newspaper clippings, memorabilia, and photographs, with no universal formula exists for handling these items, but there are guidelines to make decisions less painful.

Characteristics

- Scrapbooks are usually identifiable by their large format, poor paper quality (often brittle), and the mixture of its contents from newspaper clippings to photographs and other memorabilia

Handling

- For the most part, scrapbooks are fragile and the less they are handled, the better. However, in order to assess its storage requirements, you must examine a scrapbook thoroughly to determine if it needs to be rehoused. Discuss with digitization and special collections archivists.
- Scrapbooks that are thoroughly intact and contain no photographs can be placed in archival boxes. Interleave with acid-free paper to protect items from newspaper clippings.

Reformatting

- Scrapbooks that are falling apart present a problem on two scales. First, access to the item will be severely limited and second, storage will be messy.
- In this case, it is a good idea to reformat scrapbooks by either microfilming or photocopying them.

Diverse Media

Archival collections often consist of a variety of formats with paper being the most common. Please refer to the complete Archives Processing Manual for how to process other items not listed here.

Reboxing and labeling

Materials should be housed or rehoused in archival quality boxes while awaiting processing. The bulk of the Special Collections project will address collections already owned by the Museum, which may simply need to be rehoused. Incoming collections that have not been processed should only be rehoused while awaiting processing if the containers are hazardous to the materials or overly bulky (such as fruit-crates or oversized, dilapidated cardboard boxes). Label the contents of the boxes with pencil and record their whereabouts in the special collections database and note that the collection is unprocessed.

Organize and Arranging the Collection

The golden rule of archival collections: Respect the creator of the collection and do not divide collections based on arbitrary elements. In other words, archival materials always come from a

creator and/or office of origin. Whether the records of a particular church, or a local business or the papers of a prominent individual, keep them together and do not add materials from other collections.

Due to the fact that the nature of archives is to reflect the activities, thought processes, and transactions of a particular creator, they should ideally be left in the order they arrived. However, the processor's principal duty is to render the archives accessible and useable. For this reason, it is often necessary to impose order on materials to more easily identify them. If the materials are in a recognizable order, respect that original order and do not rearrange them. Use your judgment in placing items in alphabetical, chronological, etc. order.

Records and Papers

In everyday usage, it is simple to refer to units of archival materials as collections. However, in forming a proper title, the following definitions should guide you.

Records: In processing, this term generally refers to items generated within the context of an organization through functions, activities and transactions. For example: The Records of Ryan Aeronautical; The Records of the Consolidated Aircraft Corp.

Papers: Personal papers is the term usually used to describe an individual or family's materials. For example: The Papers of Helen Richy; The Papers of Gerald Bogan, etc.

Artificial Collection: This refers to a collection of like materials placed together regardless of provenance to enable management and use. This was done in the past but is no longer standard practice for the Archives. **Subject Collections** are now sometimes created for disparate but related pieces that are not part of any individual collection.

Arrangement

Arrangement makes the information in the collections accessible and provides the basis for description. During arrangement, physical problems are identified so that records can be preserved over the long-term. Arrangement, if performed properly, also makes it possible for users to observe the original order of the records, which provides valuable information about how the author created and used the papers.

Surveying and researching the records

The first thing the processor will need to do is to survey the records, gathering basic information about them. Consider this initial survey as a "first pass" examination of the records. You will not need to examine every single document. A sampling should do. If the records are in a state of disarray, your survey will probably take more time, whereas records that have retained a strong original order should be easier to decipher. The end purpose of the survey is to create a plan for processing the collection.

Before actually examining the records, review any documentation from the accessioning process. Examine the accession files. What has the donor already told you about these records, their usefulness during their active life, and any information they contain?

While working with the collection, be very careful to retain the existing order of the records, even if no such order is apparent. Resist the temptation to rearrange records as you work your way through on this first pass. Keep an eye out for any traces of a previous organization, which may have been disassembled at some point. Color-coded file folders, handwriting matches, and pockets of records grouped together by what appear to be chronological or alphabetical arrangements are potential clues. Do not attempt to reconstruct any disassembled arrangement at this stage. Merely make a note of it.

The following questions are notes you should take as surveying the collection:

- What types of records are present (e.g. correspondence, ledgers, memorandums, photographic negatives, sound recordings, etc.)?
- What years do the records cover?
- What events, circumstances, and activities are documented?
- How were the records utilized during their active life?
- Are the records the result of a special format or technique (e.g. a specific photographic process)? What are the unique characteristics of that technique, that should be noted during arrangement and description of the records?
- What are the physical conditions of the records? Knowledge about the physical needs of the materials will help you to rehouse them appropriately as you undertake the processing.
- Is there an existing arrangement or order to the records? Do they fall into natural groupings? If so, what are these groupings based on – material, format, subject, the person(s) who created the records?
- Are there noticeable gaps in the records, dates or events for which documentation is conspicuously absent?
- Are there records that should be restricted to some or all potential users, due to issues of confidentiality or security?
- What related records exist within the Museum's archives? Within other repositories?

Deciding the level of arrangement for the collection

A collection can be organized at several levels. Archival arrangement and description is often hierarchical, to this end.

COLLECTION

A collection is a group of materials, authored or assembled by an individual or organization. Examples of a collection might include: the personal papers of a well-known author, the business records of an aviation company, or photographs and postcards gathered by a collector.

SERIES

Some collections can be broken into series. Series are discreet, naturally occurring groups of records within a collection, usually large collections. Series should reflect the creators' organization of the materials. In the case of the author's personal papers, series might include: correspondence, diaries, writings, and scrapbooks. Series can be further broken down as necessary, into subseries. The author's writing series might contain these subseries: manuscripts, working notebooks, and publications.

FILING UNIT (FOLDER)

Generally speaking, a filing unit is a folder, containing several documents grouped together under one heading. Filing units within a collection, series, or subseries will be arranged. Possible arrangements include chronologically, alphabetically, topically, or numerically. Prefer the original order when arranging the filing units. Description can be used to make materials more accessible if the creator's arrangement scheme is a difficult one.

ITEM

The item is the individual document, whether it is a piece of correspondence, a photograph, or a manuscript, within each filing unit. Avoid devoting too much time to arranging items within file units. In some cases you will need to do this to make the materials accessible and in others you will not, so use your best judgment. Rare items or autographed material should always be noted.

When arranging a collection, the ultimate goal is to make the materials available expediently and efficiently. Respect the organization imposed by the person who created the records. Not only is this sound archival practice, but it will save you from having to devise an elaborate and time consuming alternate arrangement scheme. Strive for simplicity. There is no need to create complicated hierarchies of series and subseries if you don't need to. Many collections will be arranged and described as a single collection, without series. All the complexities of the records do not need to be revealed in their arrangement. Description is an opportunity to alert users to the many formats and topics represented in the collection.

Discarding original order

Sometimes we must choose to discard original order so that the records will be accessible to researchers. Do not take this step lightly. Examples of instances where the original order may be discarded are as follow:

- No true order is discernable. After careful examination, the records are exactly what they appear to be – a jumbled mess, thrown into boxes. This will often be the case.
- The original order has been completely lost through use or previous attempts to organize the materials. Either it is impossible to recreate the original order or the time and effort it will take cannot be justified.

Sometimes an order may exist that makes little sense to us, but is clear nonetheless. Perhaps an engineer has developed an elaborate numerical code for various aircraft and his files are organized according to this code. Use descriptive tools to explain the state of the records and make them intellectually accessible as you see fit.

Weeding duplicates and Identifying records for disposal

When processing collections, materials such as multiple photocopies can be discarded. In general, keep only two copies of each document. Make sure all the documents are absolutely identical. A different stamp on the reverse or a handwritten not distinguishes two otherwise similar items as different ones. If there are books or objects that bear annotations or a significant inscription, make note in the Condition Report, as they should be removed at a later date. **Do not**

dispose of anything original to the collection. There are serious liability and legal reasons for this. See more under **Deaccessioning**.

Identifying restricted records

When processing a collection, one may come across records which seem sensitive and should be restricted in all or in part. Examples include: correspondence of a highly personal nature between persons who are living; personnel, search committee, or payroll records of an institution. Make sure you review the Deed of Gift to ascertain whether or not the donor has placed restrictions on the materials.

Restrictions should be approved by the appropriate staff. When in doubt about whether or not to restrict records consult with the Head Archivist. In the course of processing records you may become privy to private information. Any records you restrict from researchers should be considered confidential and not discussed. Restricted folders should be clearly labeled as such with red pencil.

Categories of restricted materials:

- Medical records and hospital records are restricted for 110 years from the individual's date of birth to ensure the subject has died before opening them to researchers. Military vaccination records are an exception.
- Official personnel disputes, evaluations, or complaints should be restricted from the general public.
- Student records should be closed for 75 years after the date of the record.
- Financial and business records often contain personal information that would not normally be public knowledge. But if a donor has included them in the collection, one might assume that the donor has no privacy concerns about personal financial information.
- Security restrictions such as classified documents. Make note of these as the Archives must have them declassified.

Imposing an arrangement

When imposing an arrangement there is one rule of thumb – keep it simple! Material, alphabetical, and chronological arrangements will be easy for you to work with.

Preparation and approval of work plan

Before jumping in and physically arranging, you should prepare a processing plan. This plan does not need to be overly detailed and will likely already be created as you make notes. Include:

- A description of the current state and arrangement of the records.
- An outline of proposed series, subseries, and arrangement.
- A list of any materials to be discarded.
- Create a condition report for new acquisitions and/or before arranging the collection.

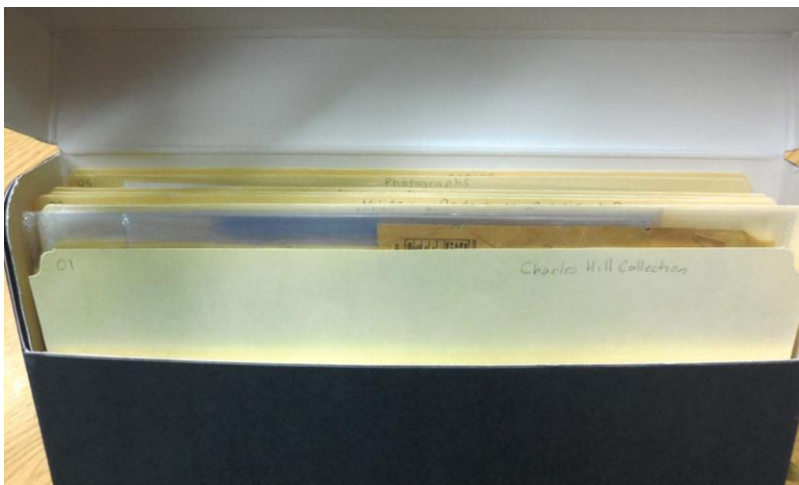
Physical arrangement

Only now are you ready to begin actual arrangement of the collection. As you do this, record information that will supplement the data you gathered in your initial survey and provide the

basis for description. You should now box and group series and subseries together. Use acid-free paper to separate unique series or subseries within a single box.

Folder-level organization

Re-house materials in archival quality folders at this point. If assigning new folder headings, use clear and simple language. Prefer “Correspondence, 1862-1864” to “Letters to Mother, Father, Sister, and Brother, 1862-1864.” Create separation sheets for any materials with special storage needs. Place the separation sheet in a folder where the materials would naturally be filed, with the appropriate folder heading.



A foldered and rehoused collection.

When arranging folders alphabetically, ignore articles (A, And, The). File by the letter of a person’s surname (“Roger Wilder, 1972-3” files under W). When numbering folders, use numbers continuously within the same series, even if the series spans multiple boxes.

Label the folders like this:

Folder # (on the left) “Folder Heading” (on the right)

Collection Name : Series (if applicable)

For example:

Folder 2: Correspondence, 1960

Consolidated Aircraft Corporation Records: Series II

Avoid labeling box and folder numbers until processing is complete. Otherwise you will continually relabel folders as new materials emerge.

Item-level arrangement

It is not always necessary to arrange all the documents within a folder, but do record the date ranges accurately. At times, the only way to do this will be to arrange the documents in each folder. Use your best judgment.

Labeling boxes

This will usually be done by the appropriate staff member. When organizing a small collection, prepare a label for the small boxes, using the following template:

SAN DIEGO AIR & SPACE MUSEUM

Accession number: # # # # #

Title of collection

Box # of #

When organizing a larger collection (more than 5 large boxes), use the following template:

For example:

SAN DIEGO AIR & SPACE MUSEUM

Acc. number #BUC 2001 001

Consolidated Aircraft Corporation, 1935-1995

Correspondences, 1935-1988

Box D, (Box 4 of 4)

Special Handling

Separations, Oversized, and Restricted Materials

Items that require special handling or are restricted based on fragility or sensitivity should be described in normal sequence in the finding guide, but physically separated from the collection using separation sheets. Identify the item specifically, its location within a series and its former box and folder location. Identify the new location on the form. Place a copy of the separation sheet in the original location during initial processing and remove the item to its new location during final boxing. A second copy of the separation sheet should accompany the item to its new location. Boxes or folders of restricted materials come at the end of the collection and be **CLEARLY** marked as restricted.

Fragile Items

Preservation photocopies should be made of all important documents on ephemeral, highly acidic or damaged paper media (such as newspaper clippings, thermofaxes, and telegrams). Newspaper clippings should be housed separately in another folder or acid-free paper folder to prevent chemical migration or housed separately and marked in an additional list created for a “Restricted Fragile” box, but described in its particular Series in the finding guide with a restrictions note. If the item is only somewhat fragile, or Mylar sleeving can provide the necessary support, it may be left in its original location.

Always make note of fragile materials in the Condition Report.

Deaccessioning

For the purposes of the project, irrelevant materials should be noted and only extra photocopies discarded. Duplicates of printed materials should also be discarded. Keep the best two versions of multiple items. Place the remaining duplicates in a separate box clearly marked as “Duplicate Material” and set aside until the collection is completely processed. Make note in the finding guide as to where originals and duplicates are kept. Annotated photocopies should be kept and noted as a copy in the finding guide. In general, photocopy duplicates of original material in good condition are considered excess and are to be discarded. **Materials for discard need authorization from the Head Archivist.** Do not discard anything without approval. This is for legal and liability reasons.

Writing the Finding Guide

The most important step in processing an archival collection is creating a finding guide to the materials for researchers. This provides intellectual control over the items and it facilitates access and retrieval for research and preservation purposes.

Larger, more complex collections may require detailed finding guides, containing indices, timelines, glossaries, or other additional tools. In general, the simpler the better. Provide enough information to assist researchers through the course of their work, enabling them to unearth more information. You may choose to put more effort into finding guides for popular research collections, regardless of complexity or volume. Use your time wisely. You can always return to a collection and add detail to its finding guide.

Template of Finding Guide

Electronic copies of the following templates can be copied and filled in to provide the proper formatting for the finding guides. They are located at: Photodrobo server > Special Collections > New Documents. Please make sure that the document you are typing is single-spaced, Times New Roman, font size 12. The following is a finding guide template for a collection.

Notes on using this Finding Guide Template: *Italics indicate instructions and material to be deleted or replaced. Italics and [brackets] provide examples and instructions only.* Items that are in **bold** or underlined should remain **bold** or underlined in the final formatting. NO *italics* should be in the final format.

[- Page 1-]

Descriptive Finding Guide for

[name]

[photo]

Prepared by: *Name*

Day Month Year

[Recent Update:]

[- Page 2 and onward -]

Cataloging Information

ACC#: *[assigned during initial donation after approved to be a part of the collection. Check if your collection has black-stamped numbers on materials, for example 32.51 SDAM.]*

Box Code:

L.C. MS.#: *[Library of Congress number assigned by librarian. Sometimes on box.]*

Location: *[Archives]*

Restrictions: *[Some collections have usage issues. Most will be: none]*

URL: *[usually the Flickr page for the collection, if applicable]*

Copyright: SDASM

Provenance

[Sample] The materials in this collection were given to the San Diego Air & Space Museum in [year] by [whom] in [years]. The collection has been fully processed and is open for research [with no restrictions/list restrictions].

History

History of collection/Biography – use this section to provide context to the collection. Briefly explain any significant people, corporations, subjects, or events that would give a researcher or someone perusing the finding guide online a framework for the collection. Do your research! You can check online sources, examine the collection itself, and use library resources.

Scope & Content Notes

How many boxes and what sizes? What formats and materials are present? List data ranges for separate groups of materials when appropriate. How are materials arranged (ABC's, or 123s)? What topics and events are documented in the records? What materials accompany the collection?

Related SDASM Resources: *[Do we have any logbooks, drawings, or other collections that might give further context to this collection? Is there a Flickr album for this collection? There is a in Network>FILESERVER>library>Searchable Lists where consolidated lists of museum resources are made available for you to see what other related resources or collections there might be. If there is an aircraft of interest in your collection, search for photos, etc.]*

Related Research Institutions: *[May be left blank, but good place to look is in the Online Archive of California: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/>. Also, see if the collection has items in other museums or related historical associations.]*

Secondary Sources: *[Secondary sources can be books, scholarly journals, or authenticated, viable websites. You could do a search in EOS. When listing, use Chicago Style notation, for quick reference use the Chicago Manual of Style Quick Cite page: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html]*

Important Personalities & Subjects

Found in the collection: tags, aircraft of importance, types of aircraft, themes, important individuals, locations, and time periods. These are keywords that will be input into metadata

when these finding guides are made available online. A list of keywords, subject terms, and aircraft terms is constantly being developed and the latest copies will be provided to you.

Content & Series Description

[“Series” will likely only be applicable to larger collections, like Convair or Rohr, in which several boxes may be categorized by general content]

SERIES I: Corporate records, boxes 1-12.

SERIES II: Financial records, boxes 13-21.

SERIES III: Photographs and Albums, boxes 21-29.

SERIES IV: Aircraft schematics, boxes 30-35.

Box Listing

[This section will contain the organizational record of the collection, making it easier for researchers, volunteers, archivists, or anyone else to locate items of interest. This does not need to be a detailed inventory list. Photographic collections exceeding 100 components can be listed in the formatted example under Box II below.]

Box 01

Series I: Records

Folder 01 – Correspondence *[When you have completed ordering your collection, label your folder the same way it is listed in the Finding Guide with the number of the folder on the upper left and the title of the folder on the upper right.]*

- 1. John Smith to Jane Smith, July 4, 1900.*
- 2. Make sure all your entries have appropriate commas and end in a period.*
- 3. [Signature illegible] to Jane Smith, regarding Charles Lindbergh, June 8, 1931.*

[alternately, when not doing a detailed listing, summarize the contents of the folder and highlight items of significant interest, for example...]

Folder 02 – Trans-Atlantic Flight

Folder contains 23 items, primarily correspondence related to the financing of Lindbergh’s flight, letters to and from John Smith discussing the flight, including:

- 1. Copy of map detailing route from New York to Paris, autographed by Charles Lindbergh.*
- 2. Drawing of Spirit of St. Louis, signed by contemporary artist.*

Box 02

Folder 03 – Photographs I *[photographs will have their own catalogue number assigned when digitized]*

- 1. 235 Photographs of Aircraft depicting Lockheed, Curtiss, and PSA commercial liners, c. 1935-1956.*

Folder 04 – Photographs II [use Roman numerals when folders have the same name]
1. 120 Personal Photographs depicting travels across the United States, c. 1955-1967.

End of Box Listing

Drawer Listing

[If applicable, this segment can be removed if collection is not a drawer listing.]

Series I: Cabinet in Basement

Drawer 1

Images

End of Drawer Listing

End of explained Finding Guide Sample.

Preservation and the Archive Condition Report

Condition Report

Rehousing the materials is part of the Special Collections project and will help preserve the collections. When organizing and arranging the collection the condition of the materials. After completing the processing the collection, fill out an **Archive Condition Report** (Photodrobo server > Special Collections > New Documents), save a digital copy, and include a hard copy with the collection. Fill out a Condition Report per each box in the collection. This allows appropriate staff members to know the condition of a collection and what conservation measures need to be taken.

Look for and make note of:

- Frayed, brittle, or fragile materials are rehousing in plastic sleeves or within archival bond paper.
- Any tape or glue utilized in the collection.
- Metal or plastic paperclips removed and materials held together by archival paper.
- Staples and metal bindings should be shown to the archivist and listed for removal.
- Items that need to remain folded in order to fit into the archival box. Never add your own folds.

Major problems, such as deteriorating negatives, strong smells, detached book spines, mold, mildew, or insects should be immediately reported to the appropriate staff member.

Basic Preservation Tasks

Boxing records - Collections should be stored in archival quality boxes. Boxes should be filled, but not crowded. Choose box sizes that fit the materials as closely as possible. Materials of different formats and sizes should be separately boxed. For example, house photographs in a different box from manuscript materials, even if part of the same collection. Small collections can be kept within the same box.



Survey the collection and select the appropriately sized box.

Refolding - Documents should be placed in archival quality folders. Avoid overfilling folders. Between 20 and 25 documents or pages per folder is sufficient. Fragile documents, or documents that may damage others when in contact with them, should be placed in their own folders.

Photocopying - Newspaper clippings or other acidic papers should be replaced with preservation photocopies. If photographs are removed from other files, they may be replaced with photocopies. Make all preservation photocopies on permanent bond weight paper.

Flattening - Unfold materials that have been creased, rolled, or folded. Previously folded items can be placed flat under a heavy book for a few days. If the item is too delicate to unfold or there is only one item in the collection that unfolded would be too large for the box, make note of it in the Condition Report. Oversized materials should be noted for removal at a later date.

Removing fasteners - Metallic fasteners, such as pins, paper clips, binder clips, and staples, will rust and cause damage to the surrounding paper over time. These materials should be removed. ALWAYS remove paper clips and pins. Refer to the Archivist for staples or any metal that has punctured paper. If materials need to remain grouped together they can be foldered separately or housed within a larger folder in an internal folder constructed of a piece of permanent paper folded in half.

Cleaning - Make note in the Condition Report of items that need to be cleaned.

After Completing the Finding Guide and Condition Report

After processing the collection and completing the Finding Guide and Condition Report, save the Finding Guide and Condition Report with titles formatted as follows:

Last Name, First Name (or name of collection) – Name of Document

For example:

Bahl, Errold G Collection – Finding Guide

Army Air Corp Air Mail Accidents – Condition Report

Save a copy of the Finding Guide as a PDF. When you have completed this step, notify the archivist who will transfer the digital files to the appropriate folders. If the *History* section of the Finding Guide exceeds 400 words, write a summary of 400 words or less and save the document as a separate file. Also with one image that best exemplifies the collection to be used on the Museum website.

Print one (1) copy of the Finding Guide to include in the Special Collections Finding Guide Binder and one copy of the guide per box (or archival container) of the collection. Print two (2) copies of the Condition Report. The first is placed with the collection, and the second is filed in the Condition Report Binder.

At this point, notify the appropriate staff member, who will review the work and upload it to the Museum website and Archivists ToolKit.