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Larry J. Wagenaar

Craig G. Wright

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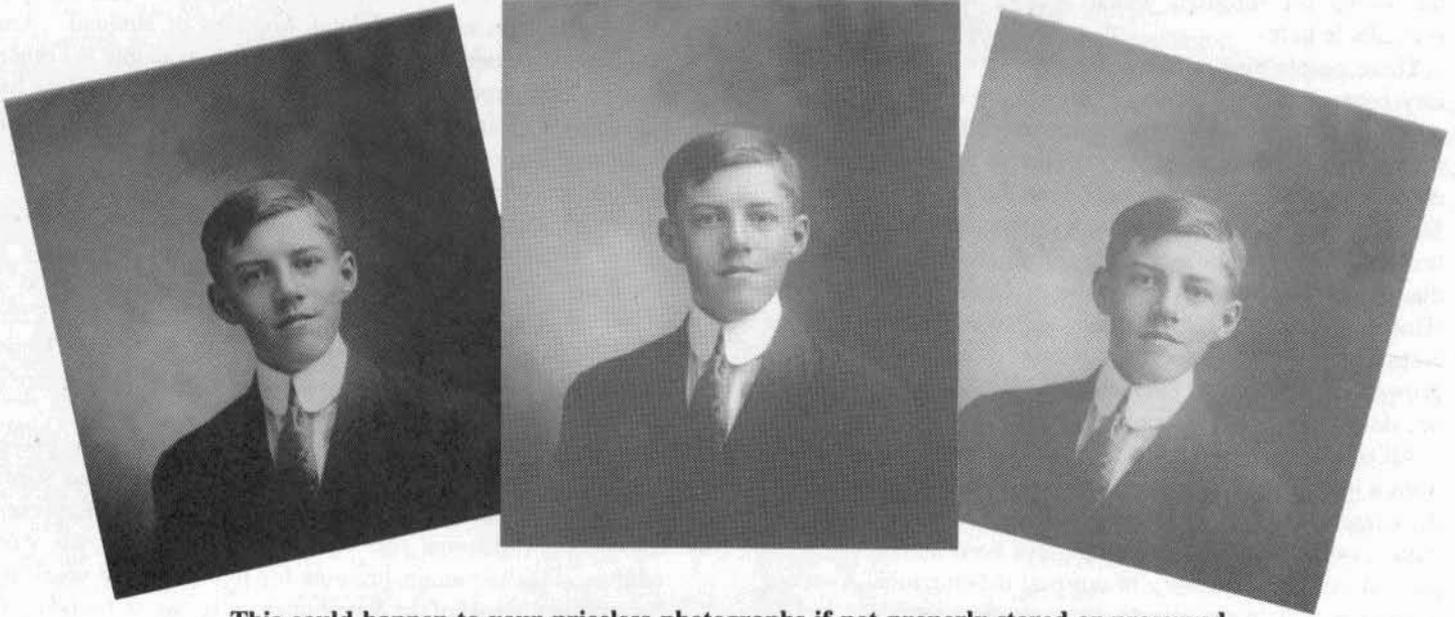
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The Joint Archives Quarterly

Volume 4 Number 3

Hints for Preserving Family Photos



This could happen to your priceless photographs if not properly stored or preserved.

Do you know that something may be destroying your precious family photographs as you read these words? Are your memories recorded on film threatened? We thought you might benefit from a little advice from an archivist on how to start dealing with your photographs. You might also like to check out our upcoming workshop on February 20 designed to give you in-depth advice on this subject.

All photographs can be damaged by high humidity that exceeds 50%, temperatures in excess of 72° F, and too much light. Too much light can result in fading, yellowing and a host of other problems that will destroy your precious memories of the past. Protective storage will preserve them and ensure that they will be around for your family for decades to come.

The sulfur, oils and acids that are present in human skin can damage photos and leave a white fingerprint. While you are handling the photographs avoid touching the image. Also, pen ink can bleed through the back and stain the

photograph. Either write on the page next to the image or use a pencil to identify who is in the picture, date and place on the reverse. This should be done in a very dense part of the image on the reverse side or up in the margin of the image.

Fading Photos Workshop

See page 3 for workshop on preserving old photos.

Don't press hard or you can damage what is on the other side!

While creating a photo album can take some time, it does provide for easy access to your collected memories. Albums also protect your photos from fingerprints, light and airborne pollutants. Several suppliers provide albums made of acid-free paper and mylar or other plastic that will not damage photos. You should avoid (like the plague) scrapbooks that have ground wood pulp pages — the ultimate in acidic paper. If the paper looks cheap it probably is.

Several types of albums should be avoided. One of them is the ever popular, cheap and very destructive "magnetic" photo album. The mild adhesive will cease to be mild over the years and will bind your image permanently to the album and might also eat into the image itself from the back. If the adhesive was applied in lines the damage to your photographs will follow this pattern.

If you have images in this type of album and they have already started to stick permanently try heating the images mildly with a hair dryer to remove them.

The plastic used in many albums can also be damaging. Another type of album to avoid are ones made of polyvinyl chloride or PVC. PVC is an inexpensive plastic which tends to be somewhat pliable, has a "plastic smell," and will damage your photographs over time by interacting with your photographs.

If you'd like to learn more, The Joint Archives of Holland will be hosting a workshop on February 20 that will address this and many more topics.

The Joint Archives Quarterly

From the Director

These past few months I have had the wonderful opportunity to meet a number of fascinating people who have come to the Joint Archives for research. Each time the staff interacts with a patron coming in the door it is a new opportunity to help them investigate our history and share with them the wonderful resource which is available here.

These people visit our repository because of the richness and diversity of our collections which is an asset to our entire community. The Joint Archives is rich precisely because you have been so generous with your donations of historical materials over the past several years. Since the Archives was formed in 1988 as a joint program bringing together the archival collections (letters, photos, diaries, newspapers, etc.,) of the Holland Historical Trust (Holland Museum), Hope College and Western Seminary the collections here have doubled. Not only have the collections grown dramatically but the number of people walking through our door has more than tripled.

All of this growth has been both a joy and a strain. It has been a joy because we can now see a broader participation in the preservation of our history. Things are being saved and made available that before would have been dumped or shipped out of town. The story of our past is being told. A record number of people are using us for countless purposes.

The strain revolves around our efforts to keep up with the growth. Since 1990 we have added a second professional archivist, however, his public grant funding expires this coming year and we have been working hard to provide for permanent funding. The Collection Manager is a critical part of the work done at the Joint Archives of Holland. It is really amazing the amount of work and the services we are able to provide with such a limited staff.

Best wishes for a wonderful new year!

Larry J. Wagenaar
Director



Guy A. Vander Jagt Papers

U.S. Rep. Guy A. Vander Jagt has placed his Congressional papers, covering his 26 years in the House of Representatives in Washington, D.C., in the Hope College collection of the Joint Archives.

The contribution includes more than 900 linear feet of unprocessed archival materials and is the largest single collection ever received at the Joint Archives. Vander Jagt, a 1953 Hope graduate, completed his 13th consecutive two-year term serving Michigan's Ninth Congressional District.

"We are excited that Congressman Vander Jagt has chosen his alma mater for his congressional papers," said Larry J. Wagenaar, director of the Joint Archives of Holland. "Our role is to document history and make this available for others to use, learn from and enjoy. Clearly Mr. Vander Jagt has played an important role in the life of western Michigan and the entire United States, and I am sure his papers will be a popular research tool."

Vander Jagt was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1966, in a special election to fill a vacancy in Michigan's Ninth Congressional District. He has served as chairperson of the National Republican Congressional Committee, was the second ranking minority member of the House Committee on Ways and Means and has been a major figure in the House Republican leadership.

Through his many years of service, Vander Jagt has played an important part in shaping the policies of the United States. His leadership on and off the floor of the House of Representatives, his influential role on critical committees, his work with presidential administrations for more than 25 years and his work on behalf of the Republican party can be found in the papers.

"Researchers from throughout the United States will be using the Vander Jagt Collection, and will include scholars writing books and articles, undergraduate and graduate students writing papers, theses and dissertations, and other members of the general public," Wagenaar said. "His papers represent one of the most important historical collections of a national political figure in the 20th century."

The collection currently comprises some 600 boxes of material. According to Wagenaar it will be several years before the collection is fully processed.

Holland Museum Opens With Exhibit Honoring Willard C. Wichers

The new Holland Museum opened with great fanfare on the weekend of December 12th. The museum is part of the Holland Historical Trust which also administers the Cappon House and is one of the three member institutions of the Joint Archives of Holland.

Inside the doors at the newly renovated facility on the corner of 10th Street and River Avenue you'll find a fascinating journey through Holland's past which draws on the museum's large object collection and materials gleaned from the archives. Maritime, industrial and religious history highlights are among the professionally constructed exhibits that are

presented in new and exciting ways — not just materials laid out in a display box.

A special exhibit has been constructed honoring the museum's founder Willard C. Wichers. Tracing his life's work and using his own words, the series of displays tells the story of his life and how important his efforts have been to many residents of Holland and to the preservation of our community's history.

The museum is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10-5, Thursday 10-8 and Sunday 2-5 and is closed on Tuesday. You will find it a fascinating experience!

The Joint Archives Quarterly

The Processor's Table

by
Craig G. Wright
Collections Manager

The presidential election is now behind us and, depending on your political affiliation, you are either looking forward with anticipation to January 20 or you are settling down for the long wait for November 1996 when you get another chance. Either way you are probably glad that all the campaigning, media hype and mud slinging is finally over and we can get down to the serious business of enjoying the holidays, right? Just when you thought it was safe to forget about politics for a while, I have decided to write about some of the events of our nation's early presidential elections.

In the Holland Historical Trust's pamphlet collection we have an interesting item dated from 1892 edited by Thomas Hudson McKee, "The National Platforms of all Political Parties With the Names of all Candidates at each Presidential Election From 1789 to 1892 Showing the vote for each Candidate both Electoral and Popular." This is a fascinating little book with all sorts of useful information if one is interested in the origins of our political system and those early Presidents whose names we memorized when we were in school but have long since forgotten.

Did you know that in the first election, held in 1789, only ten states voted? Or that only three states — Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia — actually had a popular vote of the people for President? North Carolina and Rhode Island had not yet ratified the constitution so they were ineligible to participate, and New York was deadlocked between its Federalist senate and Anti-Federalist house of representatives so no electors were chosen. The other seven states chose presidential electors in their respective legislatures.

The appointment of electors by state legislatures was the basis for the electoral college system. Most people at the time thought that choosing the President (and Senators as well) was too important to be left up to "the people." Another major difference between politics today and the time of the founding fathers is that political parties were considered to be an evil which would sacrifice the common

good for partisan concerns. George Washington himself warned against the idea of parties and its negative effects in his farewell address:

"It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part



against the other, foment occasional riot and insurrection...A fire not to be quenched; it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into flame, lest instead of warming it should consume."

One can hear echoes of these sentiments in the voices of those who speak out against today's gridlock in Washington.

Did you know that twice we have had presidents who have LOST the popular vote but won the electoral college?

In the 1876 election, Democratic New York Governor Samuel J. Tilden received over 250,000 votes more than eventual

Fading Photos Workshop

The Joint Archives of Holland is sponsoring a workshop which will deal with issues of storing and preserving old photographs. It will include an informative multi-media presentation, explanation of the various types of photographs and history of photography, recommendations on storage materials and opportunities for hands-on work which will include the chance to deal with individual problems.

Mark Coir will conduct the workshop. He is director of the Archives and Historical Collection of the Cranbrook Historical Community in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., and has conducted a number of workshops on historical photographs.

Join us for an interesting morning of activities learning to identify and handle photographs and the history of photography. Space is limited. Refreshments will be provided.

The workshop will be held at the Joint Archives of Holland's reading room on the ground floor of the Van Wylen library, 10th Street and College Avenue, Saturday, Feb. 20. It begins with registration and coffee at 8:30 a.m. and concludes at noon.

Registration \$20.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Institutional affiliation (if any) _____

Return to: **Fading Photos Workshop**
The Joint Archives of Holland
Hope College Campus
Holland, MI 49423

Please make checks payable to The Joint Archives of Holland.

(Continued on page 4)

Preserving Family Photos

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The Joint Archives of Holland

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Processor's Table

(Continued from page 3)

Republican President Rutherford B. Hayes. At first Tilden had 184 electoral votes and Hayes 165, but four states were claimed by both parties with a total of 20 electoral votes. An electoral commission made up of five senators, five representatives and five Supreme Court judges was established to decide the results in Oregon, South Carolina, Louisiana and Florida, the latter three traditional Democratic strongholds in the post Civil War era. There were eight Republicans and seven Democrats on the commission and the vote for each state was eight to seven in favor of Hayes, giving him 185 electoral votes, enough to win by one vote.

The deciding vote in every instance was cast by Republican justice Joseph P. Bradley. The Republican Senate accepted each decision and the Democratic House rejected them. One could argue that Justice Bradley chose the president that year. It seems that the nightmare of par-

tisan politics Washington warned against had indeed burst into flame. That was also the last election that a state, Colorado, did not choose the president by popular vote.

In 1888 the Democrats won the popular vote again, but not the Presidency as Grover Cleveland lost to Benjamin Harrison, despite accumulating almost 100,000 more votes. Cleveland had been elected President in 1884 and would be re-elected in 1892, thus becoming our nation's only President to serve two non-consecutive terms.

These are just a few of the interesting anecdotes discovered after perusing McKee's pamphlet. Other presidents about which we have materials include: George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, William Taft, Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and George Bush. Although much of the Joint Archives focus is on local history, there are some very interesting items which help illustrate the color of American history.

Calendar

February 20 - Fading Photos Workshop on handling, preserving and storing historical photographs. Mark Coir. Fee: \$20.

April 29 - Annual Spring Speaker Program. Francis X. Blouin, Director of the University of Michigan's Bentley Historical Library. 3 p.m. Winants Auditorium, Graves Hall. Admission is free.

June 19 - Archives 101. Basic Archival Skills Workshop. A very popular all-day workshop to learn how to deal with archival materials. Richard Harms. Fee: \$30.
