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The Eighty - Three

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Area 83 Archives Newsletter

Our Area 83 history through the eyes of those before us... A legacy of gratitude

Creating and saving our history

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Saving our History

INTRODUCTION

The following is an introduction to basic archives information for those new Archives Chairpersons at the District levels in Area 83.

As a new chair, we often ask the question 'What should I be collecting?' This is a common question and the answer is also not an easy one. It depends on whether there is already an established committee or if you are starting from scratch.

Most committees will collect meeting minutes, talks of AA speakers, conference flyers, group flyers, special event flyers, The list could be endless. At a recent workshop the following list was compiled:

Meeting Minutes
Conference Flyers and Programs
Conference Committee Minutes
District Committee Minutes
Meeting Lists
Group Histories
Oral Histories
Group Anniversary Flyers
First Edition Program Books

Personal Notes of key members

STORAGE

Now that you have decided what to collect, you now must decide where to store this information. As paper is very susceptible to humidity and dampness it is important to store your records in a facility where it is possible to manage the humidity. Garages and home basements are not recommended but you may wish to make an arrangement with your local Museum, archives or even a church facility which keeps their historical records. You might want to join a local archival association or historical society to gain information about storing your records. These organizations can also be a resource when you have to preserve or restore important documents.

PRESERVATION

In order to preserve the records you acquire it is important to store them in acid free storage containers or

Of Special Interest

See the Archivist's Blog:
<http://archivist.area83aa.org/>

Contributions to 'The Eighty - Three' should be sent to:
archivisit@area83aa.org

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large plastic storage bins. It is also necessary to ensure that documents are kept in acid-free folders or stored in acid-free plastic protectors. Some archives also remove paper clips and staples from older documents.

When trying to clean up paper documents first lay down a large bristle board sheet (white), then begin cleaning by gently brushing the surface with a soft brush to remove loose dirt and dust. Pick off accretions such as insect specks and rust deposits (using a scalpel tip). If specks are difficult to remove, leave them on the documents.

Local deposits of dirt may be reduced or removed by gently rubbing with a white vinyl plastic eraser using a soft motion from left to right or top to bottom. Rub in short gentle strokes to avoid setting up a pattern of erasure marks or abrading of the document. Do not persist if no improvement can be made. You can obtain erasers, brushes and white bristle board from Dollar stores for around \$10.00.

If there is writing on the document, leave it there as it adds to the importance of the document. However, it is not necessary to stamp the books with the name of the Archival Section.

It is important to remember whatever you are trying to do must be able to be undone without further damaging the document you are working on. Tape or glue which is applied must be able to be removed without causing any damage to the original document. There are archival bulletins which are available from the Canadian Conservation Institute at <https://www.cci-icc.gc.ca/resources-ressources/ccinotesicc/index-eng.aspx> or <https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/overview>.

DISPLAYING YOUR MATERIAL

Once you have collected some archival material it is important to be display them for your local district or area at local conferences and special gatherings. If you have First Edition Big Books or 12 & 12, it is important to keep them in a protected display case and only allow people to inspect them using white cotton gloves. Bear in mind that books are to be used on a semi-regular basis so it is important to make your community aware you have these books and to display them.

Some areas will have large display cases made but others have limited resources so it is possible to use lesser quality displays like cardboard or fibre board display cases. Should your district not have the funds to purchase even the simplest of display cases obtain these from stationery stores like Staples or Business Depot. Even a simple display is better than none at all.

Materials that may be displayed with little other resources are some of the following:

- Photo Albums of AA Events
- Collections of Pamphlets
- Grapevine Collections
- Local Newspaper Article Collections
- Selected documents from the Collection
- A list of how the group or district started relating back to how it connects to our co-founders.

Other events include Group anniversaries, Area Conferences, Long-Timer Breakfasts or Lunches, Birthdays, etc.

Start with one thing, perfect it, then move on to a second project to show your committees that success is possible as long as we practice 'First Things First'.