

Visual Genealogy

Janet Brigham
Silicon Valley Computer
Genealogy Group

- Seeing Images as Genealogy
- Selecting and setting up a scanner
- Scanning photos and slides
- Fixing photos

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham. Do not duplicate without prior permission.

Seeing Photos as Genealogy: The Historical Value of Photos

- Historical value of the photo
- Archiving your photos
- Scanning your images
- Repairing your images

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Historical value of photos

- What is the purpose of preserving this photo?
- How important is the background information?
- Solution
 - Scan the whole photo for the master
 - Crop and edit for printing and sharing

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Scanning Photos and Slides

- Scan the image to your computer
- You may want more than one scanner
 - Slides and negatives
 - Photos, documents
 - Traveling, taking to libraries

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Editing software

- You need editing software to make the most of your photos, documents, slides
 - Sometimes comes with the scanner
 - Picmonkey.com
Online, free (for now)
 - Adobe Photoshop Elements
(PC or Mac; steep learning curve)
 - Pixelator (Mac)

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Some first steps

- Use a scanner that won't damage your originals
- If you use a laptop, consider connecting it to a monitor and mouse
- Consider a monitor calibrator device

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Next steps

- Check your monitor resolution; best if it's at least 1024 x 768
- Monitor size best at least 17"
- Use neutral color theme for computer desktop background
- **Calibrate your monitor**; consider a calibration monitor such as Huey

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Software

- To edit photos on your computer:
You need to install the scanner driver software to operate the scanner on your computer
- To edit photos online
 - Upload them to an online editing program (such as PicMonkey.com)
 - Edit them online using the site's features
 - Download them back to your computer

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Steps in Fixing Photos

1. Crop the image
2. Fix the defects
3. Build the color
4. Adjust the color
5. Sharpen the image

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Identifying and handling old photos: Resources

- **Preservation: Digitalpreservation.com/you**
- **Identifying time periods**
 - www.ajmorris.com/roots/photo/
 - www.classyarts.com/howto.htm
 - oldphoto.com/Old%20Photo%20ID.htm
 - www.olivetreegenealogy.com/photos/fashions-photos.shtml
 - dancurtis.ca/2010/02/10/how-to-identify-old-family-photographs/
- **Identifying individuals**
 - genealogy.about.com/od/photo_dating/ss/identification.htm
 - www.mayrand.org/photoid-e.htm
 - www.ehow.com/how_4815568_identify-old-family-photographs.html

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Genealogy documents

- Old
- Fragile
- Awkward to handle
- Irreplaceable

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Scanning situations

- **Scanning on the go**
 - Libraries
 - Family gatherings
- **Scanning at your desk**
 - Time to check scans thoroughly
 - Time to edit scans

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Types of scanners

- Sheet-feed
- Flatbed
- Handheld
- Smartphone apps

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Pass-through / sheet-feed scanners

- Don't take on a research trip
- Don't use with old documents or photos
- Office use only, such as scanning business cards

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Flatbed Scanner

- If you're careful, not damaging to document or photo
- With USB power, can run off your laptop computer – good for traveling
- Scan slides and negatives with attachment that comes with some scanners

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Flip-Pal scanner

- Don't use it to scan documents
- Works for photos, may work for objects
- Battery-operated

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Handheld scanner

- Practice ahead of time
- Better for books and documents
- Works better with glass to hold the pages flat, and avoid ruffling edges of books
- Battery-operated

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Smartphone apps

- Pocket Scanner
- Cam Scanner Pro

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Smartphone apps

- Try CamScanner Pro (or free version)
- Practice ahead of time
- Email image to yourself – handy!

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

Resolution

- **Output quality of an image**
 - PPI (pixels per inch): screen resolution
 - DPI (dots per inch): print resolution
 - SPI (samples per inch): scanning resolution
- **Types of resolution**
 - **High resolution** (hi-res): intended for printing, usually >300 samples per inch
 - **Low resolution** (low-res): intended for screen display, <100 pixels per inch
- **Digital camera/scanner terminology**
 - **Optical resolution** is the true measurement of resolution that the output device can capture
 - **Interpolated**, or **digital**, **resolution** is acquired artificially.
- **Scanning negatives and slides: Use highest resolution**

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

“Save as...”

- **Archiving or editing later**
 - TIFF
 - PNG
- **Second copy** in the native file format of your image editing software, such as a PSD (Adobe Photoshop) file.
- Archive an **unedited** version of the file

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham

“I’m confused”

- It’s simpler than you think
 - Scan at a suitable resolution
 - Check your scanned image to make sure you can edit it to be usable
 - Store an unedited archive copy
 - Back up your scanned copies
 - Edit a **copy** of the archive copy, not the archive copy itself

Copyright 2012 Janet Brigham