

Alice Larson - organizing source material

Alice described how she organized all her family records in 40 acid-free, archival document cases.



The Boxes:

The boxes are acid-free, archival document cases from Uline:

BLUE/GRAY ARCHIVAL DOCUMENT CASES								Passed P.A.T.	
MODEL NO.	RECORD TYPES	SIZE W x H x D	QTY./ CTN.	PRICE EACH (SOLD IN CARTON QTY'S.)				ADD TO CART	
				5	10	25	50+		
S-15529	Letter	12 1/4 x 10 1/4 x 5"	5	\$10.75	\$10.35	\$10.00	\$9.55	5 <input type="button" value="ADD"/>	
S-15530	Legal	15 1/4 x 10 1/4 x 5"	5	11.10	10.70	10.25	9.85	5 <input type="button" value="ADD"/>	

Uline also carries acid-free folders for individual documents or large photos.

The Process:

Before tackling the job of organizing our source material, I gathered it all (family documents, photos, negatives, and existing genealogy records) and divided them into 40 boxes based on a variety of themes, for example:

People

- Father
- Mother
- Each Child
- Me, My Husband

Significant events

- Weddings
- Wars

Groups of People

- Cousins, Aunts, Uncles
- Genealogy material & obituaries of extended family (on each side)

Dates or Significant Intervals

- Recent photos/negative (usually a couple of years per box for the last 40 years)
- College, Before Children, Retirement
- Video and audio tapes to be converted to CDs, DVDs

Downsized material

- Photos of objects (before recycling them) with stories behind them

The Goal:

Within each box, the material is usually in simple chronological order. I keep finding photos here and there as I downsize our house, but at least I have a logical place to file them for now. My goal upon returning to this material is to find the most representative photos to illustrate our nuclear family's story over the last 50 years.

Eventually I plan on writing some biographies:

My Father, a WWII pilot and brilliant educator

My Mother, a WWII army nurse & bored housewife who studied Russian for fun

My Daughter, a Princeton grad and Acting CEO of two small companies

My Son, a world traveler who works at the US State Department

My Grandfather, an insurance salesman who became an Episcopal priest

My Grandmother, who taught me to make lace and have pillow fights

Karen Lilley - 71 years of scrapbooks

My mother was very organized and had put together 71 years of scrapbooks. With the help of my photographer husband I made copies of all of the scrapbooks and sent them to my siblings on 32 GB flash drives, one flash drive per sibling.

We used an old fashioned copy stand my husband had. The copy stand is what they used to shoot flat art and pages before they had digital scanners. The digital camera



could auto-focus, and since the pages were pretty much all the same size, I didn't have to adjust the camera for every shot. The base could easily accommodate the 12" x 12" pages (typical scanners are smaller).

We attached a digital camera to the stand and replaced the original lights with LED lights so the heat would not be so intense. I took apart the albums so I could shoot one page at a time flat under glass on the base of the copy stand. This way I did not have to remove individual pictures. Shooting each page with a high resolution digital camera allows me to crop out individual photos if I need to. Clicking the camera shutter is a lot faster than scanning individual pages.

I also made inquiries at local photo stores for doing the same thing and found that Astound Video Duplication and Transfer offered a very reasonable price. They quoted me \$.99/page. They were the only one I found who used a copy stand. They have 5 metro locations.

71 years of scrapbooks

Six pages from 1982

The image shows a digital photo gallery interface. On the left is a sidebar with a list of years from 1949 to 1982, each with a 'Date Modified' column. The year 1982 is selected. On the right, six individual scrapbook pages are displayed in a grid, each with a caption below it. The pages contain various photographs and text, including family portraits, group photos, and individual portraits.

Name	Date Modified
▶ 1949	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1949 Wedding Album	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1950	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1951	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1952	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1953	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1954	Feb 22, 2021
▶ 1955	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1956	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1957	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1958	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1959	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1960	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1961	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1962	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1963	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1964	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1965	Feb 22, 2021
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▶ 1968	Feb 22, 2021
▶ 1969	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1970	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1971	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1972	Feb 22, 2021
▶ 1973	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1974	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1975	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1976	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1977	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1978	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1979	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1980	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1981	Feb 21, 2021
▶ 1982	Feb 21, 2021

1982-19.JPG

1982-20.JPG

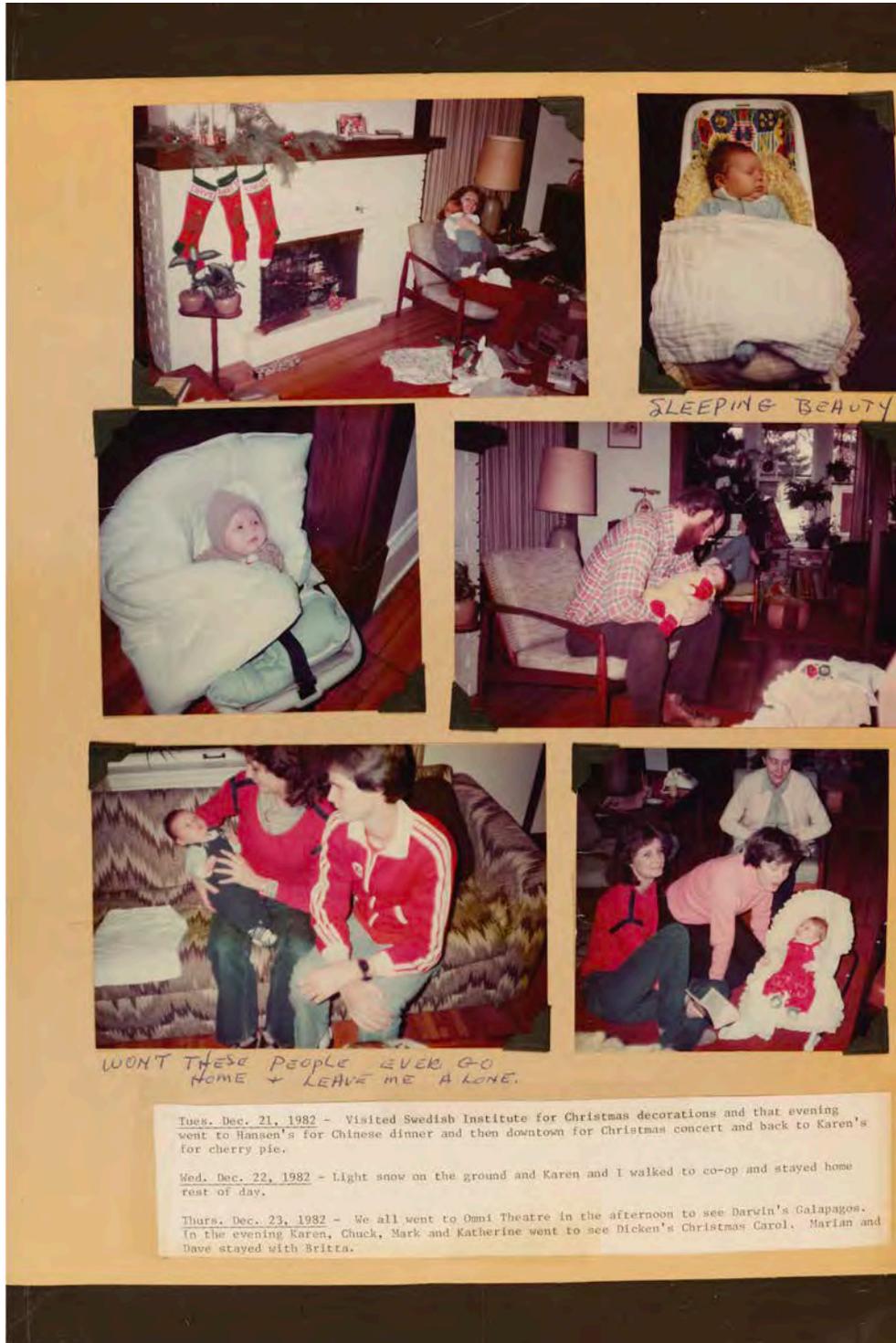
1982-21.JPG

1982-22.JPG

1982-23.JPG

1982-24.JPG

The 23rd page of the 1982 scrapbook



Jeanne Matross

I have photo albums that tell family history in a more traditional generation by generation way but I also have 17 categorial albums. I have found that putting pictures together in a categorial way adds a different perspective to family history and can provide a place for that odd photo. I also add funny or explanatory comments to the matched photos so it's a great opportunity for creativity.

There's a Definite Family Resemblance - could be many things - facial resemblance, a certain look, same clothes - anything that seems to link two pictures together

Brothers and Sisters and Sisters and Brothers

Cousins

First Photos (earliest photos of family members)

First Steps

Something Missing - could be anything - head missing from photo -person missing from photo, missing piece of clothing.....

Something Wrong - pictures with people frowning, kids crying etc.

The Strange, the Unusual and One of a Kind

All Things Bright and Beautiful - the Pet Pages

School Days - a place to put those photos kids take at school

Bathing Beauties - and Swimming Around the World - my earliest photo here is of one of my grandparents swimming in a river in Poland.

Best Friends/Friends

Dangerous Places

Real or Fake

Fotos Fantastical

The Eyes Have It - mainly closeups of baby pictures

Beautiful Babies





Fake - Wyoming Visitors Center

Real OR Fake



Real - Colorado River raft trip - December 2016



Merry Christmas Cards



Merry Christmas



Not Parent Expected

A question was raised about cases where someone discovers, often through a DNA test, that a parent who raised them is not their biological parent. Such situations are often called “Not Parent Expected” and the children of such situations sometimes refer to themselves as NPEs.

Here are two websites that provide more information on this issue.

<https://www.stitcher.com/show/npe-stories>.

Podcasts where NPEs can share their story of what their original family was like. How they found out they were an NPE. And what their journey has been like since the day they found out.

<https://npefellowship.org>

Raising awareness by providing community and education to those affected by an NPE discovery.

Changing Names of Towns and Villages

Some frustration was expressed about tracking ancestors when, especially in Europe, a town or village might switch from one country to another and back again. A similar problem can arise in the United States with changes in county boundaries and the name of towns. All of this is just part of the fun and challenge of family history. If you face such a challenge, be creative as you figure out what happened and then celebrate when you solve the puzzle, perhaps with a glass of local wine or beer.

Military Service Records

There was a lively discussion about finding military service records for family members. The following comments are offered with an important caveat: Neither of us (Lynn and Craig) have much experience searching military records.

Fold3.com

A commercial website owned by Ancestry with extensive military records. It is structured like Ancestry with free unlimited record searches, but free access to only some documents, access to other documents comes at a price. Access to Fold3 documents can be included with the Ancestry membership at an additional cost.

Your public library may offer free access to Fold.3 searches and documents, although exactly which documents are available for free is unclear to us. If you live in Hennepin County go to

<https://www.hclib.org/programs/genealogy-local-history#>

scroll down and click on “Genealogy,” then click on “Fold3 History & Genealogy Archives Plus.” At some point in this series you will need to sign into your library account.

Craig found Civil War records including a Widow’s Pension File this way. The file was available for free through the Fold3 on the library website while ordering it from the National Archives would have come at a cost.

National Archives

This is a general site for WW II, Korean War and Vietnam conflict. Look at least half way down for the search option. <https://www.archives.gov/research/military/veterans/aad.html>

Veteran’s Administration

Here is another website for finding military service records: <https://www.va.gov/records/get-military-service-records/>

National Personnel Records Center

There’s a note requesting that non-urgent requests for records not be submitted at this time. Despite that, and for future reference, this is another good site. While it’s discoverable on the VA general site (noted above) it’s not something that immediately jumps out for attention. See <https://www.archives.gov/personnel-records-center/fire-1973>

These last three sites may require that you know the name and service number for the person you are searching but you can find the service number by submitting the social security number. See <https://www.archives.gov/personnel-records-center/social-security-numbers>

Much of the official records refer to individual changes in status — enlisted, promoted, reassigned, discharged. While there are some official unit histories in government archives, many unit histories are written and held outside of government offices. Especially if your relative’s service was during time of conflict or war, try a Google search on the name of his/her unit e.g., “7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division WWII” or “315th Engineers WWI”.