

Photographs and Memories

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A Question for You

Do you have old photos of your grandparents? Snapshots of uncles, aunts, cousins? Pictures of friends and family members who may no longer be living? Those images of the people, places and events in your life are precious and irreplaceable. Where are they? What condition are they in? And what will become of them?

In our intensely visual society, we tend to be selective about preserving photographs. Not all are treated well. Some are framed, and some are kept neatly in albums. Others are jammed into boxes or envelopes, while the rest are just tossed loosely in a drawer. Over the years, the combined effects of time, temperature, humidity and poor handling result in damage.

What Should You Do?

Have your vintage photographs professionally restored and preserved. Dull images can be brightened; scratches and blemishes removed and missing sections recreated. The priceless memories that your pictures represent can be preserved – either as printed images or on compact disk.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How long does it take to retouch and restore an old photo?

A: Most orders are completed within ten days.

Q: Do you work only with old pictures?

A: No, current images may be brought in for retouching.

Q: How large a photo can you work from?

A: Maximum image size for scanning is 8.5" X 11."

Q: Will my original photos be returned to me?

A: Absolutely.

Q: Will any of my original materials be damaged?

A: Hopefully not. Although every reasonable precaution will be taken in the handling of your materials, no guarantees are possible. However, since there haven't been any problems so far, let's assume that the trend will continue.

Q: What formats can you work from?

A: The preferred medium is an original photograph. Jpgs can be handled also, but generally lack sufficient resolution to allow detailed retouching.

Q: Can I have a CD of images that I can view on my computer?

A: Yes. Jpgs are viewable on most computers.

Q: How long will a CD last?

A: No one knows. Reminds me of an early Volkswagen commercial that said something like, "We don't know how long a Volkswagen will last. The first one we made is still

running." Basically, just keep your disk out of direct sunlight and away from heat.

Q: May I see samples of your photo retouching?

A: Sure. Call anytime for an appointment.

Q: Can all damaged photos be made good as new?

A: Nope. All images are improved, and some to an extraordinary degree. Others, however, are too damaged to be completely restored.

Q: What was the oldest photo you've worked with?

A: A grade school class portrait taken in 1896.

Q: How did a sound studio get involved in photo restoration?

A: As a direct result of many years of creating custom CD covers from clients' materials.

Q: Can I do this myself?

A: Absolutely! With a background in both art and photography, sophisticated software and years of experience, anyone can restore and retouch their own photos. You may find, however, that developing the necessary skills will take far longer than you had ever imagined. What's the best use of your time?

Q: How much will it cost?

A: Such a seemingly simple question requires a somewhat complex answer. Please bear with me on this, and I'll do the best I can.

First of all, there's a time consuming process involved. To begin, your original image is carefully examined and detailed notes made on what needs to be done.

Next, the image is scanned at a high enough level of resolution to allow detailed retouching at the level of a single human hair. This part of the process is completed for a flat rate of \$25.

What follows next tends to vary widely as the complete process may take several minutes or several hours. An individual estimate will be provided, based on a combination of complexity involved and time required, with an average bottom line of approximately \$75.

Q: Why don't you publish a detailed price list?

A: Several reasons, really. First is complexity. Each restoration project is unique, and the level of time and skilled effort required varies greatly. That would make it difficult to produce a standard price list that would make sense.

Second, there is also the matter of public perception. The special computer effects we see in movies or on TV are generally not possible in the real world. Unfortunately, they are *perceived* as real by the viewing public. This leads to the widespread belief that any task involving the use of a computer will be easy, simple, fast and cheap. At ain't so! As a general rule, hundreds – or thousands – of careful