

Preservation Newsletter—July, 2018

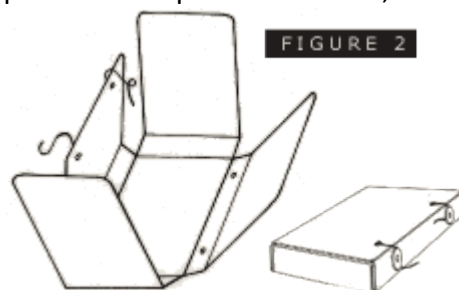
Custom housings

Professional best practices recommend that valuable and at-risk collections materials be kept in acid-free boxes or other types of enclosures, depending on the format of the objects. Many of our collections materials can be housed in standard-size enclosures that are readily available from commercial vendors, but these are not always appropriate. There are times when an enclosure must be custom made for an object in order to provide optimal protection while avoiding wasting much-needed shelf space. The most common candidates for custom enclosures in library, archival, and museum items are:

- Fragile, brittle, and/or broken items that are not candidates for reformatting and for which repair or treatment is not advantageous or possible
- Items that consist of multiple parts with a single call number
- Thin, soft cover materials (e.g. pamphlets) that require additional support for shelving and use
- Materials especially sensitive to the effects of relative humidity or pollutants such as parchment and vellum bindings or gelatin silver photographic processes
- Flat objects such as art-work, prints, photographs, and fragile documents that may be damaged during handling
- High-value unique or decorative materials
- Collection objects that pose a shelving challenge due to their size or format

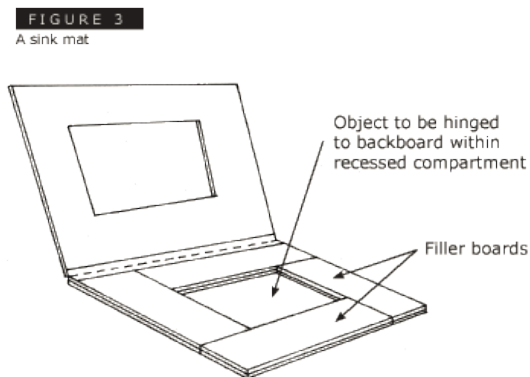
The two types of enclosures that we in the Werner J. and Gisella Levi Cahnman Preservation Laboratory see are most needed in collections are: 4-flap or clamshell boxes and sink mats.

Custom 4-flap or clamshell boxes (10- or 20pt board 4-flaps for most items, e-flute clamshells for larger, bulkier items) protect bound materials. They provide structural support, protect against environmental fluctuations, and prevent the spread of red rot, mold, and insects.



Conservation can provide you with a custom cut 4-flap or clamshell for as little as \$25.00 per box. Conservation staff will measure the book for you and fold the box when it arrives flat from the vendor with no additional charge.

Sink mats protect flat items with delicate supports or media that cannot be crushed or abraded such as vellum documents, broken glass negatives, or pastel drawings by creating a “cradle” out of 4-ply mat board.



These are made in-house and cost about 60 minutes of treatment time.

When bringing an item down to the lab for custom re-housing, it is important to let us know 1) why you think it needs a custom enclosure; 2) how you intend to shelve/store the re-housed item; and 3) to what extent you expect the item to be handled.

Before the end of the year, the preservation lab will offer a workshop for interested Partner staff on creating your own custom-made book wrappers and sink mats.

If you have any questions on whether you have items that should be fitted with a custom housing, please don't hesitate bring it down to the lab for examination by Jennifer or Luda.

The Werner J. and Gisella Levi Cahnman Preservation Laboratory