

Preservation Newsletter—June, 2018

Does this need quarantined?

In the heady rush to evaluate new acquisitions for historical and research value or to prepare them for exhibit, don't forget that incoming materials can harbor hidden horrors!

Keeping mold and pests from damaging our collections is a vital component of the Center's preventive conservation program. The staff of the Werner J. and Gisella Levi Cahnman Preservation Laboratory routinely inspect the stacks for evidence of insect infestation or fungal growth. We institute common sense measures that inhibit pest activity and active mold such as banning food and drink from the stacks, maintaining a cool, dry environment, and controlling the level of particulates. The quarantine room is an additional tool we can use to maintain a mold and pest free storage environment.

Not all new acquisitions or loans need to be examined before entering the storage area. Newly published library materials, materials that come from trusted dealers or large cultural institutions can generally be made available for use without an additional examination period. However, materials coming from:

- A private home [especially if it was stored in the basement or attic!]
- A historic property
- Off-site commercial storage areas not specifically meant for library/archival materials

should be considered high priorities for quarantine prior to introduction to your work or storage spaces.

The quarantine room provides a work surface entirely separate from any of our collections where incoming material can be examined.

- Work over a clean surface covered with blotter or other light paper.
- Remove all objects from storage or shipping enclosures and look at the binding, pages, and housing materials.
- Examine frame backings and mats, wrappings, and other accompanying materials.
- Look for active mold, live creatures, insect droppings, larvae, or bodies. If any of these are seen, contact the Preservation Department for treatment options.
- Transfer materials to clean archival boxes before bringing them up to your office space.
- Always wear appropriate PPE when examining potentially contaminated materials.

Please see the following page for a handy list of quarantine room guidelines. Remember that our building and storage areas are shared—it's up to you to be a mindful guardian of research materials and a good neighbor!

The Werner J. and Gisella Levi Cahnman Preservation Laboratory

INCOMING COLLECTION MATERIAL AND QUARANTINE ROOM GUIDELINES

- All incoming collection material – from both donors and lending institutions – should be inspected in the quarantine room (or off-site) for mold or pest issues before being brought into general collection spaces
- Each Partner organization will be given 1 key to the quarantine room for a designated person to coordinate the incoming material inspections for that Partner
- Partner staff will be responsible for checking incoming material for mold, insect infestations or other pest issues (general check of exterior of box and select material inside – not every page)
- For large deliveries of material (more than 15 boxes), please contact the Preservation Services Manager to reserve space – you can see if there are other large bookings on the quarantine room calendar located in the Outlook public folders
- Fill in the tracking log in the room **and** online on the Google doc so that it can easily be seen how much material the room is holding and who is using the space
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-Z0TyLxTLYnQBj0qyeLi_C1J8hdX-t1vGgLv7UbVFG0/edit#gid=0
- The quarantine room does not have the capacity to be a holding space, so incoming material will need to be checked and moved out as quickly as possible
- Any questions about the condition of material can be directed to Preservation Services. If the material has pest (mold/insect) issues, then we can take it for cleaning and/or freezing
- In the event of an emergency, the freezer can be used to freeze small quantities of wet material – please contact Preservation Services to use the freezer
- Please note that the quarantine room is a transition and inspection space, not a treatment space. Any cleaning of material, aside from freezer usage, will need to take place in an equipped conservation treatment area