



The following article may be used free of charge with no prior authorization provided that it is used for nonprofit purposes and appears with the author biography at the end of this article intact. Please [email us](#) with any details of its use so that we can keep the author or other interested parties informed of the use of this article.

Scrapbooking

The Nation's Biggest Hobby

Fran Nantista

Scrapbooking is one of the most popular hobbies of all time. Many of us kept scrapbooks when we were young, but as you look at them now, you see how your photos have yellowed and the glue has dried. Scrapbooking today has a new meaning: a way of preserving history, photos, and souvenirs without yellowing or having things fall off the page.

The most important aspect of scrapbooking is to be sure to use only acid-free papers. As you shop for supplies, the labels will state acid-free or lignin-free (these are equivalent in meaning for our purposes), and even glues are labeled with these statements.

Some basic tools are an absolute must. A good 12-inch cutter is the only size to get as most acid-free papers are 12 x 12 inches. These "papers" include paper, cardstock, and vellum (a translucent paper). A decent pair of scissors should be kept on hand for trimming as well, and a small pair of scissors works best if you want to cut out small items. Most scrapbookers use a tape runner—a continuous roll of acid-free, double-sided tape in a dispenser, and there are several different brands on the market, but it is best to select a permanent adhesive. All of these supplies are available at Joann stores, A.C. Moore, and Michaels. Scrapbooking Studio is a small specialty store at 10473 State Highway 23 in Davenport Center; Oneonta and Cobleskill Walmart stores both have scrapbooking departments; and online purchase can be made at www.Joann.com, www.ACMoore.com, and www.Michaels.com.

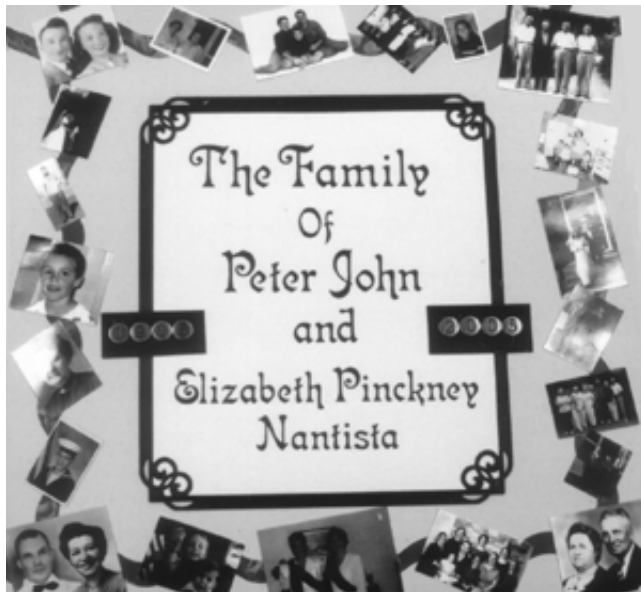
When scrapbooking old photos or historical documents, there are two options. The best is to have these photos color-copied or scanned into a computer and printed onto acid-free photo paper (color copying or scanning of black and white photos ensures that all tones will be present even though they still will appear to be black and white). The other option is to spray the photo with a deacidifying spray (this is not the best thing to do, as the spray is quite expensive and could even mar the photo). Newspaper articles should be handled in the same manner.

Once your materials have been copied, use the copies for your scrapbooks and keep the original photos out of the light. They may be kept in an acid-free scrapbook (keep the book closed most of the time) or in an acid-free photo storage box available at craft stores. If you use the computer for scanning your pictures, you can store the files on a DVD and give copies to your family.

When scrapbooking a genealogical book, it is best to keep your photos in chronological order. Organization is the key to having a well-presented work. Keep in mind that you do not have to use every photo in your possession. Sort through the available photos and choose the best. It is always a wise idea to make a title page for any themed scrapbook. Like any book, this announces your work.

"Journaling" is anything written on the page. If you create a title for your page or wish to name each person in your book, it is wise to have this information at hand. If your handwriting is not legible or even if you just don't like it, do your "journaling" on the computer. Many fonts are available as well as many colors.

A "layout" is how you design your page. How many photos will be on the page is totally up to you. It is best when doing an entire book with a "theme" and to choose simplicity over busy. Choose a background paper, two colors to "mat" your photos, and one printed paper. Use these on each "double-page" spread and use them differently. A "mat" is a piece of acid-free card stock or paper that is usually about 1/8 inch larger than your photo. This will outline your photo. You may mat each photo twice, the second mat of a different color and an additional 1/8 inch larger than the first mat. This will make your photo visually pop off the page. Do the same with your titles, descriptions, or names used on the page.



The title page from my family's historical album. grandmother used.



The background is a copy of the passport my great-grandmother used.



A double-page spread is a two-page layout made to coordinate with each other so that when your book is opened flat, you have a 12 " x 24 " spread.

Once you begin to "scrapbook " you will see things with scrapbook possibilities (such as period buttons, fibers, or yarns) to make your pages more interesting. Even though these are not acid-free, you should have no worries as long as your photo does not touch them. If you always remember to mat your photos at least once, anything not acid-free that is under the photo will not affect your photo because it is protected by the acid-free mat.

Albums today come in 6 x 6", 8 x 8", 8 1/2 x 11", and 12 x 12" sizes, and pages can be added as needed. There are two varieties: strap-hinged and post-bound. The straps seem to deteriorate over time, so I use the post-bound variety that has the additional advantage of being able to add posts, spacers, and pages to make larger albums (the narrow spacers are placed in the spine between pages as necessary, and allow even a large album to lie flat).

All albums purchased come with page protectors: clear, acid-free plastic sleeves into which your pages are slid once they are completed. These keep each page from touching another page and destroying the acid-free environment.

Each layout of your pages can be different and could contain as many photos as you can fit. Many photos can be cropped to eliminate the extraneous things in the background so their size can be minimized and will highlight the main area of the photo. A scrapbook page is a work of art and only you have to be satisfied with the outcome.

Using as many acid-free products as you can will ensure that your album will be around in a hundred years for someone else to view with as much interest as you had making it. Adding a dedication page either at the beginning or at the end of your scrapbook will ensure that your descendants will know to save your work. I, personally, have left mine in my will to my godson with explicit instructions not to destroy it, but to share it as well.



Fran Nantista spent 25 years as an administrator for a physician's group, retired, and became a NYS registered child care provider. She has been scrapbooking for 13 years and leads the Scrapbook Social at Joann's store in Northway Mall.

Analyzing Your Own Resources

[Organizing your information](#)

[Organizing the people of your area](#)

[Organizing the documents of your area](#)

[Organizing the pictures of your area](#)

[Organizing the artifacts of your area](#)

Creating Your Own Local History

[Developing documentation from your resources](#)

[Genealogical work](#)

[Validating local history](#)

[Presenting and publishing local history](#)

Courses and Support

Assignment: Most historical societies close down for the winter, and non-migratory neighbors tend to fight cabin fever by going to the Saturday or Sunday afternoon movies in Hunter, at the Power Authority, or another venue. While these may be fun, I hope you set up this alternative: host a series of workshops using this article as a focus and start to document your own local history.

[.pdf file](#) [audio file](#)

To use this article in your newsletter or as a handout, click into the article; select all; copy; and paste into a MSWord file.

Please remember to [let us know](#) of this use so that we can let the author or other interested parties know.

To subscribe or unsubscribe to this site, click [here](#) and select [northerncatskillhistory](#) (top left link).

Fill in your email address, name (optional), and a simple password.

You will receive an email confirming your intent

Respond to it to subscribe or unsubscribe to northerncatskillhistory.com

Copyright © 2009
northerncatskillshistory.com
contact@northerncatskillshistory.com
 April 7, 2010

