

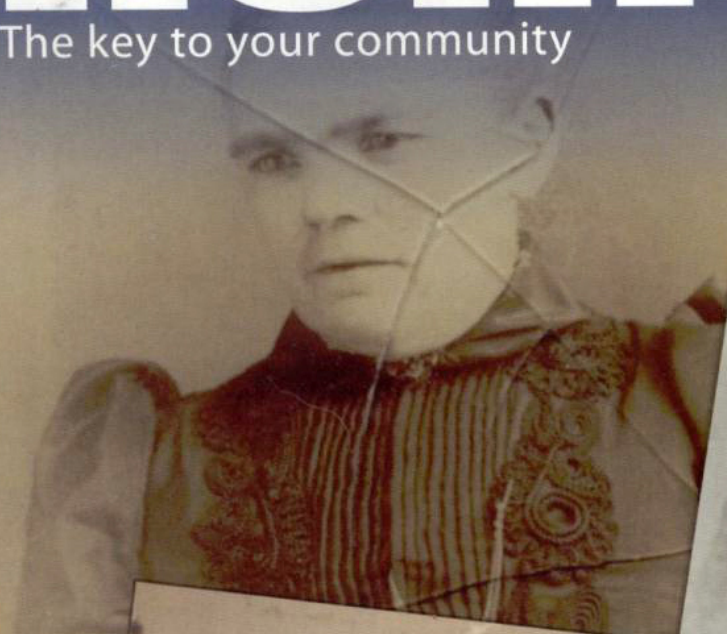
Golf Tournament
HALL OF FAME

Head to the Ballpark
A DAY FOR DAD

Rome's New Soccer Club
WHAT A KICK

Rome Life

The key to your community



MEMORIES MATTER

Preserving Family Photos for Future Generations

Preserving Your Family's Past Through Restoration

Don't let your family photos turn to dust. Consider bringing them back to life with photo restoration.

by Scott B. Smith
Community Contributor

By now almost everyone has taken or viewed a digital photograph. Given the accessibility of modern digital cameras (especially the ones in our phones), it's almost unavoidable. Even so, it's a safe bet that nearly everyone still has a large supply of paper-based photographs in his or her home. Whether in photo albums, shoeboxes, or trunks in the attic, most of us have a trove of these around somewhere. While photographs are important to us due to their sentimental value, they're also easy to forget about in our day-to-day activities. Over time, damage can occur from any number of sources, marring these reminders of our pasts. When this happens, photo restoration can help.

Today's photo restoration usually consists of using a desktop scanner to get a digital copy of the original image. Next, the restoration artist uses digital imaging software (such as the

popular Photoshop) to clean up the damage. Ironically, even old physical photographs must rely on modern, digital techniques to regain their pristine condition.

Even images you might think beyond repair can be fixed by experienced photo restorers. Jarratt Bryan, owner of The Digital Pen, explains, "We have restored 100 plus year-old images as well as pictures that suffered water and fire damage. For instance, we had a framed picture that had gotten moisture underneath the glass, which then dried. At some point later, the glass cracked. Peeling the picture from the glass would've destroyed it, so we simply scanned it, cracked glass and all."

Photographs have become windows to the past, showing us what people from up to 150 years ago looked like and valued.

But for all their historical importance, photographs are perhaps more important because they are reminders of important people and events in our lives.

Other photographs require even more outside-the-box thinking to restore. "In terms of challenges," continued Jarratt, "one of the toughest was a photograph in which the woman's face was very faded. It was so far gone I had to ask my client to find another image of her. I was able to pull the facial features from

Continued on next page



One of the hardest restorations was this photo because the facial features were so faded.

Photo Courtesy of Jarratt Bryan



The Digital Pen used another photo of the woman to restore the photo of her, as seen above.

Photo Courtesy of Jarratt Bryan



The original of this photo (seen on the cover) had been damaged by moisture under glass, removing the glass would have destroyed the photo, so The Digital Pen simply scanned the photo with glass and all and restored the photo digitally.
Photo Courtesy of Jarratt Bryan



This photo was digitally restored by improving the image quality and removing the handwritten names that were scrawled onto the photograph.
Photo Courtesy of Jarratt Bryan

Continued from previous page

the secondary picture and apply them to the original.”

As Jarratt points out, photographs aren't the only things one might wish to restore and preserve. “Documents can be just as important and sentimental as photographs. A client once brought in a beautiful marriage certificate that had suffered extensive water and light damage. It was so bad I had to actually go in and digitally ‘handwrite’ over some of the signatures.”

Not only can photographs be restored, they can also be modified in other ways after being scanned. Jarratt recalls one such instance. “Our customer wanted a 100-year-old image to not just be cleaned up a bit, but the names written on the photograph removed. She wanted versions of the image with and without the names. So we basically cut the names out and restored the picture. Once that was done, we saved that version, replaced the names, and then saved that version.”

Although photo restoration can be a lot of hard work, Jarratt says his motivation comes from helping families restore pre-

vious memories and loved ones from their past.

“In 2000, I started The Digital Pen as a web design business. I soon started to include photo restoration because I'd done a few projects for family members. Seeing their excitement at having a cherished picture come back to life was very rewarding. I wanted to offer those same opportunities to the public. Helping them renew their memories with restored images is very rewarding.”

Not only can photographs be restored, they can also be modified in other ways after being scanned.

One such instance stands out in Jarratt's memory. “It meant a lot to my client; it was the only childhood picture he had of his father.”

Along with the good will that comes from restoring these photographs, Jarratt says he tries to be of service to his clients in other ways. “One of the ways I can save clients money is by doing away with unimportant, damaged parts of the picture. Rather than trying to fix a damaged background, for instance, I can simply pull the subject from it and focus on fixing the scratches and artifacts that affect him or her. This saves me time, and my client's money.”

37 percent of photos last year were taken with a camera phone. By 2015, it's expected to be 50 percent.

4 Reasons to Go Digital

Check out why custom photo DVDs are a great way to treasure your family memories for years to come.

They're easy to store

Photo albums are heavy, bulky, and can take up a lot of space. Thousands of pictures can be put onto a DVD slideshow, which can easily be stored along with your other DVDs as well as in a safety deposit box.

They're easy to use

DVD slideshows run on any standard DVD or Blu-Ray player, as well as on computers and laptops. They can also have menus, making them easy to navigate various categories like years, vacations and other special events

Original pictures can be printed from them

Not only will a properly designed DVD slideshow work in DVD players, but the pictures can also be stored in a separate folder on the disc. This means you can take the disc to a photo lab and have any picture reprinted

They're secure and easy to share

How many times have you pulled out a photo album only to have pages or pictures out? This is completely avoided with DVD slideshows. DVDs are compact and, because they're small, easy and inexpensive to mail.



Above is the original version of the photo shown on the left.
Photo Courtesy of Jarratt Bryan

Even if photos aren't damaged, they're still fragile. Creating digital copies of photographs and storing them is important. The Digital Pen encourages people to not only have their pictures scanned, but integrated into a DVD slideshow as well. This makes viewing the photos easier than lugging out large, heavy photo albums. And because DVDs are so compact, keeping a copy of them off site can be invaluable if disaster strikes.

"After some of the nasty storms we've had recently," recalls Jarratt, "it reminded me how important my own photographs were. So I began scanning pictures in old photo albums, backing them up, and making DVD slide shows."

Since their invention, photographs have become windows to the past, showing us what people from up to 150 years ago looked like and valued. But for all their historical importance, photographs are perhaps more important because they are reminders of important people and events in our lives. These records might be physically damaged over time, but with the help of photo restoration they can be repaired and cherished for a long time to come.

As Jarratt points out, "I don't want to suffer the same fate I warn others of: letting my own photos become history."

For more information, please visit thedigitalpen.com or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/thedigitalpen.

Scott B. Smith is an aspiring novelist from Taylorsville, GA. When not jotting down the ideas that crowd into his own head, he is an educational designer, writing curriculum for students.



Jarratt Bryan owns The Digital Pen in Rome.
Photo Courtesy of Doug Walker/RN-T