

PRESERVATION OF GARMENTS & TEXTILES

- ❖ Many dry cleaners will offer a “preserving” service for wedding gowns. If you choose to buy this service, make sure that they use inert, acid-free products and not plastic.
- ❖ Many experts believe that the packing services provided by dry cleaners are merely for aesthetic appeal, and as far as the safety of the garment is concerned, you can do as good of a job at home if you have the time and proper materials.
- ❖ There are two ways to store a garment: horizontal or vertical. To determine which method is most appropriate for your garment you should consider a few things. If the garment is *extremely* sturdy at the shoulders, you could hang it. Gowns with sheer or beaded fabrics, lace, bias-cut sections, heavy skirts or trains should be stored horizontally.

Vertical Storage (hanging)

- ❖ Gowns should be hung on a well-padded hanger with a dust cover to minimize wrinkling and to protect it from dust and light. Pad the hanger with quilt batting and a cotton cover (unbleached, undyed muslin is best). Once the hanger is padded and covered, make a dust cover that completely encases the gown. This cover should be made from an undyed, unbleached muslin as well. The outer dust cover should be washed (do not use bleach) once a year to neutralize the fabric. **DO NOT USE A PLASTIC GARMENT BAG.**

Horizontal Storage

- ❖ Ideally, you will need an acid-free box, acid-free tissue, and clean cotton muslin. The box should be large enough for the gown to fit with the last amount of folds. Acid-free boxes and paper can be ordered from mail-order catalogs and online. We suggest Gaylord or Light Impressions. You should avoid using a brown cardboard box because they release acids that are harmful to fabrics.
- ❖ Place crumpled tissue along major folds to prevent creasing. Cover the top of the gown with tissue or muslin before closing the box.
- ❖ Plastic and metal buttons, pins, buckles, headpieces with metal pieces should be stored separately. If you do not want to remove buttons, make a special encasement for them.
- ❖ Remove rubber shields or padding because they deteriorate with age and may stain the fabric.
- ❖ Store your garment in an area with minimum fluctuations in temperature and humidity. The box must be kept dry, as a basement or attic is not the best place to store your box.
- ❖ You should take your garment out of storage once a year. Inspect for evidence of staining or soils. Change the position of the folds, replace all of the tissue paper, if needed, and wash the muslin. This inspection should be done regardless of who packed it. This part of storing your garments cannot be overemphasized. Don't wait 20 years to inspect it to find that stains are more permanent, and insect, mold, or mildew damage has occurred.

If you have questions about storing your garment, call the Massillon Museum at 330-833-4061 or visit our website: <http://www.massillonmuseum.org>

MASSILLON MUSEUM

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Open Tuesday-Saturday 9:30am-5:00pm, Sunday 2:00pm-5:00pm

<http://www.massillonmuseum.org>