

NEWSPAPER BINDING FACTFILE

Local, regional and national newspapers contain a wealth of fascinating information and photographs of prime importance to historical researchers, social and cultural recorders and writers, commercial companies, solicitors as well as those studying family history. They capture the way we live our lives through time, what and how we advertise and those family members and events that we care about. Back files also represent an invaluable tool for the newspaper publisher for their future publishing programme.

The use of all Local Studies material including newspapers is however rapidly growing, creating increased pressures on storage and study space as well as acquisition and maintenance budgets for local and national libraries. The introduction of technology over time such as microfilm, microfiche, CD Roms and optical disc storage is helping but the greatest proportion of the primary resource information is still held in hardcopy book and paper form. This is partly a result of the page makeup and images in published newspapers being preferred in the format as originally published and partly due to the pride and satisfaction of newspaper publishers. Unfortunately such materials are of course significantly prone to mechanical damage, ageing and theft so there is a constant need to develop and adhere to sensible stock management and maintenance policies and programmes.

This Factfile helps to provide background information about our newspaper binding services especially designed to be of interest to librarians charged with the responsibility of acquiring and maintaining Local Studies materials and newspaper publishers alike. Newsprint was never designed to be a long-term storage medium but has become an invaluable source material, presenting collectors with many problems.

THE DANGERS FOR NEWSPRINT AS A PERMANENT MEDIUM



The natural ageing process of newsprint and its' inherent vulnerability, inevitably leads to the infamous deterioration, weakening and discolouration of the paper, rendering the information vulnerable to obliteration and loss. This ageing process is accelerated by dry atmospheres, such as commonly found in central heated buildings, excessive heat or direct sunlight. Damp storage conditions can lead to fungal attacks – mould problems. The organic nature of paper creates a chemical change over time known as acidification leading to brittleness and discolouration. Newsprint displays signs of this ageing process much faster than other paper types and poor storage or bad use techniques significantly aid the mechanical damage through tears, creases and crumpling.

SURROGATCY AS A MEANS OF PRESERVATION

Custodians of newspaper collections have long practised a form of surrogatcy to try to ensure that the historical information is at least captured for posterity. All registered newspaper titles are deposited with the various national libraries such as The British Library Newspapers at Colindale in North London. In turn, and as budgets and resources permit, these newspapers have been stored by the national libraries but also microfilmed. Not all runs or titles are complete though and there is a considerable backlog to film.

Microfilming

Has proved to be long lasting but not an ideal medium for capturing and subsequently reading newspapers due to resolution and quality problems. In more recent years, with the advent of full colour or spot colour in the production process, this medium has become even less suitable as a means of preservation.



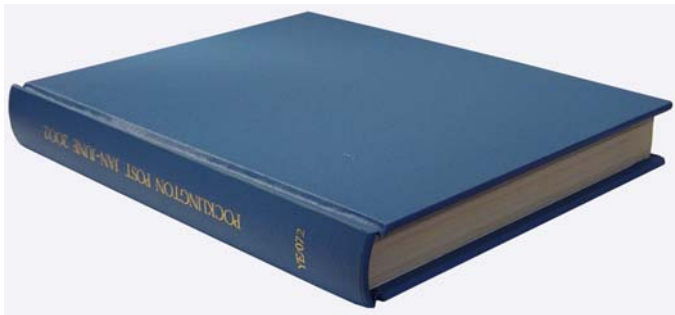
Scanning & Digitisation

Developments in the last few years are leading to a more 'true' record of the images and words contained in newspapers and it has been possible to digitally convert microfilm to electronic file storage for some time. However, the results can only be as good as the original with use of high resolution and this is an expensive, time consuming process, giving rise to space capacity difficulties. Output on to CD Rom or optical disc presents further technical concerns as to the longevity of both the carrying medium and the possible future obsolescence of recording/reading technology.



Direct input systems commonly used by publishers now help to form an electronic record but have yet to be proven as a safe technique suitable for storing large archives over time.

NEWSPAPER BINDING



It is perhaps not surprising then that many publishers and libraries still prefer to maintain back files of the newsprint as published as a reference tool. The optimum method of storage of the individual issues is to have them professionally bound in to volumes that can be safely stored on suitable shelving or racks and easily moved around.



THE ADVANTAGES

The secure sewing and binding of individual issues and pages of newspaper titles in chronological sequence of publication is a preservation solution with a number of advantages:

- It enables the original publications to be stored safely and secures the issues from excessive damage or loss when in use
- Slows down the ageing process of newsprint by retarding the exposure to the atmosphere apart from the very edges of the pages
- Keeps the publications in correct chronological sequence making reference easier
- Aids browsing for information. Readers and researchers prefer to see the image and text on the page rather than reading a screen for many hours at a time
- Allows the collections to be relatively mobile and used more flexibly compared with electronic files
- Still allows important articles to be copied if absolutely necessary (with great care)

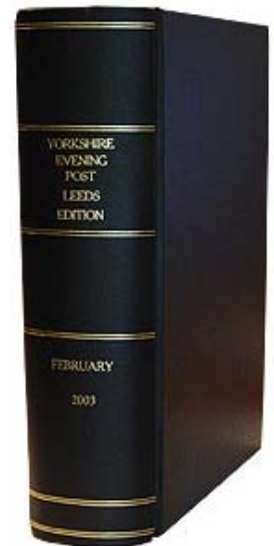
HOW TO ACHIEVE THE BEST RESULTS FROM BINDING NEWSPAPERS

A few simple tips to help you keep costs of newspaper binding down and achieve the best quality results:

- Store your unbound copies in mint condition if possible
- Build up the collection by placing each issue without folding in half upside down in a suitable box
- Store newspapers away from dampness and direct sunlight, in a cool room
- Prevent anyone removing an issue without returning it as back issues may be difficult or impossible to replace at a later date and the subsequent volume will have to be bound incomplete
- Try to avoid binding each volume too thick as these volumes will inevitably be very heavy and possibly difficult to carry around or move on the shelves
- When each volume is complete and ready for binding protect the bundle (folded in half once if necessary) by wrapping in strong wrapping paper taped rather than tied with string or rubber bands as this might damage the newsprint
- Place wrapped bundle of papers in a strong carton or container together with your instructions or official order and label the outside of each carton clearly with our full address and the senders name
- Contact us to arrange for the newspapers to be collected from you

THE BINDING PROCESS

- Our staff will first check the volume for completeness and unless notified to us in advance will contact you for further instructions if any issues appear to be missing
- Each issue and page will then be inspected for damage, repaired if necessary and refolded down the spine fold or pressed flat before being placed in the correct sequence for binding. If tabloid sized supplements or magazines need to be bound in sequence with broad sheet publications then these can be opened out and sewn along the top or bottom edge
- Strong blank white paper end sheets will be especially prepared and added to the front and back of the volume prior to sewing. Sewing together of issues can either be carried out by hand or machine depending on the weight, size and mass of pages in each issue
- Once sewn, the backs are glued, rounded, backed and double lined with mull and paper to give good shape and to add strength
- The three open edges are lightly trimmed to give a solid edge to prevent penetration of dirt, dust and help act as a barrier to the atmosphere oxidising and discolouring the pages
- Stout 6,000 micron thick boards and manila spine shapers and cords at the top and bottom are used to make durable covers that can be protected with a full waterproof buckram cloth or combination of leather and cloth if desired
- Spines are lettered by hand with title and volume contents (edition, months, year etc). Lettering can either be direct on the spine or via a cloth or leather title piece. Finishing touches may include headbands and gold or blind lines to panel out the spine
- Finally, the sewn newspapers are united with their case and glued in to form a robust binding before tying in the French grooves and pressing for at least a day in standing presses



THE COSTS

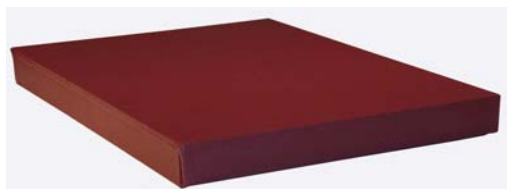
The cost of binding varies according to the size of each newspaper to be bound, the condition we receive the paper in, the complexity of the makeup of each volume and the style of covering materials used and decorative finishing. Discounts can be given based on quantities and condition of paper but expect to be paying approximately £65 upwards per bound volume inclusive of collection and return delivery.

PAPER CONSERVATION

For older newspaper collections, we offer extensive paper conservation treatments to safeguard newsprint. Provided the newsprint has not been allowed to deteriorate to such a bad state as being beyond economic remedial treatment, services available include:

- the cleaning and repair of paper
- brittle paper support using archival tissues
- removal of pressure sensitive tapes
- patching
- encapsulation using inert polyester film
- mounting using archival paper and
- guarding

NEWSPAPER BOXING



An alternative to full binding is to box or place newspapers in especially constructed newspaper folders. Please ask us for more information about our newspaper storage box and folder range.

JOURNAL AND MAGAZINE BINDING

Suitable for all part published information such as magazines, newsletters, parish magazines and journals or supplements, our service provides a secure method of storing this otherwise awkward form of information. By binding for the first time into volumes, considerable shelf storage space can be saved. This service is detailed in our Journal and Magazine Binding Factfile.



CONDITION SURVEYS AND STAFF TRAINING

Finally, our Binding Consultants are always pleased to conduct surveys of your collections to assess the condition of holdings, analyse your storage and maintenance problems and offer the best value for money solutions and programmes of action. We also offer free training for library staff in all aspects of binding and book repairs and have a Factfile prepared on the subject – Library and Information Staff Training Factfile. Please contact us to ask for any of our Factfiles or if you would like our Binding Consultant to call.

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