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[www.oldfilm.org](http://www.oldfilm.org)

***Film and video give people a reflection of themselves, a moving image of culture and tradition, a context.***

— Pam Wintle, NHF founding board member, film archivist, Smithsonian Human Studies Film Archives

Northeast Historic Film (NHF) collects, preserves, and makes accessible the moving image history of northern New England. The nonprofit organization runs a community cinema in the 1916 Alamo Theatre, and the new cold storage vaults hold thousands of hours of videotape and more than five million feet of film. NHF maintains one of the country's foremost collections of home movies, a valuable cultural record. For more information, visit us online at [www.oldfilm.org](http://www.oldfilm.org).

#### Services

- Consulting and technical services including stock footage research, transfers from film to videotape and DVD, and preservation planning advice.
- Free Video Loan service to NHF members.
- Videos of Life in New England, a line of videotapes for sale through our Web site, direct to individuals and organizations, and wholesale to book and gift stores.
- Presentations, workshops, and screenings at schools, community centers, and cultural events.
- Cold Storage for film and videotape in the 12,000 cubic foot, state-of-the-art Conservation Center.

#### Supported by the Public

NHF is a nonprofit organization supported by its members, board of directors, and tax-deductible contributions from individuals, companies, and foundations. Moving image preservation is an important, expensive, long-term undertaking, and members and volunteers provide essential support.

#### Who Benefits?

We all benefit from the preservation of our motion picture heritage. Moving images are an important element of education, arts, and cultural heritage programs. Preservation and access to moving images helps teachers, students, librarians, museums, historical societies, public service and trade organizations, state agencies, producers, and individuals.

#### The Big Picture

NHF is an active member of the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA). Staff members have served on its executive committee and conference panels, helped found working groups on amateur moving images, TV preservation, small gauge film, and brought Home Movie Day events to Maine. Each year NHF hosts a silent film festival and film symposium in the Alamo Theatre.

#### We Need Your Help!

NHF accepts film and video for preservation from individuals and organizations. Your financial donation will help NHF save New England's film and video heritage and make it accessible to everyone.

## HOW DO I IDENTIFY FILM?



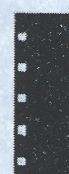
35mm



16mm



8mm



Super 8

#### Do Not Project It!

All film shrinks with age and becomes fragile. Projecting shrunken film can cause permanent damage by ripping sprocket holes, stressing splices, and/or scratching the image. Most home movie footage has no negative and is likely the only existing copy. Projection can cause irreparable damage.

#### Careful Hand Inspection is OK

In a clean area you may carefully unwind the first few feet of the film and inspect the images with a magnifier or loupe. Handle the film by the edges only, using clean cotton gloves. Never touch the image area – fingerprints leave permanent marks.

#### How Should I Store Film?

Film benefits from a stable environment with low temperature and low humidity. Store film in clean containers lying flat and avoid frequent changes in temperature and humidity.

#### Nitrate Film

Prior to the 1950s, 35mm film was almost always made on a cellulose nitrate base, which is highly flammable and unstable. Inspect it regularly and store in a cool place, removed from heat. In cases of advanced deterioration, nitrate film is subject to spontaneous combustion. Virtually no 8mm or 16mm film is nitrate.

#### Vinegar Syndrome

Nonflammable acetate (also called 'safety') film is also subject to deterioration. The telltale sign is a vinegar odor, indicating the presence of acetic acid. Heat and humidity accelerate acetate decay. Films with strong vinegar smell or visible acetic acid crystals must be isolated from other films and copied soon.

#### Notable Dates

- 1923** 16mm film introduced
- 1932** 8mm film introduced
- 1935** Kodachrome color film available for amateurs
- 1950s** 35mm safety film in wide use
- 1965** Super 8 film introduced
- 2003** First annual Home Movie Day events take place

#### Some Things to Consider:

- Don't throw anything away! Are there notes on the can or in the container?
- Check the condition of the film. Is it brittle, is there obvious damage?
- The beginning and end of a reel tend to be more worn than the rest.
- Remember that the film may be wound with the end out.
- Home movies can be important documents of people and places long gone. Treat them with care.

**If you have any questions, please call 207-469-0924 or visit our Web site at [www.oldfilm.org](http://www.oldfilm.org).**