



Cape Lookout National Seashore: NPS helps preserve local memories in aftermath of Isabel

At the request of Cape Lookout National Seashore Superintendent Bob Vogel, conservators from the National Park Service Harpers Ferry Center Conservation Lab have spent the last two days helping neighboring Down East residents on Harkers Island who suffered property loss as a result of hurricane Isabel.



Theresa Shockley prepares a book for the freezer.

framed historic posters and clean mold and mildew off of wooden decoys inundated by floodwaters. Grateful residents expressed their appreciation for the help in preserving their irreplaceable treasures.

Wood Conservator, Alan Levitan and Paper Conservator, Theresa Shockley worked with Connie Mason, a Historian and Collection Manager from the N.C. Maritime Museum and the Core Waterfowl Museum to evaluate, restore and repair family treasures.

Residents brought in water damaged items including yearbooks, family photographs, and negatives. The team of conservators also helped residents properly package and freeze waterlogged books to stop the growth of mold and prevent distortion. They also helped salvage

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Jennifer Taylor holds up the photo of her grandparents that concealed hidden documents.

Levitan and Shockley were also able to carefully restore the glass and photograph. Park Ranger Karen Duggan is also helping Ms. Taylor by scanning and digitally restoring water damaged family photos. Duggan says, "I can't keep the water out, or rebuild their house, but I'll do everything I can to give back a memory."

One Down East resident offered thanks to Levitan and Shockley for helping to preserve a special family heirloom. Jennifer Taylor suffered major losses during the storm, including damage to family memorabilia and photographs. A photo of her grandparents, taken at the turn of the century was spared because it was on temporary display at the Core Sound Museum during the storm. Our team of conservators made a surprise discovery when they took a closer look at the photo. When they took the backing paper off the frame, they found an envelope inside that contained Jennifer's grandfather's birth certificate from 1888, marriage certificate, and social security card.