

Cayuga Centers

Adopting Digital Preservation for a Legacy of Caring

BACKGROUND

Founded in 1852 as Cayuga Asylum for Destitute Children, Cayuga Centers is a nonprofit in Auburn, New York. Over the last 165 years, Cayuga Centers has served as a temporary support system for children in need. Their mission focuses on social services for children with disabilities, foster care programs in multiple states, and support for unaccompanied migrant minors with the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Challenge

People from all over the US can trace their relatives back to adoptions through Cayuga Centers. The physical record books logging children in their charge were referenced daily, but after 165 years of use some of the delicate materials were in poor condition. To keep this avenue of genealogical research open, they had to find a way to preserve their archive fast.

Solution

With the help of Anderson Archival, Cayuga Centers developed a plan to digitally preserve their oldest record books and use the digital files as the daily reference tool for genealogical queries. Then, the fragile originals could be stored safely.

The project involved:

- Very old, oversized materials with fragile binding construction and deterioration from frequent use
- Faded handwritten text; deep, hard-to-capture gutters; and loose or separated pages
- The need for a “one-stop shop” that would keep these one-of-a-kind materials in-house
- High-quality image files compatible with their reference solution and accessible from multiple locations



Results

Cayuga Centers now has a functional, shareable digital archive to house their adoption records.

Some key outcomes include:

- An archive that is used in many locations across the organization’s reach—New York, Florida, Delaware, and foster care centers across the US
- Clear, high-resolution images that are better for research, allowing users to zoom in or highlight relevant information for more impactful sharing
- Protection for family and community connections that don’t exist anywhere else
- Preserving invaluable materials, as well as their historical significance



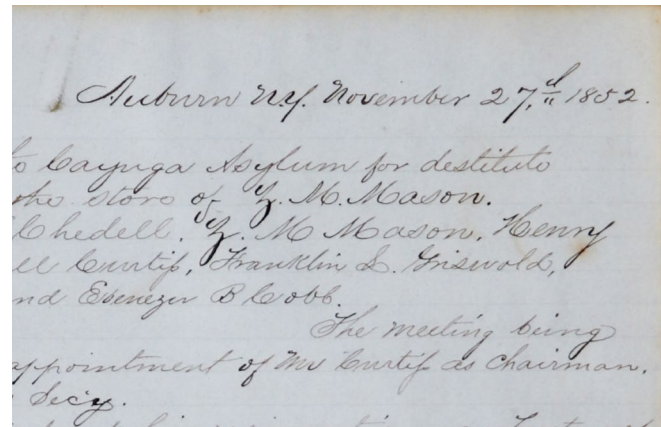
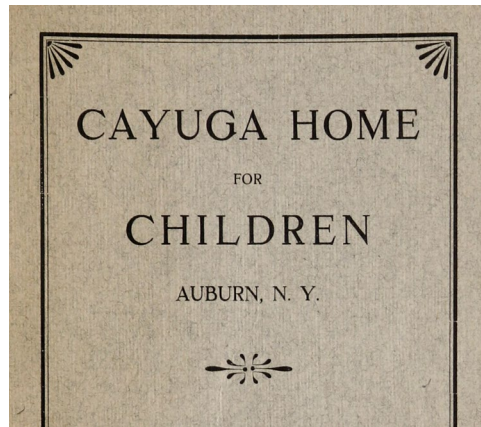


WHAT THE CLIENT HAS TO SAY

“We had a woman whose aunt stayed at the orphanage as a child, and she wanted to try to find everything she could. Looking through the books, it was actually very hard to find her because your eyes miss things. But as it was digitized, I was actually able to find the exact page that her aunt was on, and I was able to print and send that page to them because it was digitized. Because the image was so clear I was able to print them out a blank one and then I also printed out one where I was able to highlight where she was in the page.”

—Laurel Bennett, (former) Executive Assistant at Cayuga Centers

DATE 18-23	MEMO	CHARGES	MONTHLY TOTAL	DATE 18-23	MEMO
		POST. REF.	DETAIL		
	FORWARDED	1		13230559	
Jan 31	CR 1			15816	Jan 31
Feb 28	CR 1			11647068	Feb 28
Mar 31	CR 2			17692	28
Apr 30	CR 2			105350	Apr 30
30	9 3			14888	May 31
30					June 30
May 31	CR 3			94659	Aug 31
31	9 4			39100	Mar 31
June 30	CR 4			90378	Dec 31
30	9 6			17220	" 31
July 31	CR 4			60432	
Aug 31	" 5			70838	
Sept 30	" 5			106820	
Oct 31	" 6			130460	
Nov 30	" 6			3041253	
Dec 31	" 7			142691	
Dec 31	9 10			112015	10 2



Outcome

With Anderson Archival as a digital preservation partner, Cayuga Centers gained a functional, shareable digital archive of vital records—and the knowledge that their one-of-a-kind collection will last for generations to come.



Anderson Archival, a division of Anderson Technologies, provides digital preservation and archive consulting services to protect, preserve, and share what matters most. To learn more, please contact us today!