

*Margaret's*<sup>®</sup>  
the COUTURE SINCE 1953 CLEANER

*Gown Preservation  
& How to Care for  
Our Preserved Gowns*



*Breathe...*

*You've Found Extraordinary  
Care for Your Gown*

*You Can Trust*

*Margaret's*  
the SINCE 1953 COUTURE CLEANER

*with Your Special  
Memories...*

Even if there were such a thing as vacuum sealing a cardboard box, Dr. Nancy Kerr, Professor of Textile Science at the University of Alberta, states, “*Vacuum sealing is not a good idea, because any moisture trapped inside leads to mildew.*”

## *Your Wedding Gown is Forever*

**M**onths of planning go into your single, special day. Your wedding gown isn't just a dress, it's a part of your life story. Preserving your gown will help preserve your memories of that special day, and also make it possible for your daughter or granddaughter to one day wear the same beautiful gown.

It is important to plan for your gown's cleaning and preservation following your wedding. Remember that the key to a successful preservation is to begin the process as soon as possible. Proper cleaning and preservation of your gown ensures that it will last for years to come.

Museum conservators expect to extend the lifetime of textiles for 200 years by storing in a truly archival-quality box with acid-free tissue and a cotton-muslin liner. **Margaret's** was among the first to apply true museum-quality standards to the gown preservation process. We remain an industry leader in developing advanced inspection techniques, unique and creative restoration processes and clean-room facility processes.



*Member*  
Association of  
Wedding Gown Specialists

## *The Country's Finest Bridal Gown Preservationist*

*Preserve the Gown...  
Ensure the Memories*



*Gowns preserved using our museum-quality archival preservation technique can be periodically opened and inspected. This will NOT void your lifetime warranty on the preservation.*

**Y**ou can trust **Margaret's** with your precious memories. As a full-service gown care specialist, we care for the needs of many couture bridal shops and designers, as well as individual brides with their unique pre-wedding and post-wedding needs. Services include couture alterations, restoration, cleaning, pressing and preservation. We have decades of experience dealing with the finest, most intricate and delicate of designer gowns.

All of **Margaret's** preservations include a lifetime warranty. We do not seal our preservation boxes. Fabrics need to breathe and we encourage that you open and check the gown every two to three years and re-fold if necessary to prevent permanent creases. White gloves are provided for use in the folding and inspection.

You may ship us your gown through our CleanByMail® service. Be sure to wrap it in plastic for protection and pay insurance desired. Return shipping is complimentary. Return insurance will be added to your preservation cost.

Contact [bridal@margarets.com](mailto:bridal@margarets.com) for the necessary forms to include with your gown.

*Margaret's*  
the COUTURE CLEANER

*Lifetime  
Warranty*

Our standard of excellence is to provide you with the highest level of service. We will do everything possible to remove any caramelization stains or yellowing that could occur, as long as the cleaning process maintains the integrity of your gown and will not cause damage. You can expect some yellowing, especially on silk gowns, through their own natural aging process. Improper handling or storage may cause damage, compromise the true preservation of your gown and may void your warranty. When in doubt, ask us.

**(866) 454-2375 • [margarets.com](http://margarets.com)**



*Be Sure to Include  
Your Accessories  
for Preservation.*

Katherine Dirks of the Museum of Natural History states, *“Don’t let plastic touch fabrics. Plastic can decompose and give off fumes...[also] fabrics should not touch a cardboard box if it contains acid.”*

## *The Preservation Process*

**A**t **Margaret’s**, our wedding gown preservation service is the best you’ll find anywhere. We have extensive experience in cleaning and preserving gowns from the most distinguished gown designers. We are very proud of our decades of exceptional service to brides throughout the United States. Being given the privilege to care for such an important piece of your personal history is never taken lightly.

There are a great many details that **Margaret’s** understands and attends to in order to deliver a gown prepared for lengthy storage with a lifetime warranty.

It is very important to have your gown cleaned and preserved as soon as possible following the wedding. The longer stains remain on the gown, the more difficult they are to remove and the harder it is on the garment to remove them.

### **The Steps...**

- We thoroughly inspect your gown for stains, wear, age, oxidation, perform minor repairs, then test beads and trims before cleaning.
- We carefully and expertly pre-treat and hand clean your gown, paying special attention to minor stains that can turn yellow over time.
- Our proprietary anti-sugar treatment prevents latent caramelized stains from developing later.
- Following an inspection, we carefully hand finish your gown, taking extreme care to maintain the designer’s lines and drape.
- We perform a final tightening of beads and trim and also remove, and package separately, items such as buttons or padding that could cause problems with the archival process.
- A final multi-spectrum inspection is performed prior to boxing....a **Margaret’s** exclusive.

## *Our Packaging Technique*

**F**ollowing cleaning and finishing, we carefully package your gown in an archival-quality box with acid-free tissue and a cotton-muslin liner. Completely archival, our storage box and tissue are acid-free, lignin-free, and unbuffered to remain acid-free.

The desized, unbleached, and washed cotton-muslin liner serves as a fabric filter and blotter which helps keep moisture away from the gown.

A cotton-muslin bag fits over the box to keep the box clean. The bag may be removed and washed as needed to maintain maximum breathability for the gown.

## *Unpacking Your Gown*

**I**f you used our CleanByMail® service you received your gown in a shipping box. Open the box, remove the inner heirloom chest, and take the plastic cover off. The chest should be stored without the plastic cover, which is for protection during shipping only.

**Note:** We've removed bust and underarm pads as these items may emit acid fumes and must be stored separately. We have also removed all metal hooks, buttons, etc. and placed them in a separate envelope included in your chest. Over time metal may rust or oxidize causing damage to the fabric.

## *Our Preservation Process is the Method Preferred by Museum Conservators.*

Jane K. Hutchins, chief conservator at the Textile Conservation Center in North Andover, Massachusetts states, *"If you are putting away a wedding dress, the Center advises storage in acid-free paper, in an acid-free, crush proof box."*

## *CleanByMail Nationwide*

Margaret's is a perfect option for Bridal Gown Preservation no matter where you live. We regularly clean and preserve bridal gowns through our CleanByMail® service, which is available nationwide. Following cleaning and preservation, gowns are placed in their heirloom acid-free chest and shipped in a custom box for their protection.

## Storage Recommendations

**S**tore your boxed gown in a cupboard or closet in the main section of the house, preferably in a place where it will be left undisturbed. A guestroom or spare room is ideal. Choose a cool, dark, dry place to store your gown.

Avoid places conducive to moisture or excessive heat. Changes in either temperature or humidity can result in damage to the gown.

- **NEVER** store the gown preservation box directly on top of a cement slab, in a basement, or in a closet with an exterior wall.
- **NEVER** store the gown in an attic. Temperature extremes can cause the fabric to become brittle.

If possible, **store the box flat** to prevent shifting of the gown during storage. If it is necessary to store the box on end, there is adequate tissue to support the gown and keep it from bunching up at the bottom.

We suggest that you check the gown every two to three years and refold it every three to five years to prevent permanent creases, but otherwise keep handling to a minimum.

Because skin oils can damage the preservation, we include white gloves for whenever you need to handle your gown. Instructions are provided.

Justin E. Leene states in her book,  
*“The muslin liner serves as a fabric filter which can remove 99.99% of the incoming suspended dirt.”*

## Periodic Inspections

**Y**ou may remove your gown from the chest periodically to check how the storage is proceeding and refold it to prevent permanent creases. Please be aware that every time you handle the gown there is the potential for damage. Your preserved gown is best left intact in the chest, where it has been packaged carefully by skilled professionals. However, we recommend a preliminary gown inspection yearly and a complete inspection and refolding every 3-5 years.

The outer muslin bag may be removed, washed and replaced as necessary. Don't tumble dry—it will shrink! The purpose of the outer bag is to keep the chest clean and at the same time permit it to breathe.



## *How to Perform a Periodic or Interim Gown Inspection*

**W**hen you are ready to do an inspection of your gown, here are the steps to follow:

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
- Unfold a clean sheet on a bed.
- Remove the outer muslin bag from the chest. This is the time to wash the cloth bag if it is dusty or soiled.
- Put on the white gloves provided as part of your preservation kit.
- Place the chest on the sheet.
- Open the chest and lay the lid on the sheet. Lay open the inner muslin cloth and the top layer of tissue. Do not remove the muslin or outer most layer of tissue from the chest.
- An inspection of the gown may be accomplished at this point. If a more detailed inspection is desired, continue with the following instructions otherwise reverse the above sequence to close up the chest.

## *Complete Gown Inspection*

- See above instructions for opening the chest.
- Pay special attention to how the gown is folded and placed in the chest. If any tissue is removed keep it on the clean sheet. There may be articles placed at the base of the box including a head piece, envelope, or tissue wrapped items. Lay these articles on the sheet.

- Remove the gown and place it on the sheet to inspect.
- Check the gown both front and back.
- **CAUTION!** — No matter how tempting, **DO NOT TRY ON THE GOWN!** Body oil residue left on the gown will yellow in time and destroy the integrity of the preservation.

## *Repacking & Refolding Your Gown*

**F**luff up the tissue to keep the sleeves rounded and try to place the gown back into the box with as few folds in the fabric as possible. Place tissue between layers of fabric to absorb acidity. The tissue serves two functions:

- (1) to prevent hard folds in the fabric, which can cause damage over time, and
- (2) to keep the environment acid free. If you need more tissue when you repack your gown, use only acid-free tissue, which you can get from **Margaret's**. Most tissue is not acid free; so don't take a chance.

If you feel uncomfortable with repackaging the gown or inspecting it yourself, bring it to **Margaret's** and we will gladly do so at no charge. If you wish to be present to inspect the gown, this is only done at our San Diego location. You may drop off the gown at one of our other locations and they will ship to San Diego for the inspection and repacking.

# *Vintage Garment Restoration is a Margaret's Specialty.*



## *Beware of Other Preservation Techniques*

- Avoid all plastic, be it a plastic viewing window, a plastic bag to fit over your gown, or box. Plastic is chemically unstable, and promotes the formation of mold and mildew.
- Do not allow your gown to be packaged in a standard cardboard wedding gown box as it may contain acid that could damage your gown. Insist on archival-quality materials only!
- Use only acid-free tissue, and only white.
- It is impossible to make a box truly air-tight. In addition, "air tight" isn't the best way to store fabrics over a long period of time. A sealed box, ("hermetically sealed" or "vacuum sealed") just restricts air flow. All textiles, even synthetics, need good air circulation.
- Be wary if you're told that opening the box will void the warranty. After storing, your gown should be checked periodically.

## *Restoration*

**W**hen a bride decides that she would like to wear a vintage gown, many factors must be considered. **Margaret's** has been restoring gowns and antique fabric for over 40 years and use proprietary processes which are the most advanced techniques available.

The ultimate goal of restoration is to restore a vintage gown to its true color, without damage to the original fabric. In our business, there is nothing more gratifying than being able to restore a vintage gown and see the smile on the bride's face when she realizes that she will be able to walk down the aisle in a dress that was once worn by someone dear to her.



## LOCATIONS

### LA JOLLA

7511 La Jolla Blvd.  
La Jolla, CA 92037  
(866) 454-2375  
Fax (858) 454-4303

### DEL MAR/RSF

3790 Via De La Valle  
Del Mar, CA 92014  
(858) 755-2715  
Fax (858) 454-4303

### SAN DIEGO

5150 Convoy Street  
San Diego, CA 92111  
(866) 454-2375  
Fax (858) 454-4303

### NEWPORT BEACH

1831 Westcliff Drive  
Newport Beach, CA 92660  
(949) 645-5210  
Fax (858) 454-4303

### LOS ANGELES

10700 Santa Monica Blvd.  
Suite #160  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
(310) 470-9200

### CleanByMail® Nationwide

5150 Convoy Street  
San Diego, CA 92111  
(866) 454-2375



[www.margarets.com](http://www.margarets.com)  
[bridal@margarets.com](mailto:bridal@margarets.com)

**TOLL FREE**  
**(866) 454-2375**



**SERVICE AREAS**  
**San Diego County**  
**Orange County**  
**Beverly Hills & Surrounding Areas**  
**CleanByMail Nationwide**