

Storage forms also should function well

BY BARBARA MAYER
FOR AP SPECIAL EDITION

Everyone loves a good storage idea. Here are some that work for almost any type of decorative setting in your home.

■ A storage wall. The open storage wall may have started in mid-20th century as a modernist decorating idea, but the idea can be adapted by those who prefer traditional decor.

In *Time at Home* (Abrams, \$29.95 hardcover), there's a particularly appealing storage wall used as a divisor between a kitchen-dining area and an informal living room beyond it.

The wall consists of two tall storage units with glass-fronted upper cabinets and drawers below, extended by long open shelves of the same dimensions. The cabinets are large enough

to hold several china services as well as glasses of various shapes and sizes, while the drawers can accommodate linens and additional utensils.

Since the unit stops short of the ceiling, its top can hold oversize decorative and serving pieces. The open shelves are used to store a large collection of books.

"Storage walls don't have to be cold and modern," says co-author Steven Roberts. "This one gives the room a warm and friendly feeling. One of the best ways to warm up your house is to show the things you have."

To Meg Stevens, the main point of a wall of disparate objects is to show that "rooms are no longer used for a single function. This is a kitchen and yet there are books stored in it."

■ Displaying and storing col-

lectibles. Get maximum decorative mileage out of a collection of small objects while you also store them safely on open shelves along a wall.

The idea is colorfully illustrated in *House Beautiful Art: Decorating with Art at Home* (Hearst Books, \$40 hardcover) with a display of colorful children's lunch boxes.

While each individual item is fairly insignificant, the complete display adds up to a good deal more than the sum of its parts.

A storage bonus in this particular case is that the lunch boxes can be storage receptacles for mementos, cookie cutters, holiday items or any other small, infrequently-used objects, says author Judith Gura.

The concept of open storage works well for any collection of objects such as antique Christmas ornaments, salt and pepper sets, ceramic or glass figurines, and cups and saucers.

Displaying the items gives you a chance to show them off as well as a place to put them. "Massing any group of objects gives them more importance and makes each one look better," says Gura.

■ Dealing with snapshots. In

Martha Stewart's Good Things for Organizing (Clarkson-Potter, \$22 paperback), there are several strategies for getting control of family snapshots.

The most useful idea is a storage footstool or ottoman attractive enough to keep out in a living room or family room and large enough to accommodate any number of snapshots either in their original protective envelopes or in other storage envelopes.

A box can be a homemade affair with an upholstered top, wooden ball feet cut from the ends of drapery rods and an old fashioned metal handle at each side.

Those who aren't handy or don't want to take the time to make their own box can shop for a ready-made storage ottoman in a furniture store.

Any attractive box placed on casters will also serve a similar function.

Another decorative way of accommodating a lot of snapshots featured in the book is with a collection of boxes covered in monogrammed suiting fabrics.

These turn out to be shoeboxes covered at home with fabric. The same boxes also can accommodate CDs, receipts and clipped recipes.

Family photos can be a decorating asset when attractively framed. The book advises buying the same or similar inexpensive 8-by-10-inch frames along with appropriate sized white mats.

When you get tired of looking at the currently displayed photos, it's easy to exchange them from time to time to show off new images.

Extenders can help drain water away

FOR AP WEEKLY FEATURES

Water is a precious commodity. It's also one of the single biggest enemies to one's home — especially excess water produced from rain or snow.

Poor watershed and drainage from spring downpours could, over time, cause soil to swell and cause cracks over windows and doors.

It can cause doors to stick and even rot to siding and framing members under the house.

Make sure roof gutters and downspouts have been installed and carry water away from your new home.

Consider adding downspout extenders and splash blocks for added protection.

Soil and concrete that surround the home also should slope away from the foundation to further minimize damage.

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