



By Linda Sattgast

Picture Perfect Gift Books—Gift Books for Adults

In this class module we're going to explore gift book ideas for the adults in your life. This could be your family, including grown children, or friends, or even your boss.

In each lesson we'll look at one or more category of gift books. My list is certainly not exhaustive, so use my suggestions as a springboard for your own creative ideas!

Lesson 03-01: History Gift Books

History gift books are fun and fairly easy to make. These are books that involve a particular time in history or a compilation of photos across a span of history. Let's take a look at some examples.

A Story from the Past

Example: A Love Story by Linda Sattgast

Credits: Paper and deckle photo frames by Linda Sattgast; Chalkboard layer style by Susie Roberts

Fonts: Jenna Sue Regular and Minion Pro Regular

Is there a special time or story in someone's life that deserves being told?

As I interviewed my mother about her past, I found myself drawn to the time when she and my father met and began to court. I was planning to create a bigger volume of history that included this story, but then I thought about making a smaller gift book just about that one topic.

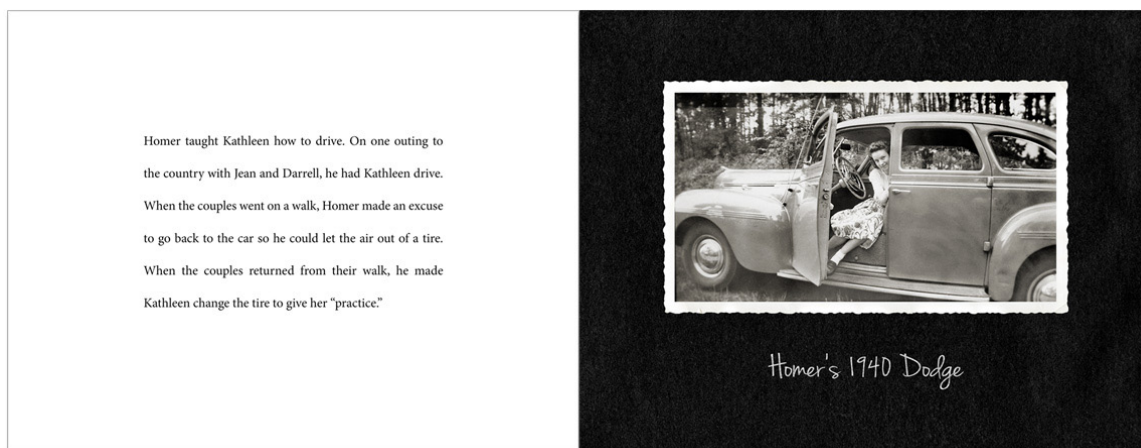
I liked the idea. It carried more punch! Here's the cover I made for the gift album.

I thought I would have a bit of fun on the cover with Boy meets Girl. Because the pictures had such nice deckle edges, I decided to scan a black page out of an old photo album for the background. Then I used a cursive font and a chalkboard layer style to simulate writing on the page, but I used regular type for the title.

On my title page I decided to leave the same dark background, but I used a different photo, and the page on the left is white.



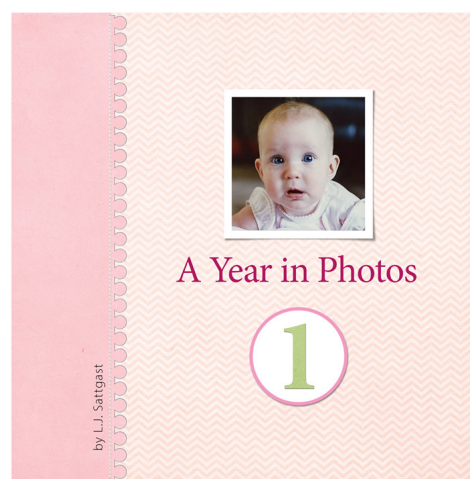
Here's one of the interior book spreads. I've kept the entire book really simple with one or two photos on a single page and an opposing page that has the story on a white background.



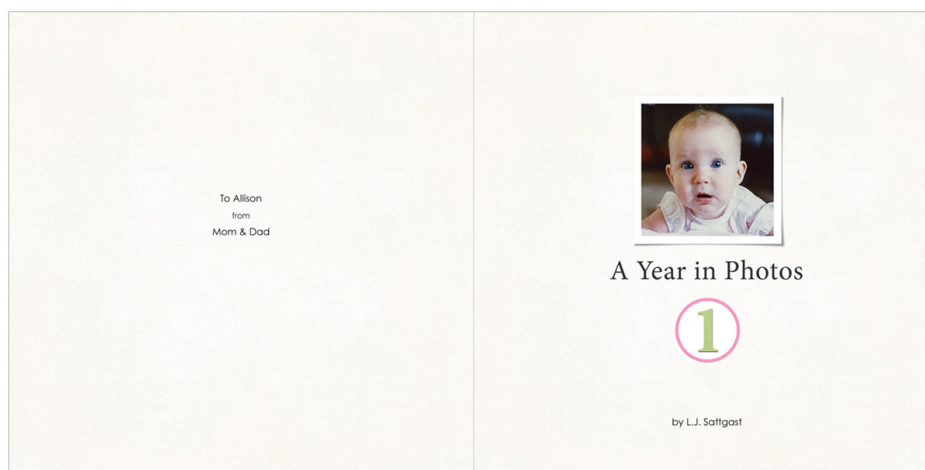
A Year in Photos by Linda Sattgast

Credits: Menagerie by One Little Bird, Under The Pier by Kellie Mize and Christmas Past by Susan Bartolini
Fonts: Century Gothic Regular, Myriad Pro, Minion Pro Regular

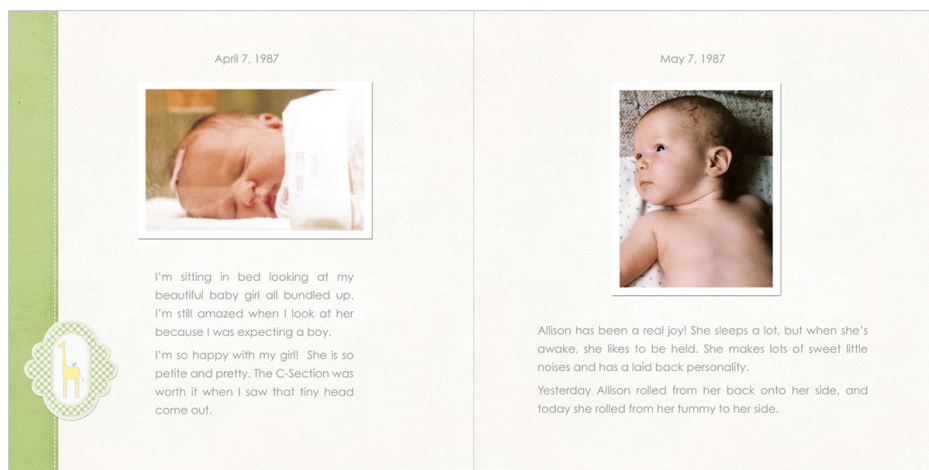
Here's another history album, A Year in Photos. This is the first year of my daughter's life, and I'm featuring one photo per month. Notice that my cover has some pattern to it and it has a fun graphic for the number. But it still has an elegant gift book feel.



Here's my title page with a dedication on the left.

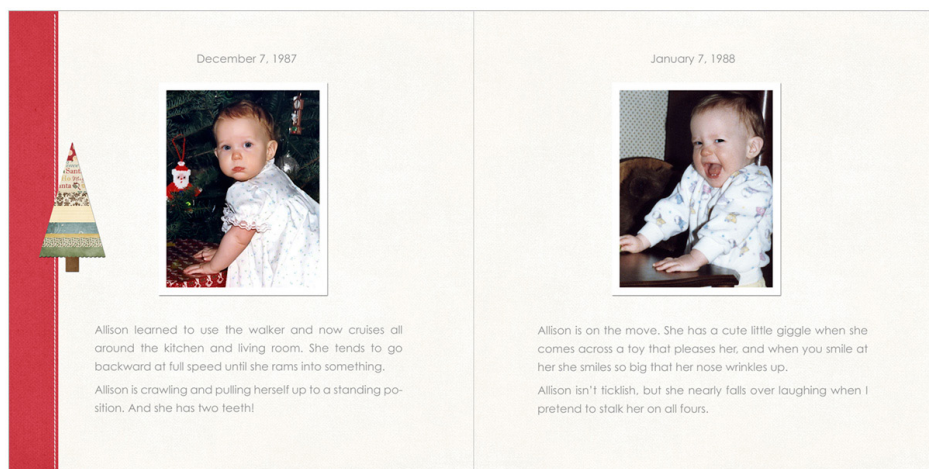


Here's my first spread with Allison as a newborn on the left and one month old on the right. The journaling is from my own journaling way back when. On the one-month anniversary of her birth, I wrote about Allison and told what she had learned and was doing that month.



Notice that I have a little bit of scrapbooking influence on this spread, but I'm keeping it a lot more graphic and simple so it doesn't detract from the photos and journaling.

Here's a spread from month 9 and 10. Since it was Christmas, I've changed the graphic to reflect that.



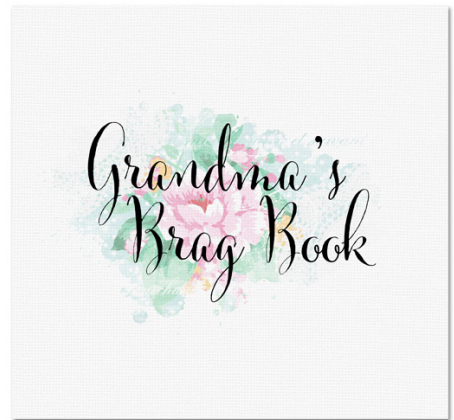
This is a great book to make for parents who don't have the time to make it themselves, but can you imagine what a fun gift this would be? And the child will appreciate it when she grows up.

Grandma's Brag Book by Susie Roberts

Credits: Cottage Garden Kit and Cardstock Blank Canvas by Susie Roberts
Font: Cantoni and ITC Avant Garde Gothic

Another kind of history gift book is a brag book. Whether you're the parent, or the grandparent, you can create a small gift book about one or more children that can be easily tucked into a purse or handbag.

This 6x6 inch book is by Susie Roberts, and she kept it very simple—one stellar photo per page. Isn't that fun? She did include a family picture as one of the photos as well.



This is a history book because it's of a particular time in a person's life. Here are some other ideas for a history gift book:

History Gift Book Ideas

- A 25th or 50th wedding anniversary
- The first 20 years of a child's life.
- Favorite photos of someone from birth to now.
- The year someone was born—historical events as well as baby photos

Here's a variation of that:

- Since You Were Born: Major events that happened during a person's lifetime with a tribute to the person on the last spread.

You can use the internet to discover what was going on during certain years of a person's life and pair a photo of the person taken that year with a well known or not-so-well-known event.

For example I was 27 when Mount St. Helens blew in the northwest. I was driving down 82nd street in Portland, Oregon when I looked up and saw plumes of smoke and debris mushrooming in the sky right before my eyes.

So that's an example of pairing a photo of the subject taken in a certain year with an event that happened the same year. This idea might take a little more time to research and find photos, but it would be a fascinating book, both now and for future generations!

- Time Capsule: What's happened in a person's life and in the world at a particular point in their history.

So you can see there are nuances that you can explore with these topics. They can be similar topics, but have a slightly different focus.

- Antiques or other household items that are honored and cherished: Take a picture of the items and give the history behind it. We'll be talking about collections in a different lesson, so what I'm talking about here is NOT a collection. These are things that have history that would be interesting to pass down to the next generation. You can do this as a gift book for a parent, and then you and your siblings will benefit from having this information.
- Hair: Feature someone's hair styles throughout the years. For some people, this can be hilarious!

I'm sure there are plenty more ideas we could add to this list, so if you come up with some, write them down for possible exploration.

Some of these topics will be quick and easy for you, and others will take more time to research, so pick a topic that works for your time frame.

Lesson 03-02: Shared Events

In this lesson we'll look at making gift books about a shared event and hopefully demystify the difference between a gift book and a photo book.

Let's say Charlie and I take a cruise to Alaska and have a marvelous time. Our ship is fabulous, and we see some amazing scenery along the way, so I decide to create a book about the cruise. I think this will make a marvelous gift for all my siblings, so I make copies of my book and on Christmas morning they open a present from me—and it's all about the cruise Charlie and I took.

It has beautiful pictures, and it's very artistically presented. Will they love my present?

I don't think so.

They might thumb through it once. But they'll think it's a bit odd that I would give them a photo book about our cruise.

What if, instead, I took some of my best scenery photos from the cruise and made a book showing off my great photos? Maybe I could even do a little blending to make them more artistic.

Would that make them like the book better?

I don't think so.

What is the missing ingredient? What would make them exclaim with delight when they opened my present on Christmas morning?

If THEY had been on the same cruise and shared that experience with us, they would love my book—especially if they were featured in my book!

Now there's absolutely nothing wrong with me making a photo book about our cruise for just Charlie and me and showing off our selfies. We'll enjoy looking at our cruise photos and remembering the amazing views and the relaxing moments in the spa!

We even got to meet Santa Claus!

So go ahead! Make some books just for yourself. I do!

Just understand the fine difference between a book for you and a book for someone else. It really has nothing to do with the design or style of the book. It has everything to do with the focus of the book. Does it focus on the other person? Does it make them feel loved and affirmed? Are they delighted with the topic?

The great thing about a shared experience is that you can create a book that both you and someone else will LOVE! Isn't that cool?

So let's talk about some ideas for books about shared experiences.

Family Recipes by Susie Roberts

Credits: Template design: Kellie Mize

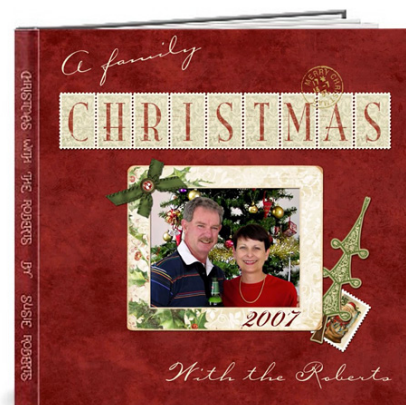
Background paper: Katie Pertiet "Botanist No. 17"

Tree: Shabby Miss Jen

Font: Santa's Sleighfull and Century Gothic.

One thing that families share is their food. So a book about favorite family recipes or holiday recipes would make a great gift for family members. It probably wouldn't work for a neighbor or friend, but for family members, yes! Well, I should qualify that. Adult family members. Wait until your kids move away and start writing to ask you for family recipes before giving them a book like this!

A good example of a shared experience recipe book is Susie Roberts' book about holiday recipes. She put a recipe on the left and a family photo page on the right.



But what a great idea! She kept it simple by repeating the same style for every recipe and only changed the photo at the top.

She also kept the same style for many of the family photo pages. Again, you don't need to reinvent the wheel. No one's going to say, "Hey! You used the same photo design on two pages! Come on!"

No one will say that or even think that! The repetition will give them a sense of rhythm, and they'll automatically focus more on the photos! Susie did use some other photo page designs in her book, so there's nothing wrong with doing a different design on every page. That would be more of a scrapbook look, which is fine. It all depends on the look you want.

Camp or Vacation

Memories of Timothy Lake by Linda Sattgast

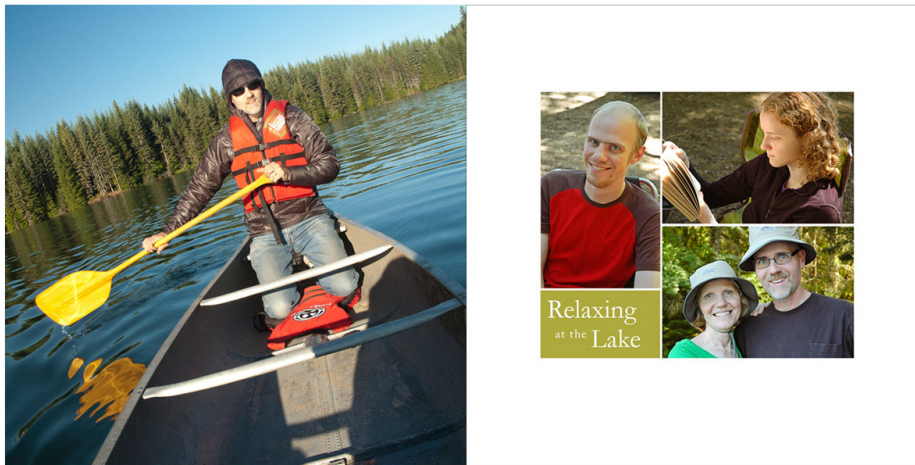
Credits: Cover template from Picture Perfect Gift Books, cardstock Blank Canvas by Susie Roberts, clipping mask by Jen White

Fonts: Myriad Pro Light and Garamond Regular

Another family or friends shared experience can be a favorite place to camp or vacation. Our family has gone to the same camping location for years, so we've built up a lot of positive memories.

It's such a peaceful place that I wanted a very peaceful book. To achieve that I used an almost white slightly textured paper in the background, and I used a clipping mask to soften the edges of the photo. Even the title is subdued.

For one of the inside spreads, I used a full bleed photo on the left and a simple grid arrangement of photos on the right.



Since scenery is such an important aspect of this location, I've included a good number of double page spreads of a single photo. A lay flat binding would work really well with this kind of photo book.



This book would be appropriate as a gift book for Charlie and me or for our two children who shared this experience with us. There's really nobody else I would give it to.

Here are some other shared experience ideas:

- Family sayings or quotes from favorite movies: Besides the quotes themselves, you might want to share the history behind them. You could pair the sayings with quirky or fun photos of family members.
- A small wedding photo book would be another “shared experience” book that would be appreciated by some family members or, possibly the people in the wedding party—maybe not everyone, but some. A book like this should just show the highlights. Not everyone will appreciate a detailed wedding book.
- Holiday traditions make a good shared experience book. For example, I take a lot of photos every Christmas, so one of these days, I want to make a Christmas book of our family during the time our kids were still at home. I wouldn’t give a book like that to anyone outside our immediate family, but if I made a book about family reunions throughout the years that involved our extended family, then all those who participated in those reunions would love it!

I’m sure you can add more to this list.

It all comes down to someone’s personal connection to the topic. As long as the book is about a shared experience, it can fit the definition of a gift book that I’m using in this class.

Lesson 03-03: Hobbies and Collections

Gift books about a person’s hobby or collections are sure to be well received! In this lesson we’ll look at the difference between hobbies and collections and show some gift book examples.

Hobbyist

A hobby is an activity done regularly in one’s leisure time for pleasure. So it involves actively doing something like:

- playing a musical instrument
- sports like baseball, or soccer
- activities like rebuilding old cars, riding horses, gardening, painting, doing things on the computer, such as digital scrapbooking or creating photo books.

For a larger list of hobbies, check below.

Collector

A collector is someone who collects a specific type of item, so it’s not so much an activity as it is a collection of items that is of interest to an individual.

You can collect anything. Our son, Caleb, collected bar codes off of product labels when he was young. He was very pleased when we got him a book where he could store his bar codes.

Some people collect dolls. I have one doll, that belonged originally to my mother-in-law. I love it and keep it on display in my house because it reminds me of her, but I don’t collect dolls as a hobby. I knew a woman once who had an entire room in her house devoted to her collection of dolls. Now THAT is a collection!

So let’s talk about some ways to create gift books about people’s hobbies and collections. We’ll start with hobbies.

Gift Book About a Hobby

First of all, gather photos of the person actually doing the hobby. If you don’t have photos, begin to take photos when the opportunity arises.

Or you can simply tell the person that you want photos of them doing their hobby. For example, if your recipient is a golfer, ask to tag along when they go golfing so you can take some photos. The nice thing about having a book in mind first is that it informs the kinds of photos you take.

You can look for interesting photos ops and angles, and you might take photos of ancillary items, like equipment. I also love taking panoramic photos with my phone.

If you're able to get photos without arousing suspicion, you can work on a gift book that you intend to give as a surprise. However, my theory is that most recipients will want to be involved. Most people are very particular about their hobbies and will welcome the chance to give their opinion.

For journaling, you can look for quotes on the internet about a person's hobby, like this one:

Golf combines two favorite American pastimes: taking long walks and hitting things with a stick. P.J. O'Rourke

You can also get a quote from the person with the hobby, but remember, you don't have to put journaling on every page.

Now let's take a look at some possible covers and pages from a Hobby album.

Grandma's Garden by Linda Sattgast

Credits: Cover Templates: Picture Perfect Gift Books; paper from Travel Adventure by Digital Scrapper Designs
Fonts: Goudy Old Style Bold, Orator Std Medium, Minion Pro Regular

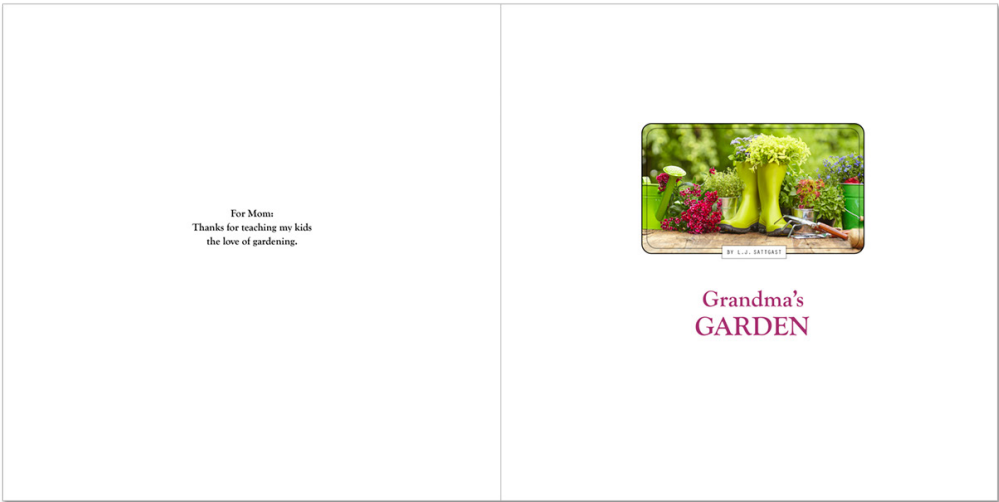


This cover, as many of the one's you've seen so far, is from one of the cover templates in your downloads. I tried the style on the left first, and then I got the idea to reverse the photo and the title in the version on the right.

I'm actually not sure which one I like the best!



Here's my title page with a dedication to the gardner on the left.



Here is one spread from the book. I added a small amount of journaling with right aligned type. The larger photo has no frame or drop shadow, but the inset photo has a white stroke outline and small drop shadow to help it stand out from the larger photo.



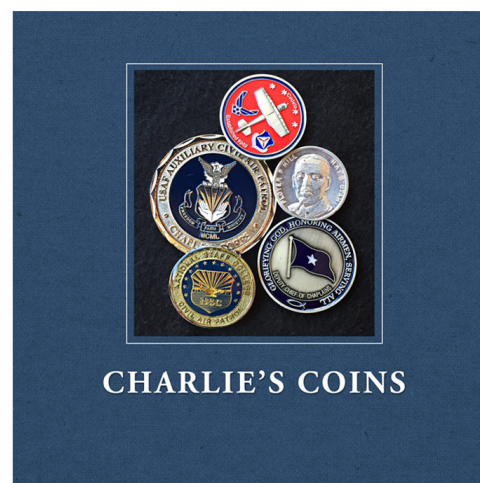
This is a simple design but I really like it! Of course it helps if you have great photos, but even average photos will be appreciated by the recipient.

Charlie's Coins

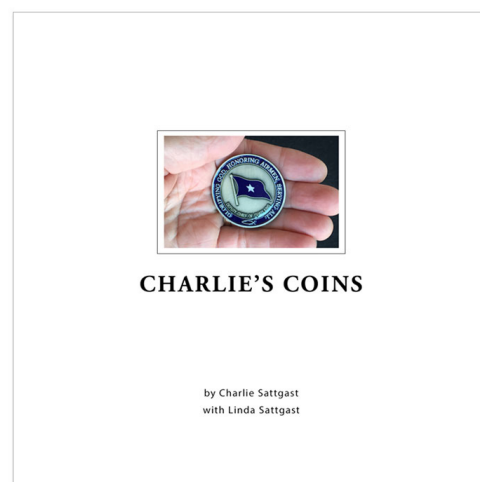
Credits: Cardstock Nautica by Susie Roberts
Fonts: Adobe Garamond Pro, Myriad Pro Regular

Now let's take a look at a collection gift book. My husband collects coins. He collects military coins. He's a volunteer chaplain in Civil Air Patrol, the auxiliary of the Air Force. The giving of coins has a long and honorable history in the military, ever since World War I.

I asked Charlie if he would like a book about his coin collection. He seemed pleased with my proposal and helped me make some major decisions on how to present the coins. By working together we're both really happy with the result!



Here's the title page, and that's his hand holding the coin.





I made a presentation in 2007 that was attended by Chaplain, Gen Cecil Richardson, Air Force Deputy Chief of Chaplains. At the end of my talk Ch Richardson made a bee-line to the front and coined me. It's one of my favorite coins.

Later that day I learned that Chaplain Richardson had a field grade officer's service cap he could no longer use after becoming a general. I gave him my card and he mailed it to me.



Here's one of the spreads. Charlie helped me photograph the coins and the hat against a black felt background, and then I cleaned up the lint from the felt in Photoshop and also combined two coin photos into one picture so you can see the front and back of the coin. But Charlie did the journaling for me. Yay! That was very helpful! I created some sample text to show him the approximate amount of copy I needed, because too much type wouldn't look good, and he did a great job of keeping the story simple and within my guidelines.

So that's an example of working together with the recipient. You can always order the book and hold off giving it to him or her until a special occasion.

Notice that I didn't start out with any photos for this book project. That's going to be the case with many of your books. You might actually get better photos by knowing what you want and taking new photos than by searching through all your prior photos.

The other thing I did was ask Charlie to choose his favorite photos from his Civil Air Patrol career. That way, I can pair photos of the collection with photos of collector. That will add interest and context.

The photos don't have to be of the person working on his or her collection—they can be any kind of photo. You just want a connection between the person and the collection.

I hope that gives you some good ideas for your own hobby and collection gift books!

Some Hobbies

scrapbooking

cooking, canning, desserts, favorite cuisine, specialty food

music, bass, guitar, piano, violin

dance

games and card games

Sports: hunting, fishing, rock climbing, hiking, camping, jogging, running, skydiving, snowboarding, skiing, scuba diving, cycling, skateboarding, jogging, running, fishing, ice skating, roller skating, etc.

Outdoor Games: basketball, tennis, football, soccer, volleyball, fencing, golf, baseball, hockey, fishing, frisbee, archery, cricket, etc.

Indoor Games: Ping pong, billiards, bowling, boxing, poker, martial arts, gymnastics, etc.

Water Sports: rafting, kayaking, swimming, diving, canoeing, surfing, etc.

Motorcycles and cars

Sewing, quilting, and fabric crafts

Knitting, crocheting, and embroidery
Fashion
Pottery
Computer
Jewelry making

Jigsaw puzzles
Painting, art, sketching
Woodworking
Glass blowing
Mushroom hunting

Photography
Model building
Radio control

Some Collections

Spoons
Stamps
Figurines
Glass
Antiques

Comics
Books
Coins
Cards, e.g. baseball cards
Movies

Vintage cars
Rocks and minerals
Insects
Flower collecting and pressing
Sea Shells

Lesson 03-04 Personal & Misc

One of my favorite kinds of gift books is a personal book that comes right out and expresses appreciation for the recipient. We'll look at several ways to do that and also slip in a few miscellaneous ideas.

Tribute Gift Book

Memories of Mom (Leah)

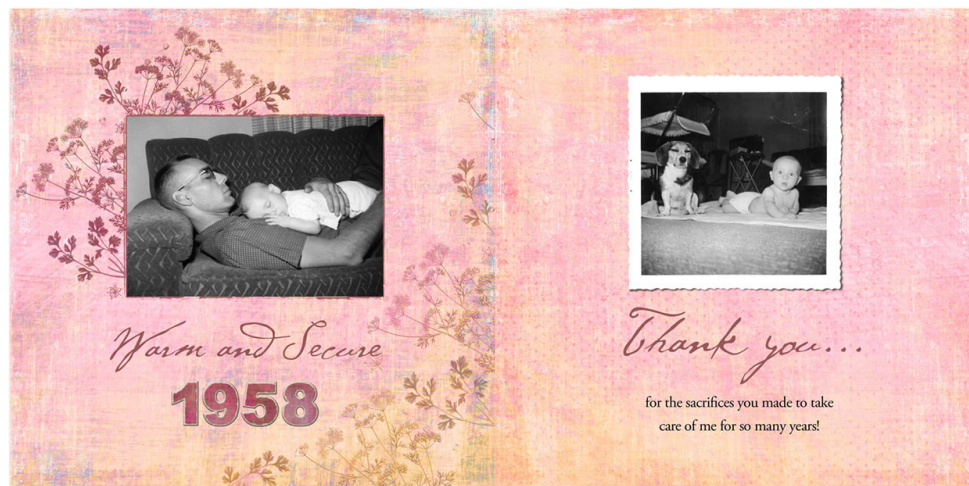
Credits: Simply Tribute by Michelle Shefveland

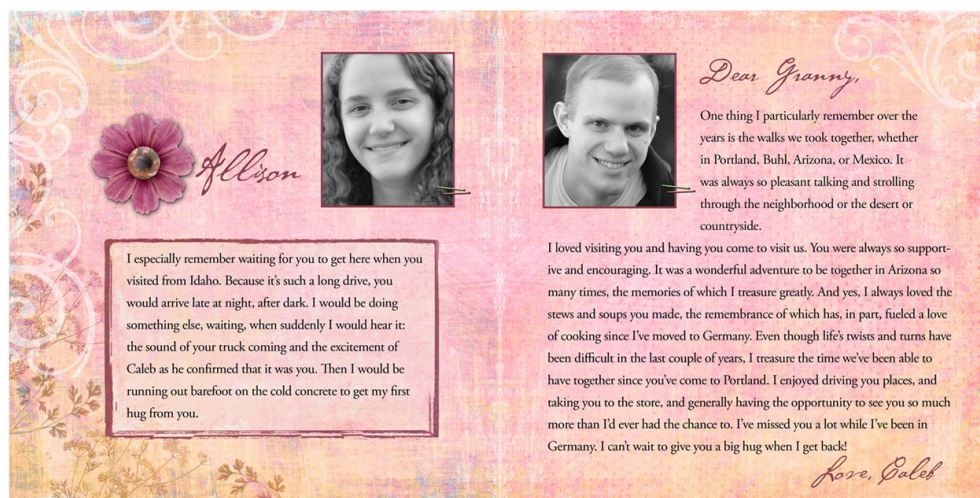
Fonts: P22 Cezanne Regular and Adobe Garamond Pro

The first book I want to show you is a tribute to someone special. This example is a tribute to my mother-in-law. I made this book quite a few years ago, and it's more of a scrapbook style

It isn't just a history book, even though we included pictures from the past. It was really an expression from Charlie of his appreciation for his mom and dad's care of him over the years. We included photos from Charlie's growing up years along with his memories.

We also included current family photos and expressed our appreciation for them. We asked Caleb and Allison, their only grandchildren to write down some memories of Granny and Grandpa as well.





This kind of book is really special! When we gave it to Charlie's mom she said, "This is the best present I've ever received!"

Memories of Mom—Kathleen

Credits: Cardstock Nature Strip by Susie Roberts

Stitched heart from Simply Tribute by Michelle Shefveld

Fonts: Adobe Garamond Pro, Minion Pro Regular, Jayne Print Hand

A tribute book doesn't have to be complicated. In this book for my mom I used a single paper for the background, giving it a simple, yet artistic look, and allowing the focus to be on the photos and journaling. For some of the pages I used a matching solid textured background on the opposite page.



I also asked my siblings to send me their memories and expressions of thanks so I could include them. By the way, that's a quick and easy way to make a book—get your family to help you with the journaling!



Personal Characteristics Gift Book

The Essential Charlie

Credits: Boys And Toys by Digital Scrapper Designs; Cardstock Winter Washed and Cardstock Nautica by Susie Roberts

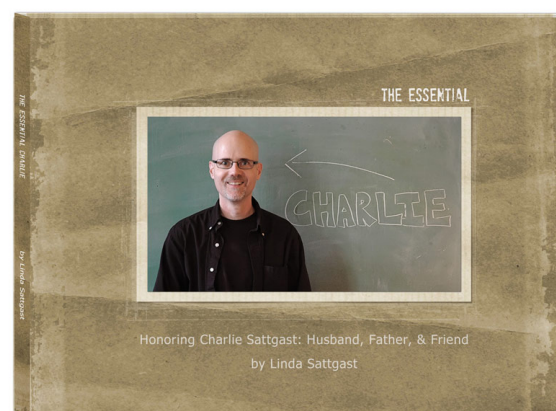
Fonts: stamPete Regular and Tahoma Regular

Another type of personal book is where you simply show photos of the person and then put a simple word or phrase that describes them in a positive manner.

This book, called The Essential Charlie, is only 5x7 inches, but it's packed with warm affirmations of my husband's character, personality, and abilities.

This is also a fast and easy book to make. You just need to choose your favorite photos of the recipient and pair them with a word or phrase that describes them in a positive way.

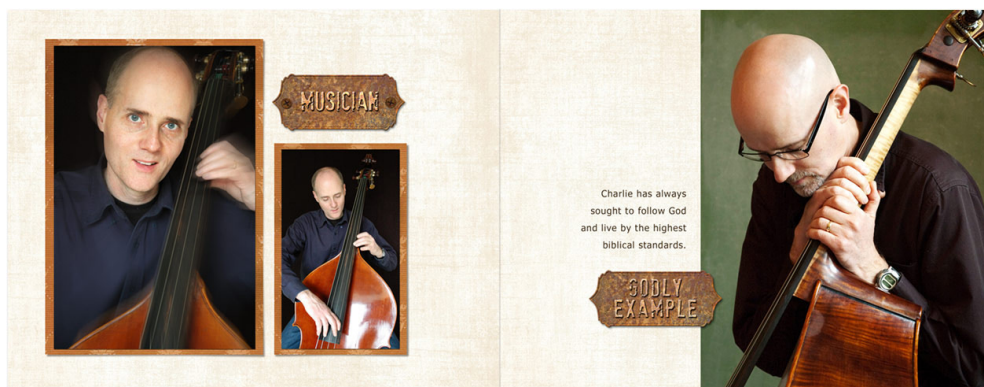
I really like the photo on the cover—it's perfect for this book. At one point we were in a school classroom that had a chalkboard and nice lighting from the windows, so we wrote Charlie's name on the board and snapped a photo.



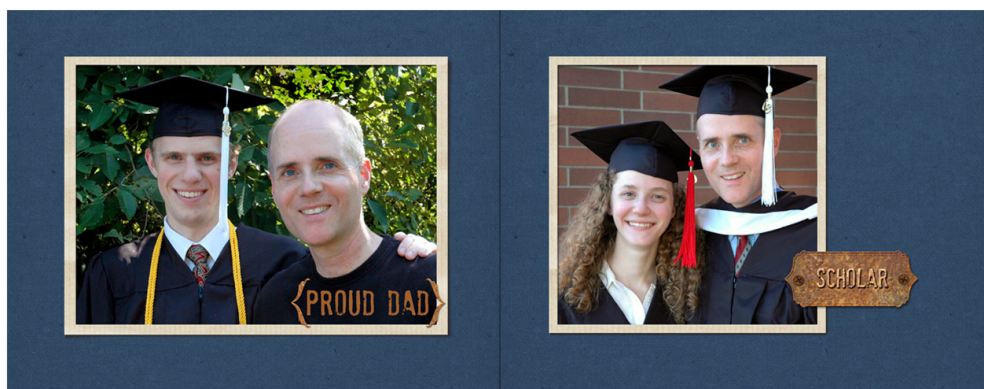
The simplicity of this book is that you feature one characteristic per page—for example, Charlie's musical ability. Who is he? He's a musician. I used a grungy plaque throughout the book to give the characteristic.

He's also a godly man that I admire. I snapped this photo of him in church where he often plays bass. So you see, always have a camera with you. Or at least your cell phone. And yeah, I know. I should have had my eyes closed. Good thing I didn't, though, huh?! It's one of my all time favorite photos of Charlie!

Here's what the two pages look like in a spread.



The entire book is like this. Usually one photo per page. Sometimes more. And I feature something about him that I admire. So I guess you might call this an admiration book!



Quotes and Sayings

Credits for Page Samples:

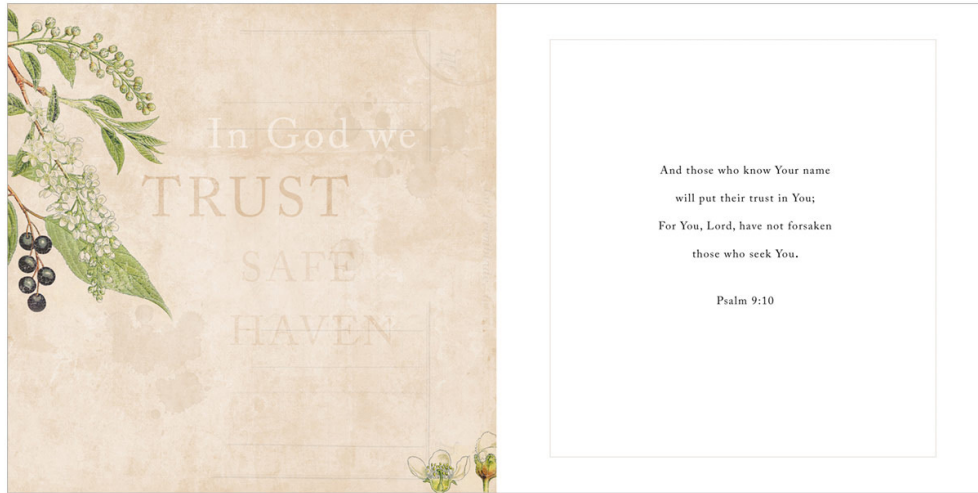
Cardstock Nature Strip and Crisscross Gelato by Susie Roberts

Doily, revised, from Home Sweet Home by Leora Sanford

Elements from A Mother's Heart by Susan Bartolini

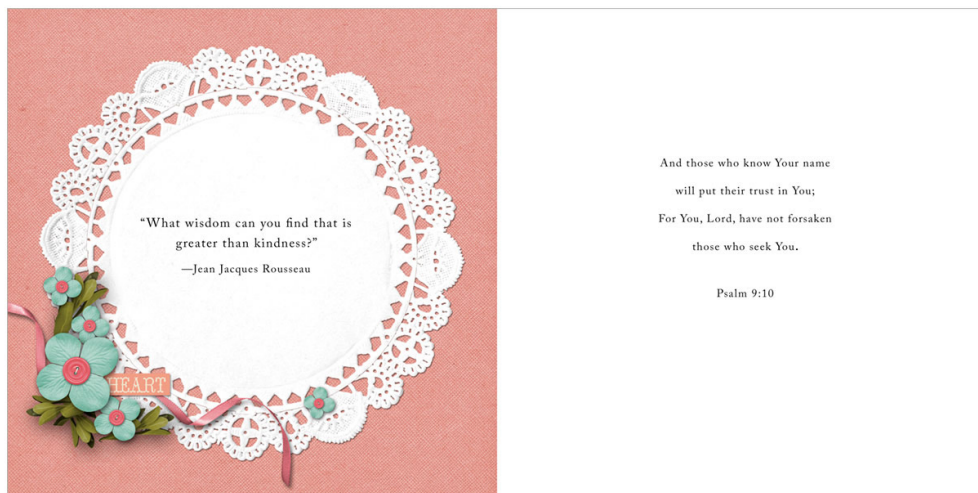
Font: Adobe Caslon Pro Regular

The last book I want to feature is a book of poems, quotes, Scripture verses, or sayings. Here are some sample pages. I don't have a cover for this. My main goal is to show you how the same quotes can be presented in any style you want, from totally graphic to ornate.



This spread is in between a graphic and scrapbook style because the paper on the left has some decoration. I really like the beige background of the paper paired with white on the opposite side. And for good measure I added a stroke outline around the copy. I also used blend modes and layer opacity on the words on the left to make them more artistic.

Here's a different take on the same kind of book. This has a scripture on the right and a quote on the left, but I've introduced a more scrapbooking feel. This can be very simple, even simpler than this, or it can be even more ornate. What you do depends on your taste and on the recipient.



A man isn't likely to want an ornate scrapbooking style book. The first example I showed you might work, or you can use photos for the background instead. This can actually be a beautiful way to present quotes that would be meaningful to the recipient. If you pair the sayings with familiar images, such as their home or a place they frequent, or with images of them or their family, it can be quite powerful.



Remember, you're after a connection with the recipient. What would be meaningful to him or her? Tailor your design to their tastes and you'll have a winner.

Now let's talk about a few more gift book ideas.

You could create a book called:

- Lessons from _____. (Mom or Dad, Grandma or Grandpa, sister, friend) Subtitle: Things I learned from your words and your life.

This is a topic you'll probably want to think about for awhile, so jot down ideas as they come to you. If you can manage a book like this, I think it'll be a big hit!

- Thankful for: Reasons you're thankful for someone
- Pair memorabilia with reminiscing starting with the words Remember when...?

An example would be showing a photo of old roller skates and then reminiscing about roller skating with your friend when you were young.

This works especially well for a friend or sibling you grew up with. You can often find photos of bygone days on the internet. Or you can simply reminisce without showing a photo.

- Chronicle a journey of some sort: Finishing grad school, getting a doctorate, retirement, etc.
- Recount the blessings in your life or answers to prayer. Even hard times where you've gained a better perspective.

Misc. Gift Book Ideas

- Appreciation for a boss or business owner

Remember the 50th Birthday book for an employee that I showed you in another lesson? This would be similar but would showcase the business.

Perhaps show photos of the facility. Take employee photos and ask them to say a word of thanks or appreciation for their boss or job. Record their words on your cell phone so to make it easy for the employee to contribute their thoughts.

A book like this would make a great holiday gift or business anniversary gift for the business owner.

- Make a book you can leave with a parent at a care facility.

I read an article once that mentioned how helpful it is for care workers to have a sense of their patient's backgrounds, so they see them as real people with a history and value. They found that the level of care increased when workers had a better perception of the person.

When Charlie's dad was in a care facility, we made a poster with photos, including one of Charlie's dad when he was young on his motorcycle. The facility saw that photo and arranged to have a local motorcycle group take him for a ride. It was his last motorcycle ride.

- Make a book about your faith community as a gift for the pastor, Rabbi or leader. You might want to tell the history of your group, or again, you could take photos of people in the congregation and have them write a little note of thanks.

So, as you can see, there are lots of ways to show people that you care about them by giving them a gift book.