



The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER JR. LIBRARY

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NEWSLETTER

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THE THRILL OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Did you know that one of the duties the Rockefeller Library is charged with is maintaining a records management program for Colonial Williamsburg - from the President's Office to Hotels, to Finance to the Historic Area and everything in between? Records management provides for the efficient management of paper and electronic records throughout their entire life cycle from creation to final disposition. The Library creates records retention schedules for every department in collaboration with the department itself, General Counsel and Internal Audit to ensure compliance with legal responsibilities. The schedules identify the types of records a department creates, govern how long those records need to be kept, and provide for their proper disposition.

The Library manages an off-site Records Center to store temporary records until their retention period has been met. Those retention periods can vary anywhere from two to twenty years based on the pertinent retention schedule.

IN THIS ISSUE

The Thrill of Records Management:	p. 1-3
Winter Training:	p. 4
New to View:	p. 5-6
Recent Gifts:	p. 6
Fellowship Update:	p. 7-8
Bassett Hall Installation:	p. 9-10
Research Notes:	p. 11
New Databases:	p. 12



A view down one of the aisles at the Records Center.

THRILL OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT

(continued)



Donna Cooke and Sarah Nerney from the Rockefeller Library working with Joel Voron, Senior Integrated Pest Management Technician, to ready the monitoring equipment for records just placed in the freezer.

Currently, the Records Center houses over 6,000 boxes from departments across Colonial Williamsburg. With the assistance of a wonderful team of movers, the department picks up records from all around the Foundation three times a year, either for permanent retention in the Archives, for temporary storage at the Records Center or for immediate disposal. If a department needs to access files from records stored at the Records Center, we will pull the required files for them.

After records have met their retention requirement and an approved disposal certificate is received, they are destroyed by confidential shredding and pulping. Eligible records are disposed of two times a year by a local disposal company that picks up the records, takes them back to their warehouse and shreds them using a room-size shredder.

Some of the most interesting places we have discovered records have been in attics, basements, stables, dairies, laundries, smokehouses, the old bus garage and even in bathtubs in former hotel guest rooms. Storage space for records in the Historic Area is very tight so records are often kept wherever room can be found. Due to the wide range of buildings we have to visit, it is always an adventure when records are picked up. Often, accessibility to those storage spaces is challenging to say the least.

Archives is currently conducting an experiment in partnership with the Collections, Conservation and Museums Division using freezers located in the old commissary building to treat archival records that may have been exposed to insect infestation. The process involves freezing the records for several weeks to ensure that any pests are killed before transport to the Library or Records Center buildings.

THRILL OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT

(continued)



Mover George Banks moving records from a small attic.



Kelly Brennan Arehart works with staff during winter training, 2019.

Photograph by Wayne Reynolds

WINTER TRAINING

Winter training 2019 was a big success this year thanks to innovative teaching techniques and new approaches to historical content. Over a period of 8 weeks, close to 350 Education Research and Historic Interpretation staff went through the training – one of the largest groups in winter training’s history.

The historians paired with the new training department and the 3 day training sessions covered everything from guest satisfaction statistics to a cross-colony comparison of slavery in the 18th-century. The hospitality and guest service training on day one had never been provided to the frontline staff before and encouraged them to think about guests’ needs in a new way.

The historical content encouraged staff to think beyond what they already know and build meaningful connections to other topics, other places, and other time periods. In a summer 2018 survey, the ERHI staff said that they wanted to learn more about working with primary and secondary sources, women’s history, and the history of slavery.

Day 2 was devoted to reading sources and women’s history and day 3 was devoted to the history of slavery. The historians structured the two days to meet the needs of the staff and encouraged them to engage with the information in new ways. They devised engaging activities to strengthen the critical thinking skills needed when reading primary and secondary sources, created an activity to familiarize the staff with Williamsburg women and their work, and presented new information on slavery in the 19th-century and slavery in different parts of the British Empire.

The most significant change to training was the intense peer-driven discussions moderated by the historians. In these sessions, staff and interpretive veterans talked to each other about the difficulties of interpreting women’s history and slavery, respectively. They shared tools and techniques for better interpretations, for maintaining dignity and the dignity of colleagues in difficult situations, and for creating the mutual respect so critical to good frontline interpretation.

NEW TO VIEW



Photograph by Wayne Reynolds

Our volunteer photographers are, as always, hard at work documenting what happens at Colonial Williamsburg. Without their efforts our visual record would be greatly diminished. Recently, Wayne Reynolds shot some of the first images of Valiant, the first foal born at Colonial Williamsburg in sixteen years. You may see some of those images on the Colonial Williamsburg Facebook page. Jerry McCoy shot beautiful images of the Afternoon Tea at the Williamsburg Inn, which are featured on the resort website. Staff and volunteers may view these images and thousands more in the Foundation’s asset management system affectionately known as “The Source.”

NEW TO VIEW

(continued)



Photograph by Jerry McCoy

RECENT GIFTS TO THE JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER JR. LIBRARY

The Rockefeller Library is pleased to announce two recent gifts that will further our mission. Brooke England and Paul Michel have created an endowment that will provide for the purchase of new reference and circulating books to strengthen the collection. The endowment honors Basima Qattan Bezirgan, a long-time librarian who served as a Middle East Cataloger and Arabic Specialist at the University of Chicago and a Cataloger and Bibliographer at the General Libraries at the University of Texas at Austin. The gift honors the memory of Bezirgan and her lifelong commitment to libraries and learning.

The Gladys and Franklin Clark Foundation recently awarded the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library \$125,000 to support the purchase of rare books and manuscripts for its Special Collections and for conservation of materials from the Library's Special Collections and Corporate Archives collections. Included in the conservation needs are key documents related to the history of Colonial Williamsburg and the Restoration of Williamsburg. The Rockefeller Library also received a \$50,000 gift from the Clark Foundation in late 2018 to support the purchase and installation of high-density archival shelving to store its Corporate Archives collection. The Clarks, long-time supporters of libraries, have funded many initiatives at Williamsburg-area libraries.

The Library is very grateful for the continued support of our donors that help us continue supporting the research needs of Colonial Williamsburg staff and patrons.

COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP SERIES UPDATE

2018 was an eventful year for two of our more unusual fellowships. The year began with a visit from two fellows who took up our NEH funded fellowship in 3D Visualization. The Fellowship aims to explore innovative ways in which 3D visualization technologies such as Augmented reality and Virtual reality can enhance our understanding of Early American history or a closely related field. The 2018 winners were Lauren Massari and Shayne Brandon from the University of Virginia's Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities (IATH). Lauren and Shayne worked on a 'Then and Now' 360° panoramic exploration of the Douglass Theatre site. The experience was premiered to the public at May's IT Expo, to a very positive reception. Next steps are to load the experience in CW's Explorer App, allowing guests to see what the site looked like in the exact place it was located in the Historic Area. If you don't know where that is, then it was on the NW corner of the Gunsmith lot, to the south-east of the Capitol.

In March we had a visit from our EXARC fellow Dr. John Seidel. John is the Director at the Center for Environment & Society, and the Lamont du Pont Copeland Associate Professor of Anthropology and Environmental Studies at Washington College, Maryland. The EXARC Fellowship is intended to advance the research and scholarship through a partnership between EXARC, the international organization of Archaeological Open-Air Museums (AOAM), and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. John developed a multi-faceted project to pursue artifact analysis and structured experiments with Colonial Williamsburg Trades. John looked at the results of metal-



John Seidel maps the deposition of metal debris in the Anderson Blacksmith Shop and Public Armoury.

working practices by our Trades personnel, especially metalworking waste and debris. He then used this as evidence to interpret results he was seeing in his archaeological excavations at the 1778-9 Continental artillery encampment at Pluckerman, New Jersey.

FELLOWSHIP UPDATE

(continued)



Lauren Massari and Peter Inker demonstrate the 1772 Douglas Theatre 'Then and Now' to milliner Shifrah Harris.

Warren Billings, Distinguished Professor of History Emeritus at the University of New Orleans was selected as the 2018 Colonial Williamsburg Foundation - Jack Miller Center Fellow. Billings' research, entitled "Just laws for the happy guiding and governing of the people: Statute Law in Colonial Virginia" probed why and how the Virginia General Assembly undertook seven revisions of the statutes in force between 1632 and 1748. He approached the task from the standpoint that these revisals represent fairly precise snapshots of the social, political, economic, and legal imperatives that gave rise to them. They are suggestive of the degree to which the assemblymen grew in sophistication and understanding as lawgivers, and they are windows into how Virginia statutes were often hybrids that borrowed freely from English law or were cut from entirely whole cloth.

Dusty Dye, a doctoral candidate at the University of Maryland, was the recipient of the 2018 Robert M. & Annetta J. Coffelt and Robert M. Coffelt Jr. Fellow. The Coffelt Fellowship is awarded to scholars working on topics related to the American Revolution, Early Republic, or ideas and philosophies of America's founding fathers. Dye's research, entitled "A Decent External Sorrow: Death, Mourning, and the American Revolution" focused on the ways that inhabitants of British North America deliberately crafted their funereal culture not only to provide personal comfort but also to make public statements about how they understood themselves and their place in the world. In planning funerals and observing periods of mourning, the American colonists expressed ideas about myriad subjects ranging from highly intimate matters of religious conviction and personal affection to broader issues regarding moral virtue, proper social relationships, and cultural identity.

BASSETT HALL INSTALLATION HIGHLIGHTS ROCKEFELLER'S INVOLVEMENT WITH THE RESTORATION



Interpretive installation in Bassett Hall dining room

Reproductions of materials from Corporate Archives and Special Collections are part of a new installation in the Dining Room and Parlor of Bassett Hall. Library staff met with curatorial staff to help them identify architectural drawings, photographs, and documents that John D. Rockefeller Jr. reviewed and discussed with Restoration staff. Among the items examined were the Singleton P. Moorehead Streetscapes, a report and accompanying *Map of Williamsburg, Virginia. Prepared to Accompany Report of Proposed Ultimate Restoration of Williamsburg* by A.E. Kendrew, February 20, 1939, and pre-restoration photographs relating to the George Wythe and Peyton Randolph Houses. All of these items relate to a period during the late 1930s when a team of architects drafted plans to fill in the gaps with reconstruction or restoration of structures not included in the initial group completed in the early 1930s. Known as “Phase II” in Colonial Williamsburg’s evolution, the period launched an expansion of plans for future projects at sites such as the Wythe and Randolph Houses, many of which became reality after the end of World War II.

Singleton P. Moorehead, an architect who joined the Restoration team in 1928 and became part of the architectural office in 1934, and A.E. Kendrew, Foundation Architect, proved to be pivotal in moving Colonial Williamsburg forward with the Phase II transition. Together they collaborated to prepare a report and accompanying map and architectural drawings at the request of President Kenneth Chorley “...to indicate the extent of restoration work which might be done within certain areas to completely restore Williamsburg to its eighteenth-century state.” Kendrew’s colored key map depicted the Historic Area divided into numbered blocks with structures within each block given a unique identification number. Singleton P. Moorehead’s collection of streetscapes, created in 1939, are watercolor, crayon, and pencil sketches with elevations of blocks throughout the

BASSETT HALL INSTALLATION

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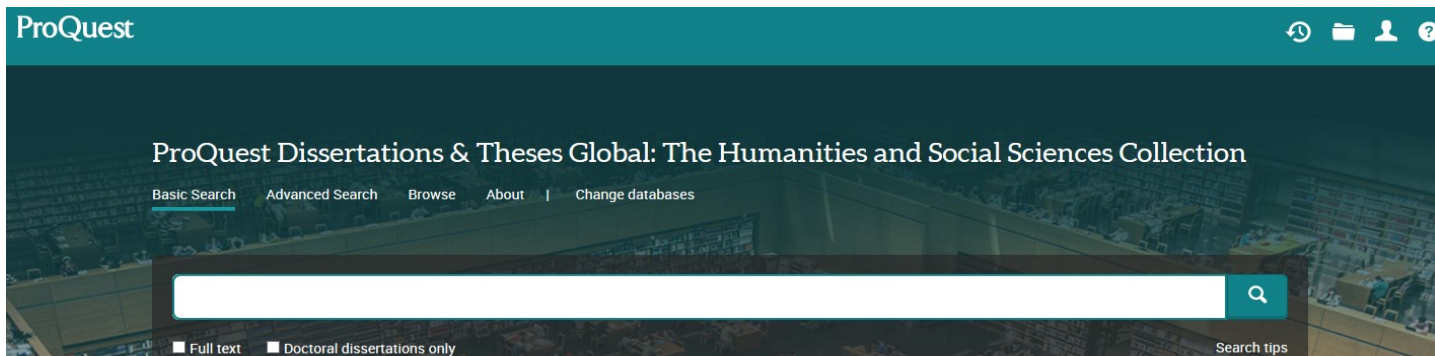
Historic Area where reconstruction or restoration work was in progress or could potentially be commenced. Both the map and the streetscapes use a system of color-coding to identify four different types of properties under discussion. Blue denoted a property that had already been restored or reconstructed but required additional work while green marked sites not currently owned by the Restoration at which work might take place in the future. Red identified sites owned by the Restoration at which proposed work could take place and black designated properties in which families continued to reside after signing life tenancy agreements. Moorehead purposely designed the street elevations to be small and easily portable to allow Mr. Rockefeller to ride about Williamsburg in his limousine comparing the streetscapes against extant structures in each block. Moorehead explained “He didn’t have to stand around with the wind blowing huge blueprints...He just had these simple little renderings...He bought the proposition, and then the fun really started.”

According to Amanda Keller, Associate Curator, Historic Interiors and Household Accessories, “...we decided to forgo the normal installation of showing the dining room for a meal and try a new scene depicting Mr. Rockefeller working on the restoration of Williamsburg at the table.” The dining table is covered with an informal display of Mr. Rockefeller’s books relating to Virginia architecture, along with reproductions of a selection of the streetscapes, photographs, and Kendrew’s map and report cover, looking as though Mr. Rockefeller just stepped away from conducting a detailed study of the materials. Keller also explains “In the Morning Room, we show Abby meeting to discuss the restoration with local Williamsburg ladies for tea and coffee.” Reproductions of several of the Moorehead streetscapes are shown on the sofa and side table as if Mrs. Rockefeller was preparing to review new developments with restoration work over petit fours with Williamsburg women. Keller summed up the goal of the installation as “...to communicate how involved Mr. and Mrs. Rockefeller were with the Restoration and how they worked with the local community to win them over and get everyone excited about the new changes to Williamsburg.”



Interpretive installation in Bassett Hall morning room

NEW DATABASES EXPAND ACCESS TO PRIMARY SOURCES AND SCHOLARSHIP



In response to requests and enthusiastic feedback from Colonial Williamsburg staff, the Rockefeller Library is pleased to announce the addition of two new databases to its collection of electronic resources:

Early English Books Online contains digital facsimile page images of virtually every work printed in England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and British North America and works in English printed elsewhere from 1473-1700. From the first book printed in English by William Caxton, through the age of Spenser and Shakespeare and the tumult of the English Civil War, this incomparable collection contains more than 130,000 titles and more than 17 million scanned pages.

ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global: The Humanities & Social Sciences Collection is a comprehensive collection of dissertations and theses in the humanities and social sciences. The database includes bibliographic citations for nearly 2.5 million works (with about 1.25 million of these available in full text) and adds approximately 100,000 new works annually. Content is updated weekly and robust search capabilities include 24 indexed and searchable fields as well as search-ability for the entire text of full-text dissertations.

The library is thrilled to support the ongoing research of Colonial Williamsburg's historians, interpreters, tradespeople, curators, conservators, and archaeologists by increasing access to both early modern primary sources and contemporary scholarship. Both new databases are available at any computer connected to the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation network through the "subscription databases" page on the library's website: <https://research.history.org/library/materials/databases/> or directly at: <https://search.proquest.com/?accountid=57798> or <https://eebo.chadwyck.com>.

If you've used the resources available in these or other databases to inform your interpretation or expand your knowledge, we'd love to hear your research story!

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