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Mid-Atlantic *Archivist*

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On the Cover

John Drew. Herford, Oliver, circa 1913. Drawing. Cabinet of American Illustration, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2010716560.

To the Right

Margot Fonteyn in The Royal Ballet production of Firebird, 1960. Photograph. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library, digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/91b3e130-cdbb-0138-fe7f-008b47cc3843.

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From the Chair

JESSICA L. WEBSTER

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to Spring! I'm so glad to see the weather starting to warm up in our region. I love to garden, and I'm excited to start seeing my plants emerge from the ground! In this season of renewal, I'm happy to share with you all some news and updates on new beginnings and initiatives within MARAC.

First, early spring in MARAC is the time when our chair-elect starts filling vacancies in appointed positions for the next year. I would like to strongly urge members to consider volunteering to serve on a committee. During my tenure as chair-elect, and then as chair, we have been trying to make each committee's projects, time commitments, and areas of emphasis more transparent. Our current chair-elect, Ali Zawoyski, and I have been working on ways to match up committee vacancies with the current skill sets of potential candidates. It is also important to me that committee service opportunities act as a way for members to upskill: for example, a member may use their work with our Communications Committee to develop skills with social media. These new skills may allow them to expand their current role or pursue a new archives career path with social media outreach as an area of emphasis. I have already seen this upskilling bear fruit in my own work! As chair, I have helped preside over MARAC's strategic planning initiative. My experience with identifying and targeting concrete, time-bound goals for MARAC has led to my undertaking a strategic planning process in my current institution and has translated directly to my success with that project. If you are interested in exploring our available roles for the next year, I encourage you to review our committee information at marac.info/committees, and reach out to chair-elect Ali Zawoyski at ajzawoyski@wm.edu for information on the appointment process.

Second, I'm very pleased to share that we are wrapping up MARAC's strategic planning process. As many of you know, the strategic planning process was started by past-chair Sara Borden during her 2022-2023 term. The Strategic Plan content was generated by consulting MARAC's committee chairs, caucus representatives, and the Executive Committee. After we drafted a plan, we led two listening sessions, one at our conference in Saratoga Springs and a virtual one afterwards, to get input from MARAC's membership. Finally, our Members-at-Large integrated all the feedback and provided Steering with a revised version of our Strategic Plan. In early March, Steering voted to approve this final version. I'm so proud of this plan; I feel that it reflects our priorities and needs going forward into the next phase of our development as an organization.

In my columns, I have enjoyed highlighting various parts of the Strategic Plan, but one area I haven't yet mentioned is very near and dear to my heart: an initiative to improve MARAC's efforts to cater to members with various dietary needs and restrictions. I have recently been required to shift my diet for medical reasons, and have come to understand the challenges associated with dining at conferences, as well as the anxiety associated with that experience. I'm proud to say that as part of our larger initiatives to make MARAC more inclusive to members with a variety of backgrounds, limitations, and needs, MARAC will be more prominently asking for dietary restrictions upon registration for our events; will provide a wider variety of meal options; and will clearly label all meals served as to key ingredients. The Local Arrangements Committee for this Fall's Saratoga Springs meeting went the extra mile in this regard, and for me, personally, knowing that my dietary needs would be seamlessly integrated into my experience at the conference really removed a lot of stress. I'll be so glad to see this initiative built into our standard operating procedures for in-person events moving forward!

Third, in another new beginning, MARAC held its first-ever MARAC symposium on April 8 in Philadelphia. The symposium, which centered on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, featured both lightning talks from MARAC members as well as a special program on Bystander Intervention and Conflict De-Escalation in the Workplace presented by Right-to-Be. Please also keep an eye out for some exciting workshops and webinars presented by MARAC's Education Committee throughout the Spring and Summer, as well as information on this fall's MARAC virtual conference.

Enjoy all the new beginnings coming your way this spring!



Sincerely,
Jessica L. Webster
Chair, 2023-2024

A handwritten signature of Jessica L. Webster in black ink. The signature is written in a cursive style and matches the printed name above it.

Commemorating ELEONORA DUSE'S Final Bow

by William Daw

While Pittsburgh might not be the first city that comes to mind when one thinks of theatre history, in 1924, it became the unexpected stage for the final performance and passing of Italian actress, Eleonora Duse (1858-1924).

The University of Pittsburgh Library System (ULS) is acknowledging this anniversary with an exhibit and several acquisitions to its performing arts collections.

To truly understand the impact of Eleonora Duse on the world of theatre, one must grasp the reverence she commanded during the early 20th century.

“Speaking in theatres in Italian around the world, Duse was understood. Audiences, critics, and especially other artists moved and responded to her art with an outpouring of tributes at times so extreme as to be worthy of a deity. Critics scoured their vocabularies for words to describe her acting and yet words seemed inadequate” (Sheehy 2009).

Born into a family of actors, Duse’s first stage performance was at age four, and she began playing lead roles as an adolescent. As she matured, she developed her own natural acting style that clashed with the prevailing style of older performers. By the late nineteenth



Syria Mosque. Edward J. Shourek, ca. 1916-1920. Photograph, Edward J. Shourek Photograph Collection, Archives & Special Collections, University of Pittsburgh Library System.

Program cover from Eleonora Duse’s performance on April 5, 1924. Ford E. and Harriet R. Curtis Theatre Collection, Archives & Special Collections, University of Pittsburgh Library System.

century, she had become one of the most highly regarded performers of her time, touring extensively throughout Europe, and undertaking multiple tours of North and South America.

Near the height of her popularity, she retired from performing for over ten years, only acting in one silent film. In 1921, she announced a return to the stage: “I shall go before the public with my weary, aged, wrinkled face and my white hair, and I shall strive to give them my soul. If they want me as I am I shall be proud and happy. If not, I shall return to my silence.” Decades later, performer Eva Le Gallienne tried to convey the presence that Duse had during her final tour:

“From 1884 to 1924 the name [Duse] stood for the most potent magic of which the theatre is capable. To those who saw her—and thank God, I am old enough to be one of them—that magic still remains undiminished and unsurpassed...I saw the stage take on an added dimension. I felt the vast audience grow still and sit as though mesmerized in the presence of a frail, worn woman...I saw ‘the impossible’ come true” (Le Gallienne 1966).



Portrait of Eleonora Duse. Arnold Genthe, 1923. Photograph. Ford E. and Harriet R. Curtis Theatre Collection, Archives & Special Collections, University of Pittsburgh Library System.

Duse's tour came to America in the fall of 1923 and was such a success that arrangements were made to extend it to additional cities, including Pittsburgh. Duse arrived on March 31, 1924, after a performance in Indianapolis, Indiana. Duse, her company, and her entourage, switched from downtown lodgings to stay at the Schenley Hotel, in Pittsburgh's Oakland neighborhood (the University of Pittsburgh's present-

day campus location). She was scheduled for a one night only performance of *The Closed Door (La Porta Chiusa)* by Marco Prage at the Syria Mosque on Saturday, April 5.

However, fate had other plans for the rest of her tour. Duse was caught in the rain on her way to rehearsal, foreshadowing the tragedy to come. Despite this setback, Duse's performance on April 5, 1924 left an indelible mark on Pittsburgh audiences.

As recounted by the *Pittsburgh Gazette Times*:

"Mme. Duse's art may be measured in feet and inches. Syria Mosque is a vast place and a figure less imposing easily could be lost in its extensive reaches of space. No ordinary player could conquer it. It would be a triumph if she merely had made an impression that was slightly favorable, but her acting was such that the great audience broke into tumults of applause and she was the recipient of a number of curtain calls" (*The Pittsburgh Gazette Times*, April 6, 1924).

However, Duse was delayed from traveling to Cleveland, the next stop on the tour. She had taken ill and stayed on at the Schenley Hotel to recuperate. Duse tragically succumbed to pneumonia on April 24, 1924, leaving behind a legacy that would endure for generations.

The University of Pittsburgh Library System's Archives & Special Collections took the opportunity of this year's centennial to expand our Eleonora Duse ephemera holdings. For the last 60 years, the Ford E. and Harriet R. Curtis Theatre Collection has documented Pittsburgh's performing arts history. For the most part, the Curtis Collection only contained materials that documented Duse's final performance and death in Pittsburgh in 1924.

The core of the Curtis Collection is a set of artificial collections

based on material type—programs, scrapbooks, photographs, newspaper clippings, etc. These collections contain some of the oldest materials documenting performing arts in Pittsburgh, and also the most current. Most donations from the public, as well as staff acquisitions, are added into these collections. Over the last several years, the ULS has been further developing and diversifying these artificial collections of theatre ephemera—primarily via the antiquarian book market, auction sites, and even eBay. In the case of Duse, the ULS purchased a beautiful 1923 portrait print of the actor taken by Arnold Genthe, possibly giving us a glimpse of the last time she was photographed in a studio. The ULS also acquired several other images and ephemera from the turn of the twentieth century relating to the prime of Duse's career. These newly acquired items, along with accompanying materials, will be on display in Hillman Library's Archives & Special Collections Exhibition Gallery this March and April.

PARTNERSHIPS

To complement these efforts are partnerships celebrating Duse's life and career on a global scale. Vigevano, Italy—Duse's birthplace—plans to commemorate this year with an exhibition on Duse's final performance and last days in Pittsburgh. The University of Pittsburgh Library System is supporting this project by providing digital scans of our materials for use in their exhibition.

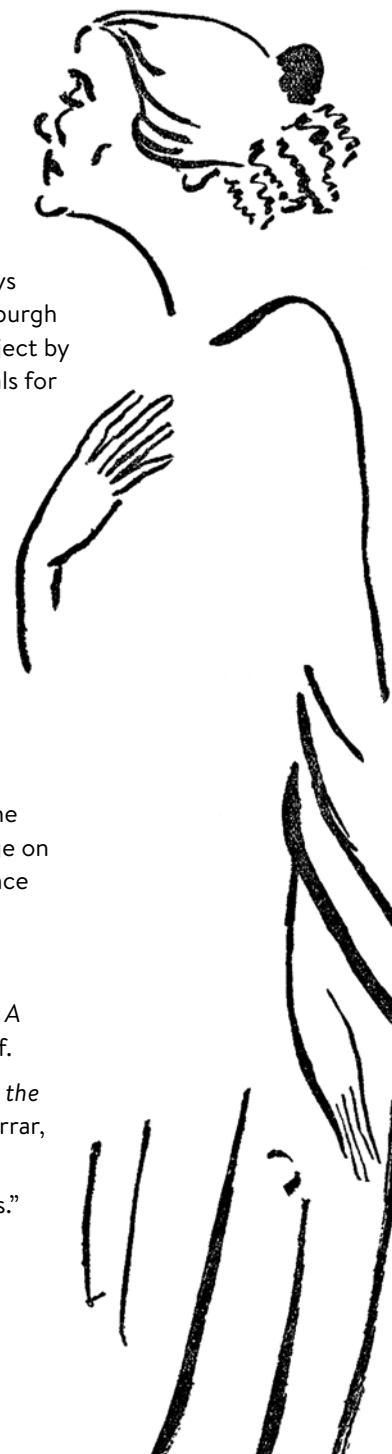
Another exciting collaboration involves Poste Italiane, which is set to release a commemorative stamp in honor of the centennial of Duse's passing. The marketing and packaging for the stamp will include images from ULS Digital Collections related to Duse's final performance in Pittsburgh. The University of Pittsburgh Library System is grateful to contribute to the celebration of this legend of the stage on the centennial of her final performance and passing.

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"Duse Thrills in Portrayal of Emotions." *The Pittsburgh Gazette Times*, April 6, 1924. Newspapers.com.



Indelible Ephemera: Posters and Fliers from Special Collections in Performing Arts, 2024. Photograph courtesy of the author.



Indelible Ephemera: Posters in Special Collections and Archives

BY BEN JACKSON

SHROUDED IN MAMMOTH ACID-FREE FOLDERS, filed away in map cases, and spartanly described in finding aids, the posters of Special Collections in Performing Arts (SCPA) at the University of Maryland (UMD) were somewhat of a hidden gem of our collections. Often among the least likely things to be requested by a patron, posters were the first artifacts we showed off during tours of our workspace. In text, shape, structure, and design, posters do so much heavy lifting in the performing arts. They set an audience's expectations, distilling the essence of a living, breathing work into two dimensions and eighteen inches by twenty-four, if not smaller.

Printed promotional works are a nexus of ideas and feelings about and produced by a staged work, concert, film, or installation. They remain a medium as likely to be found in a special collection as they are on a bedroom wall. However, in archives, they have the tendency to become accessories to collections in terms of what we believe they can tell us about performances. Often the prompt book, drafts for choreography, setlists, stage blueprints, and similar production materials are considered the primary artifacts of a show, while posters are often categorized as promotional materials, part of the marketing rather than part of the work itself. In *Indelible Ephemera*, SCPA's current exhibition at UMD's Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library gallery, co-curator John Davis and I showcase this central tension of the relationship between



Posters from the Michael Schriebman papers, 2024. Photograph courtesy of the author.

posters and the performing arts, foregrounding what kinds of questions they can pose and answer about music, theatre, and dance.

The spyglass view and minimalistic icons of the tidy buildings and trees making up Grover's Corners in a poster for an Arena Stage production of *Our Town* speak to the play's famously unadorned staging and small-town plot. Lloyd McNeill and Lou Stovall's poster promoting a Country Joe and the Fish concert at Columbia, Maryland's Merriweather Post Pavilion in 1968 is a work of art synthesizing the artists' and performer's work towards peace and justice. The layered and richly pigmented abstract shapes are a hallmark of McNeill and Stovall's output, appearing in prints organizing locally and nationally for civil rights. The delicate red flower resting atop it all is a nod

to Country Joe and The Fish's iconicity within the antiwar movement of the 1960s, later cemented with their performance of "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die Rag" at Woodstock.

Dance, on the other hand, does not have the benefit of lyrics, a script, or in some cases a pre-established plot, let alone one an audience would be able to glean from a poster. Instead, these posters reflect the form, using text and shape to mirror the ways in which dancers use the body and space to communicate.



Posters from the Harry M. Bagdasian theatre posters collection, Maryland Dance Theater records and ACDA records, 2024. Photograph courtesy of the author.

The posters advertising performances by Antonio Gades' company and the Vienna State Opera Ballet at Washington, D.C.'s National Theatre and on Broadway are among the boldest. The advertised 1972 production of *Swan Lake* starring Margot Fonteyn is, in some ways, as representative of the established canon of Western dance as it comes. Later appointed *Prima Ballerina Assoluta* of the United Kingdom's Royal Ballet, when Fonteyn first performed with famed dancer and choreographer Rudolf Nureyev in his staging of *Swan Lake* in Vienna, the pair were called back to the stage eighty-nine times. Likewise, the poster feels incredibly tied to notions of tradition and reinforces the idea of ballet as a rarified form. With the company's name rendered in an ornate, anachronistic gothic script, and Fonteyn posed in an arabesque with a swan superimposed upon her figure in muted colors, this poster is a tangle of traditionalist ideas about ballet and dance as the epitome of grace.

Although from the same year, the deeply saturated pinks, oranges, and yellows and bold titles of the 1972 poster advertising the flamenco of Gades and company stands in stark contrast to the *Swan Lake* poster. As a choreographer and dancer, Gades is known for iterating on flamenco, treating the dance as a living, dynamic means for self-expression. Gades himself is photographed seemingly in motion, with kinetic energy reflected in the technicolor flashes of light. The titles themselves equally work to convey motion and modernism with the typesetting following the dancers' silhouettes. Further, the title typeface itself, ITC Avant Garde is the typographic picture

of seventies modernism, drawn from the eponymous *Avant Garde* magazine and later showing up everywhere from first printings of Octavia Butler to the logo used by PBS for much of the decade.

Framed and mounted in the middle of our wall of colorful and evocative dance posters is a humble, partially hand-drawn, photocopied



Flier from the Dance Exchange records, 2024. Photograph courtesy of the author.

8.5" x 14" advertisement for performances and classes by the Washington, D.C., dance company and space, Dance Exchange. The company was founded by Liz Lerman—a choreographer, performer, and educator—who has centered her career on expanding dance's role in the lives of everyday people, regardless of experience, body, or age. In the flier, a company of dancers are depicted as anonymous figures, allowing anyone to see themselves among them. Rather than a gilded opera house stage or a modern black box, the dancers are seen fluidly moving through a park flanked by local businesses. This flier, and its call for "professionals, children, office workers, and senior citizens" to join in the dancing, is not just an advertisement but an argument for dance as a participatory and inclusive art form.

In marquees, taped to walls, or stapled to telephone poles, posters and fliers remain a media that places art directly into people's lives. Poster collections in archives have the opportunity to resonate with a wide range of patrons precisely because their designs invite and thrive on so many levels of appreciation. Displaying our posters enables them to once again do what they do so well, interrupt daily life and enrapture us in word, color, and image.

PERPETUAL WANDERERS

By Jasmine Smith

When I discovered the Repertory Theater of America collection in the processing backlog of the Alvernia University Archives, I assumed that the company had, at one point, been affiliated with Alvernia when it was still a college.

A previous archivist had accessioned the records about a decade ago, but it remained unprocessed, so I wanted to prioritize processing the collection to make it available to our theater students and outside researchers. Digging into the accessioning documentation and the collection itself, I could not find any link between the materials and the college. Finally, I found that the donor, one of our theater faculty, had been an actor and later a manager for the group before joining Alvernia's theater department.

So, where should these materials settle? They fall outside of Alvernia's collecting scope. The mission of the University Archives is to document the history of the institution, while special collections document local persons and organizations in the Reading, Pa., area. The Repertory Theater of America was founded in California as The Bishop's Company Repertory Players and was a Methodist theater group, but it was never formally affiliated with the Methodist Church. It separated relatively quickly from its religious roots to perform secular work and was headquartered in Texas during its most profitable years, though business activity required troupes of actors to travel throughout the U.S., performing each season's

plays. The company ceased operations in the early 2000s.¹ Given that the nomadic company had been defunct for two decades, establishing a basic historical note was difficult. Finding an alternate home for it would be equally challenging. Other active collecting institutions have no stronger connection to the materials than Alvernia. When the faculty member donated the materials, he wanted his students to be able to use the collection for research once processed. That goal ties the collection to supporting the curriculum, so despite the unlikely combination of a loosely Methodist collection from the Western U.S. now residing in the archives of a Mid-Atlantic Catholic university, they remain at Alvernia.

While establishing the background of the collection was difficult, processing was generally straightforward. The papers

were largely organized in use-based series, and most were in good condition. The oversize and photographic materials presented more of a challenge. The company created large, framed, multi-image cast headshot boards every year or two during the height of its run. (FIG. 1) The weight and fragility of these required careful handling. While the glue used to mount the photos had browned in many cases, disassembling these would introduce further risks and challenges, from managing large panes of glass, to detaching the photographs from the mats without causing additional damage. The original order of the photos would need to be well-documented to preserve that information when storing them in envelopes or folders. Furthermore, the informational value of these framed cast headshots is low. Names of cast members are

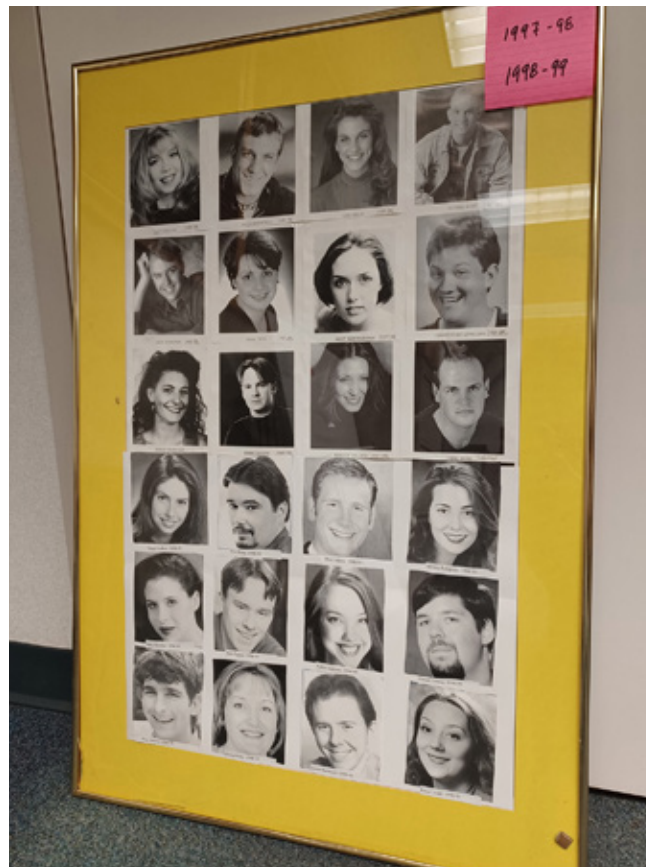


Fig. 1. Cast photo, 1997-1999. Framed collage. Repertory Theater of America Collection, Alvernia University Archives, Reading, PA.

1. The Repertory Theater of America Collection Finding Guide, 2023, MS 8, Repertory Theater of America Collection, Alvernia University, Reading, PA. https://alvernia.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=72689314.

already captured in paper records, and headshots don't convey nearly as much information as the playbills, promotional photos for specific plays, or advertising materials that make up the bulk of the records. With these things in mind, the photos have been kept in their frames. More serious preservation concerns, high demand, or unanticipated research needs could lead to rehousing them in the future.

Posters, in contrast, have been removed from their frames. The cheap framing materials were causing significant acid damage to the posters, and the glass was cracked or broken on many frames. Unframing was a safety decision for the paper, as well as archivists and researchers. The old frames had been constructed with sharp blades, so disassembling them was a careful operation, but storing them in archival boxes with acid-free interleaving materials was an upgrade worth the effort. (FIG. 2, 3)

An unusual component of this collection was the original booking card system. Cards were used to track organizations that had previously booked the group, along with managing upcoming bookings. (FIG. 4) While I carefully preserved the order of the cards in their holders, the system itself was unclear. Doing the archival detective work to analyze the card system, compare it with other records, and rediscover the booking

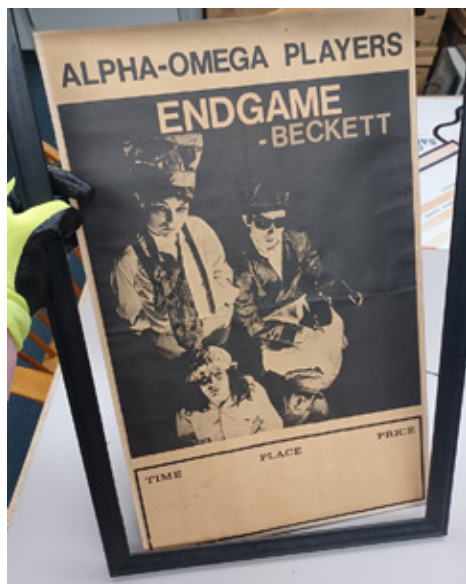


FIG. 2. *Unframing Process*, July 2023. Image courtesy of Jasmine Smith.

FIG. 3. *Unframed poster: Endgame*. August 2023. Image courtesy of Jasmine Smith.

system may be an interesting future project for students or researchers.

The most significant challenge related to this collection has been promotion. Because the height of the company's activity was the 1980s through the 1990s, most actors are still living and may be excited to promote or use the collection. However, connecting with this group has been difficult. A private Facebook group



FIG. 4. *Booking cards*, August 2023. Image courtesy of Jasmine Smith.

includes many actors as members, but the group administrator passed away, so the group is essentially locked to attempts to join or post about the newly processed materials. Posting on the Alvernia library's own social media and tagging the organization has not yielded engagement. Working with Institutional Advancement to connect with cast members was also unsuccessful. Unfortunately, the records of this traveling group have found a home repository but are struggling to find their researcher base.

In 2023, I updated Alvernia's archives policies, including the collection policy, to better describe what materials and subject areas match the mission of the Alvernia University Archives, as well as the formats and conditions that the archives can properly manage, given staffing, funding, physical space, etc. Under the updated policies, the tenuous connection between this theater collection and the institution would likely not lead to the archives accepting the donation. But that begs the question of what would become of these materials? Like the performers, they are not tied down; they have no obvious home. Online research suggests that no other repository holds records on The Bishop's Company or the Repertory Theater of America, and by the height of the company's activity, other for-profit traveling theater companies were out of business, so the records are fairly unique. Perhaps with continued outreach efforts their current location, even if it does not directly correspond to their history, can become a place where they are used and appreciated.

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► DELAWARE

SYMPOSIUM AND ARCHIVAL EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHT BANCROFT FAMILY CONTRIBUTIONS TO DELAWARE

On January 26, the [Delaware Art Museum \(DelArt\)](#) and the [Woodlawn Trustees](#) co-hosted a free day-long symposium: “The Bancroft Brothers: An Untold Story,” which focused on the transformative impact that brothers Samuel (1840-1915) and William (1835-1928) Bancroft had on Delaware. Samuel made significant contributions to DelArt’s world-class collection of Pre-Raphaelite art, while William spearheaded the preservation and thoughtful development of land in Wilmington for parks and neighborhoods. The Bancrofts’ philanthropy had a major impact on northern Delaware, yet their efforts remain a quiet story due to their Quaker heritage and active involvement with the Society of Friends.

The symposium featured a lecture by MARAC member Gene Castellano on the history of [Joseph Bancroft & Sons Company](#), which was once the largest cotton fabric producer in the world and the source of the Bancrofts’ wealth. The company’s innovative fabrics and insightful advertising enabled it to become a renowned marketer of textiles in the United States. Its products were used in book cloths, home furnishings, and high-fashion apparel featuring Ban-Lon and Everglaze fabrics. Bancroft even became a household name by virtue of its twenty-two year sponsorship of the Miss America Pageant. The symposium was accompanied by an exhibition of archival papers, photographs, and marketing materials from the Bancroft Company, which are now maintained in the collections of the [Hagley Museum and Library](#). The exhibition was co-curated by Castellano and staff from Hagley and DelArt.

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► MARYLAND

TOWSON UNIVERSITY’S SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES WINS DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AWARD



Unearthing Towson University’s History summer 2023 cohort of student researchers with project mentors Ashley Todd-Diaz and Christian Koot.

Towson University’s Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA) was recently acknowledged with the University’s Diversity and Inclusion Award for the work they have done to develop and support the Unearthing Towson’s History project, a member of Universities Studying Slavery consortium. This collaborative initiative between SCUA, the History Department, and the Office of Inclusion and Institutional Equity

centers student researchers as agents of change to develop a more authentic University history by connecting alumni and the wider community with the University. Acknowledging the many gaps and silences that currently exist in the University’s archives, the team’s objective is to capture a rich, collective history that is representative of all members of our community, to celebrate different forms of expertise including lived experience, and to embrace both the triumphs and challenges in our past. Since the project’s commencement, many undergraduate and graduate students have worked closely with faculty and staff mentors, resulting in the completion of ten oral histories with alumni and former faculty and staff that tell stories of previously marginalized Towson University community members; a sharable database of diversity-related archival sources with over one thousand entries; ongoing compilations of biographies of key players relating to Towson University’s diverse history; a draft timeline of U.S. key events and the University’s history of segregation, desegregation, diversity, and accessibility; and so much more.

- **CAUCUS REPRESENTATIVE**

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▶ NEW JERSEY

FIRST HOSPITAL AT THE JERSEY SHORE

On January 17, Monmouth Medical Center marked 135 years of providing clinical excellence and treating patients with the safest, most compassionate care. The official establishment of the hospital dates to 1889, when twelve men put their signatures to a certificate of incorporation for Long Branch Hospital. A copy of this certificate is available at the Monmouth County Archive for interested researchers. Read the [full press release](#), and visit the [Archives & Special Collections page](#) for more information.

HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Retired Monmouth County Archivist, Gary Saretzky has been developing history of photography resources on his [webpage](#). Recently, he added a dating guide to cabinet cards in the section “Virtual Exhibits of 19th Century Portrait Photographs.”

INNOVATIVE ARCHIVES AWARD

The New Jersey Caucus is accepting nominations for the *Innovative Archives Award*, which is given to an organization that has made outstanding efforts to preserve and make archival materials accessible within the State of New Jersey.

Nominees may have developed innovative educational or outreach models utilizing archival sources, provided leadership during a time of crisis or emergency, demonstrated new thinking in solving a long-standing problem, exhibited creativity in increasing awareness of local history resources among New Jersey residents and visitors, or otherwise provided service to the archives and history communities.

The organization need not be affiliated with MARAC to be eligible for nomination. To nominate an organization, complete and send the nomination form and supporting documentation by April 15. Form and criteria can be found at www.marac.info/new-jersey-caucus-awards.

Past recipients have included the New Jersey Digital Newspaper Project, Ukrainian History and Education Center, Puerto Rican Community Archives, New Brunswick Music Scene Archive, Morristown National Historical Park Library & Archives, the League of Historical Societies of New Jersey, and the Township of Ocean Historical Museum.

NEW JERSEY STATE ARCHIVES NEWS

- New Jersey State Archives (NJSA) has awarded a contract for guest curation of its *Semiquincentennial Exhibition* to Claudia Ocello. The exhibit will be hosted by the New Jersey State Museum in Trenton, N.J., from April 2026 through “Patriots Week” and into January 2027. It will feature New

Jersey’s colonial, state, and federal charters and a rich selection of historical materials illustrating the ongoing American Revolution from a New Jersey perspective. Claudia Ocello is president and CEO of Museum Partners Consulting, LLC.

- NJSA has announced a major online resource providing direct access to digital images of nearly 1,700 early [New Jersey tax ratable lists](#). These booklets are invaluable for genealogical and local history research in the 1773-1822 period in light of the federal government’s loss, by fire, of the New Jersey schedules from the first four decennial censuses. The ratable lists enumerate leaseholders, householders, and single men in addition to those who owned acreage (including women and free Blacks). NJSA staff are in the process of indexing the records. The resultant database will be made publicly available eventually. In this initial unveiling, the tax booklets are browsable by county, municipality, and date.
- Finally, the State Archives has further expanded its public hours, opening the Manuscript Reading Room on Monday afternoons and is no longer limiting appointments per week.

VISIT TO THE NEW JERSEY STATE ARCHIVES

The New Jersey Caucus and the New Jersey Library Association’s History and Preservation Section met to tour the New Jersey State Archives on February 9. Thank you to Donald Cornelius and Joseph Klett for leading tours!

NEW EXHIBITION EXPLORES GARDEN STATE HISTORY THROUGH GLASS PLATE NEGATIVE ARCHIVE

Discovering Grant Castner, a new exhibit at the New Jersey State Museum, explores stories of Garden State history through one New Jerseyyan’s passion for photography. Grant Castner



Thomas and Susan Dillon, at their home near Jacobs Creek, Ewing Township, New Jersey, 1899. From a glass plate negative by Grant Castner, collection of the New Jersey State Museum.

(1863-1941) was an amateur photographer born in the Delaware River town of Belvidere (Warren County, N.J.) who later lived and worked in Trenton. The 200+ images featured in the exhibition reflect Castner's notable artistic talent and illustrate numerous aspects of New Jersey history, from pictures of family and friends to the marvels of turn-of-the-century transportation to the flurry of excitement and activity at the famed Inter-state fair.

In 2019, the New Jersey State Museum received a donation of more than one thousand glass plate negatives—many still in the original sleeves containing Grant Castner's hand-written notes. Drawn from the most evocative images in the archive, the exhibition is arranged by subject matter and includes rare views of New Jerseyans at work and at play; canals and railroads; the Jersey Shore; floods, fires, and other disasters; the Delaware River; and famous New Jersey landmarks.

Discovering Grant Castner: The Lost Archive of a New Jersey Photographer runs through September 15, 2024, at the [New Jersey State Museum](#). The museum is open Tuesday-Sunday, 9:00 am to 4:45 pm; closed on all State holidays. General admission is free.

A REMEMBRANCE OF ROBERT SEWELL BY RON BECKER

Robert Sewell, our dear friend and colleague at the Rutgers Library for many years died February 22. Bob spent most of his tenure at Rutgers as the Associate University Librarian for Collection Development and Management after holding a similar appointment at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. In addition, he edited the *Journal of the Rutgers University Libraries*. He interacted with nearly everyone at the library and the academic faculties, students, and administration to help build our distinguished collections and was a loyal supporter of the library's Special Collections and University Archives. He was a neighbor and close family friend in Metuchen, N.J., where he and wife Barbara lived throughout his Rutgers years before moving to Riverdale, N.Y., after their retirements. A memorial service at Rutgers Library is being planned for this spring.

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► **NEW YORK**

CUNY AWARDED MELLON GRANT TO CONNECT UNIVERSITY-WIDE ARCHIVES

The City University of New York (CUNY) has received a \$2 million grant from the Mellon Foundation to create a centralized institutional archive. The funding will be used to establish a single

public point of access for its 31 libraries and many of its 100 cultural centers and institutes, many of which house collections of significant historical interest. It will develop public access to CUNY's Central Office University Archives, a collection of thousands of administrative and internal records dating to 1926. CUNY is the largest urban public university in the United States and is nationally recognized as an engine of social and economic mobility for New York City. For 175 years, CUNY campuses and communities have been deeply engaged in the educational and social justice movements that have shaped—and continue to shape—New York City and the nation. The CUNY Office of Library Services is thrilled that the support of the Mellon Foundation will ensure that this legacy is documented, preserved, and accessible for generations to come.

The funding will be used to hire three full-time archivists who will work with students from the Queens College Graduate School of Library and Information Studies to access and inventory the resources across the University system's libraries, filling a long-identified gap in the institutional support of archives units in libraries. Collaborating with campus archivists, the grant team will work to establish standard workflows and practices in making collections available and training to implement those practices. This includes developing best practices for common system-wide issues in CUNY like handling born digital materials and the infrastructure to support these materials. Additionally, the archivists will develop outreach promoting the collections and provide professional development to connect collections to classroom teaching.

THE MEDICAL CENTER ARCHIVES OF NEW YORK-PRESBYTERIAN/WEILL CORNELL MEDICINE VISITING RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM

The Medical Center Archives of New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medicine is pleased to open the application process for the 2025 David J. Wolf, MD Visiting Research Scholar Program, which supports research using the onsite collections in the Medical Center Archives of New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medicine.

The David J. Wolf, MD Visiting Research Scholar will receive up to a \$5,000 stipend to support travel, lodging, food, and incidentals for a flexible period between January 1–December 31, 2025. Visit the program website [here](#) to learn more about the program and how to apply by the September 1, 2024, deadline.

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► PENNSYLVANIA

PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES EXHIBIT ON ACCIDENT AT THREE MILE ISLAND

The Pennsylvania House of Representatives Archives is proud to open its 2024 exhibit, *Accident at Three Mile Island: Pennsylvania House of Representatives' Response to Disaster*. March 2024 marked the 45th anniversary of the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island. Visitors will learn about the events leading up to and following the accident, how local Representatives responded to constituents, and more about how the event has been remembered locally and nationally since 1979. Featured items include documents from the special committee created by the House in the aftermath of the accident and clean up. Other displayed items are on loan from neighboring archival institutions (Dickinson College, Penn State Harrisburg, and the Historical Society of Dauphin County) such as vinyl records, mugs, bumper stickers, and more! The PA House Archives is in 628 Irvis Office Building, Capitol Complex. The exhibit will be on display for the entirety of 2024. We hope to see you there!



Exterior of the new Pennsylvania State Archives, 1681 North Sixth Street, Harrisburg.

PENNSYLVANIA HAS A NEW STATE ARCHIVES BUILDING

After many years of planning, the Pennsylvania State Archives moved to its new facility at 1681 North Sixth Street in Harrisburg. The building construction began during the pandemic, in May 2020, and was completed in July 2023. The 145,000 square foot building includes 8,000 square feet of mechanical yard and storage for 157,915 cubic feet of boxed records and 6,365 cubic feet of flat files. The building boasts 34 miles of shelving on three floors. The State Archives hired Iron Mountain to move the 88,560 boxes, which they did from July to October 2023. The building is equipped with state-of-the-art environmental controls, a scanning room, a large paper processing room, and a digital processing area, as well as a classroom and several conference rooms. An exhibit room will be opened later this year.

On December 8, Governor Shapiro held a ribbon cutting ceremony and called it “the coolest building in state government.” MARAC members are invited to view the new building at the May 2025 MARAC conference to be held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH ONLINE ORAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS

Five new oral history collections have been added to University of Pittsburgh Library System’s [Digital Collections](#) and [Historic Pittsburgh](#) as part of a Council on Library and Information Resources [CLIR] grant funded project, *Preserving the Experiences of African Americans and Immigrants Racing to Pittsburgh’s Steel Valley* by Archives & Special Collections. This project involved the selection, digitization, and transcription of interviews highlighting the African American and Pittsburgh immigrant communities. Topics include the Great Migration, Pittsburgh in the early to mid-20th Century, ethnic communities, Pittsburgh industry, government, and general life in Pittsburgh. The interviews across all collections were conducted between 1973 and the early 2000s. A total of 304 recordings were digitized creating 876 digital files and approximately 400 hours of historically relevant content.

Selections were made from the following analog collections: Ethnic Fraternal Organizations Oral History Project Collection, AIS.1976.25; Homestead Album Oral History Project Records, AIS.1980.06; Pittsburgh Renaissance Project: The Stanton Belfour Oral History Collection, 1971-1973; Recordings of the Southern Blacks' Migration to Pittsburgh Oral History Project, 1973-1977; and State and Local Government Archives Oral History Collection, 1996-2002.

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► VIRGINIA

GEORGE C. MARSHALL FOUNDATION OF LEXINGTON, VA., HOSTED WILL ROBERTS



Melissa Davis and Will Roberts discuss the Marshall bust by Nison Trager.

In February, the George C. Marshall Foundation of Lexington, Va., hosted Will Roberts, the actor who portrayed Gen. George C. Marshall

in the movie *Oppenheimer*. Roberts spent many hours on Zoom and the phone with Foundation librarian/archivist Melissa Davis learning about Gen. Marshall during preparation for his role. This effort contributed to his well-researched, accurate portrayal of Marshall in the film—including such subtle wardrobe choices as the general’s pinky ring.

While visiting the Foundation, Will finally met the staff in person and studied items connected with Gen. Marshall, the Manhattan Project, and the Trinity nuclear explosion. The Foundation held a meet-and-greet for the community, followed by a screening of *Oppenheimer* and a Q&A by Roberts.

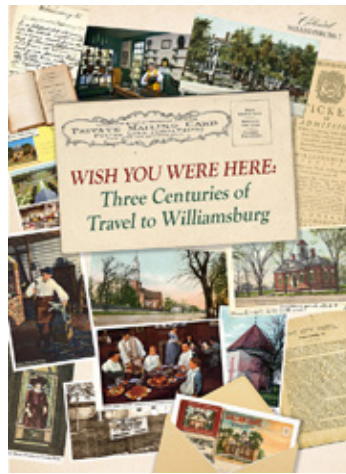
JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER JR. LIBRARY PURCHASE OF VIRGINIA GAZETTE

The John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library is pleased to announce that it has completed the purchase of 134 issues of the *Virginia Gazette* which first came to our attention in 2018. We would like to thank the donors whose generous contributions over the last six years made this possible. We also extend our thanks to the seller for allowing us the time to acquire the funds necessary to complete this transaction. The *Gazettes* acquired from these recent purchases were printed in 1774-1775 by all the printers active in Williamsburg and Norfolk during those years. They increase our ability to share the story of Williamsburg and the American Revolution through primary sources.

With these recent purchases, the Rockefeller Library now owns almost 600 issues of the *Virginia Gazette* printed in the eighteenth century. The oldest of these issues was printed by Williamsburg’s second printer, William Hunter, on January 10, 1751. Only the third and fourth pages of the issue remain, and they have suffered significant loss. Colonial Williamsburg made its first purchase of a *Virginia Gazette* from a resident of Alexandria, Virginia in 1928. That issue from November 3, 1768, and over fifty other issues, are currently being digitized. They should be available online this April. With these most recent acquisitions, the Rockefeller Library holds original copies of approximately 25% of all the *Virginia Gazettes* printed in the eighteenth century. So, while we celebrate these most recent additions to our collection, we continue to be on the lookout for more issues to add to our growing collection.

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER JR. LIBRARY EXHIBITION ON WILLIAMSBURG

A new exhibition opened at the Rockefeller Library in January 2024. Titled “*Wish You Were Here*: Three Centuries of Travel to Williamsburg”, the exhibit traces the evolution of Williamsburg from a colonial capital into an historic landmark. Two chapters in Williamsburg’s history have been pivotal in transforming the town into a destination for travelers—the period when it served as the colonial capital of Virginia and the commencement of its restoration in the late 1920s. Through a variety of



Poster for “Wish You Were Here”: Three Centuries of Travel to Williamsburg which is on exhibit at the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library through December 2024.

and the Black tourist’s experience, Williamsburg restaurants, Colonial Williamsburg taverns and dining rooms, and Colonial Williamsburg recreational activities. A monitor in the exhibit space allows guests to view segments from several home movies taken by tourists in 1949, 1957, and the 1960s.

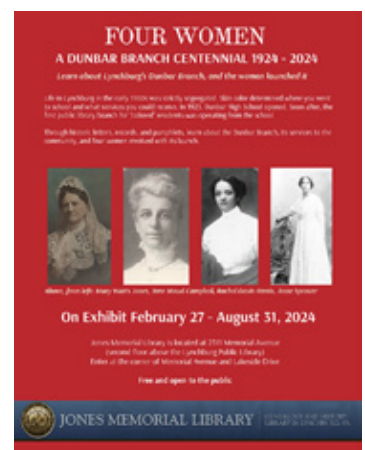
JONES MEMORIAL LIBRARY’S SETH WOODROOF ACCOUNT BOOK

The Jones Memorial Library in Lynchburg, Virginia, is pleased to announce the Seth Woodroof Account Book was selected by the Virginia Association of Museums as a Virginia Top 10 Endangered Artifact. This account book is a handwritten, 72 page leather journal that documents the first and last names of more than 200 enslaved persons who lived in Lynchburg, Virginia from 1834 to 1840. It provides a valuable bridge to meaningfully connect descendants with their enslaved ancestors before the Civil War.

JONES MEMORIAL LIBRARY EXHIBITION ON THE DUNBAR BRANCH

The Jones Memorial Library is currently hosting a free exhibit highlighting the 100th anniversary of the Dunbar Branch, the first library branch to offer services to African Americans in Lynchburg. The exhibit runs through August 31, 2024, and includes a digital exhibition, *Four Women: A Dunbar Branch Centennial*.

objects held by Special Collections, Corporate Archives, Visual Resources, and Media Collections, the story of Williamsburg’s rebirth as an important destination for travelers is illustrated. Four exhibition cases focus upon the themes of Pre-Restoration Williamsburg, Transportation, Accommodations, and Community Remembrances. Five exhibit panels examine the topics of Williamsburg’s tourist homes and wartime lodging, the Green Book



Dunbar Branch anniversary exhibition flier.

SHENANDOAH COUNTY LIBRARY'S TRUBAN ARCHIVES HELD BLACK HISTORY MONTH PROGRAM ON "VIRGINIA MINSTRELS"

The Shenandoah County Library's Truban Archives continued to honor the legacy of our local African American community with our annual Black History Month Program held in February 2024. This year's program focused on a photograph showing a group of African American performers from Mt. Zion Methodist Church in Woodstock, Virginia who conducted a theatrical production of the "Virginia Minstrels" in 1921.

The library's program combined information provided by the photograph's donor with new research to discuss not only the performance, but its impact on the local community, the stories of individual performers, and the legacy of Minstrel Shows in Shenandoah County. An in-person program held on February 13 and virtual program held on February 28 welcomed several hundred combined attendees.

SHENANDOAH COUNTY LIBRARY'S TRUBAN ARCHIVES INSTALLED NEW CIVIL WAR TRAILS MARKER

On January 24, 2024, the Shenandoah County Library's Truban Archives celebrated the installation of a new Civil War Trails marker in Woodstock, Virginia. This marker is one of a series of local Civil War Trails signs that have been updated within the past two years to focus more on community history. They feature numerous local history sources provided via the archives that help promote the library's collection and the story of Shenandoah County. This marker, and others, were installed through a partnership between Shenandoah County and several local towns with the Truban Archives providing research support and imagery.

NEW EXHIBITION AT VCU'S JAMES BRANCH CABELL LIBRARY: INK & REBELLION: THE EVOLUTION OF CENSORSHIP IN COMICS

Ink & Rebellion: The Evolution of Censorship in Comics features Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Libraries' world class [Comic Arts Collection](#) through the lens of suppression and control of creative content. Comics and graphic novels have been censored in the U.S. through legal and preventative



Maus and accompanying letter from author Art Spiegelman to Thomas Inge discussing the struggle to get funding to work on *Maus* and the decision to self-publish. Image courtesy of VCU Libraries.

processes from the mid-twentieth century through the present day. Restrictions from publishers and legal battles that aimed to remove books from the shelves spawned a significant lineage of underground

and alternative comic art. Works by and about racial, sexual, and gender minorities have often faced disproportionate restrictions.



Selection of comics from *Ebon*, *It Ain't Me Babe*, *Gay Comics #13*, among others. Image courtesy of VCU Libraries.

VCU Libraries' Special Collections and Archives is

uniquely situated to establish a timeline of comics censorship. With a collecting scope that focuses on histories of and stories by marginalized identities across our collecting areas, alongside its deep comic arts holdings, the exhibit features a wide selection of materials. The exhibit traces censorship from the Golden Age of comics and the establishment of the Comics Code Authority to the rise of underground comix, criminal censorship cases, challenged depictions of real-world events, and contemporary graphic novel bans.

The exhibit features Special Collections and Archives holdings including the *All-Negro Comics #1*, *Seduction of the Innocent*, *It Ain't Me Babe*, *Ebon*, *Gay Comics #13*, *The Adventures of Black Eldridge*, in addition to many others such as *Raw Magazine*, *EC Comics*, *MAD Magazine*. It features artists including Keiji Nakazawa and Alison Bechdel. The exhibit, located in the fourth floor gallery at James Branch Cabell Library, is on display through Summer 2024.

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► WEST VIRGINIA

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THE MARAC MENTORING PROGRAM

BY EMILY SOMACH

ABOUT THE PROGRAM AND SUBCOMMITTEE

MARAC's Mentoring Subcommittee, which began in 2018 as a subgroup of MARAC's Membership Committee, created a formal mentoring program based on a similar program developed by the New England Archivists (NEA) in 2013. Like the NEA, the MARAC Mentoring Program centers around cohorts of similarly situated MARAC members that meet regularly during the mentorship period. Diverging from the traditional one-on-one mentoring model, the cohorts are designed to:

- Encourage peer support and collapse mentoring relationship hierarchies.
- Encourage the exchange of experiences, challenges, and opportunities to facilitate goal setting for career and personal development.
- Build competence and character to reach those goals.
- Foster self-confidence, communication skills, and collective growth.
- Build professional networks in the MARAC region.

All cohort participants should be current MARAC members, able to commit to a full cycle of the program, and ready to actively participate in every meeting.

For those interested in serving on the Mentoring Subcommittee, it is an appointed position that individuals can volunteer for. Requirements to serve on the subcommittee include being a current MARAC member and committing to serve on the subcommittee for two consecutive years. Subcommittee members might not have previously participated in the Mentoring Program as a mentor, mentee, or peer, but such experience can be very beneficial. Each year, one or two standing members of the Subcommittee who have already served for one year can choose to become the chair/co-chairs for the following year.

This year, the Mentoring Subcommittee members include:

Emily Somach, *Co-Chair (2023-2024)*

John Zarrillo, *Co-Chair (2023-2024)*

Carly T. Lough

Frank Vitale

MARAC'S UPDATED MENTORING PROGRAM

At present, MARAC offers two types of mentoring cohorts: mentor-mentee cohorts and peer-support cohorts. In the former, one or two mentors are assigned to a small group of mentees and lead meetings and discussions. In peer-support cohorts, a small number of individuals are grouped together and contribute to sessions equally, or take turns leading discussions, depending on the preferences of the group. The 2023-2024 cycle is the first time that MARAC has offered the peer-support option, and the Subcommittee is looking forward to using feedback from current participants to refine and enhance future iterations.

The 2023-2024 cycle is also the first time MARAC has offered a Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) cohort, born out of feedback from past participants. This option, which individuals can opt into during the application process, is set up like the other mentor-mentee cohorts but designed to provide a unique and safe space for members of the BIPOC community to support each other and share their experiences. After announcing these new offerings, the current mentoring cycle received the highest number of applicants to date, with 40 mentees, 14 mentors, and nine peers.

HOW ARE COHORTS ORGANIZED?

The Mentoring Subcommittee tries to match applicants together into cohorts based on multiple factors, including geography, work experience, and interests, but the primary criteria for cohort selection tends to be availability, due to applicants' busy schedules. Mentors are assigned to groups of mentees based on their experience and interests relevant to the focus of the group. Originally, the Mentoring Program was designed to meet in person, but since COVID-19 all cohorts have been meeting virtually. In-person or hybrid cohorts may resume in the future if requested and feasible.

PROGRAM DETAILS

Each spring, the Mentoring Subcommittee calls for program participants, who complete a short application that includes an initial survey to determine availability, interest, and geographic location to support cohort matching. Once the Subcommittee matches participants and creates the cohorts, the year-long mentoring cycle begins. At the onset of the program, participants receive an orientation that introduces them to one another, helps set expectations and goals, and answers initial questions. Each cohort is assigned a liaison, a member of the Subcommittee, who provides support and guidance. During the year, liaisons will periodically check in with cohorts to see how the program is going. Cohorts typically meet for one to two hours per month for the length of the program. Mentoring sessions may include activities such as formal or informal discussions, guest speakers, or résumé reviews.

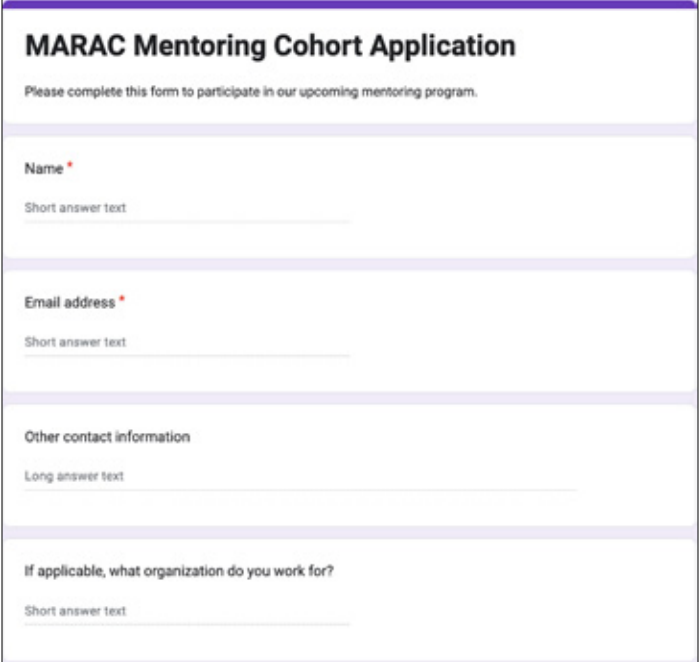
WANT TO PARTICIPATE?

The MARAC Mentoring Program will soon be seeking mentors, mentees, and peers for the 2024-2025 cycle (August 2024-May 2025). For this cycle, we will once again offer traditional mentoring cohorts along with peer-support cohorts and a BIPOC cohort.

Applications will be accepted through May 2024. Cohort members will be notified of their placements in July 2024. Applications are submitted through a form on the MARAC website which will be available in the spring—we will make sure to announce when it is live!

We encourage BIPOC and mid-career archivists to take part in these updated mentoring cohorts. We also encourage folks interested in being mentors to consider selecting a co-mentor. Lastly, we are seeking at least two more Subcommittee members to replace the current co-chairs who have terms ending in 2024.

If you have any questions or are interested in serving on the Subcommittee, please contact us here: mentoring@marac.info. For more information, you can also visit the Mentoring Program webpage at: www.marac.info/mentoring-program.



The image shows a screenshot of a web form titled "MARAC Mentoring Cohort Application". The form has a purple header bar with the title. Below the title, there is a subtitle: "Please complete this form to participate in our upcoming mentoring program." The form contains four sections, each with a label and a text input field:

- Name ***: Short answer text
- Email address ***: Short answer text
- Other contact information**: Long answer text
- If applicable, what organization do you work for?**: Short answer text

Questions from Mentoring Cohort application, 2024.
Image courtesy of Emily Somach.

VISITING THE STACKS: ACCESSING RIGHTS-RESTRICTED DIGITAL COLLECTIONS AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

BY ANDREW CASSIDY-AMSTUTZ



One of the goals of the Library of Congress’s Digital Strategy is to throw open the treasure chest—that is to share the digital collections held by the Library as broadly as possible. This goal not only includes public-facing digital collections available on [loc.gov](https://www.loc.gov) but also previously unavailable rights-restricted digital collections.

Traditionally, most of the Library’s digital collections cannot be made openly available online. Many digital collection materials acquired through copyright deposit, purchase, gift, transfer, and exchange have not been made available to Library users.

Unlike the public-facing digital collections available on [loc.gov](https://www.loc.gov), the Library’s rights-restricted digital collections are required to be available to onsite users only. To satisfy this requirement as well as the goals of the Digital Strategy, the Library had to develop an entirely new access system built around providing access to rights-restricted content in a secure fashion that protects the rights of copyright holders.

To accomplish both aims, the Library created Stacks—an onsite-only access system for rights-restricted digital collections through dedicated terminals in the Library’s reading rooms and research centers. Stacks contains digital collections that the Library has custody or ownership of; it does not include digital collections that are part of subscription packages or other temporary acquisitions.

Initially focused on digitized and born-digital general collections such as books, newspapers, and journals, Stacks now provides access to a wider variety of rights-restricted digital content from the Library’s general and special collections including manuscripts, maps, music scores, audio recordings, computer files from external media, and more.

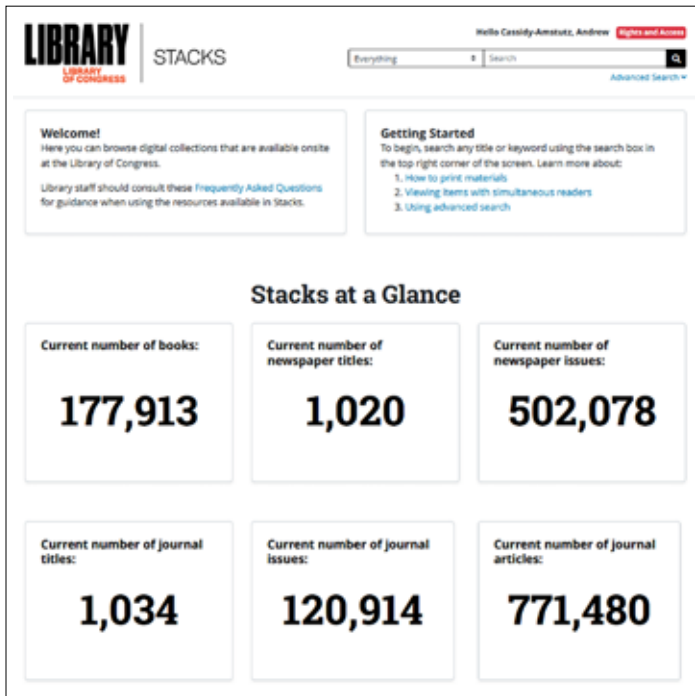
Stacks provides a customized level of access to rights-restricted



User accessing digital collection materials at a Stacks terminal.

digital content that aligns with the relevant statute, acquisition agreement, or determination from the Library’s Office of General Counsel. For example, electronic titles received through copyright registrations may only be accessed by two simultaneous users in Stacks, which will display a message directing additional users to try to access the title at a later time. This applies to both registered researchers in the Library’s reading rooms and research centers and staff users accessing Stacks through their workstations.

Stacks also provides an additional layer of security through the public terminals, which are configured to prevent rights-restricted content from being removed and redistributed. Users accessing Stacks through the public terminals are also limited to only accessing publicly available websites within the Library’s domain such as [loc.gov](https://www.loc.gov) and catalog.loc.gov. Users attempting to access websites outside of the Library’s domain receive an error message that the requested website is not available. This prevents the download and redistribution of any portion of a title through email or other web-based file-sharing service.



Screenshot of Stacks homepage.

Search Music Scores



Browsing music scores in Stacks.

USB ports on the public Stacks terminals are also disabled and will not recognize any drives or other media inserted into the machines, preventing users from downloading any portion of a title. The public Stacks terminals only support printing through the Library's existing printer network in each of the Library's reading rooms and research centers.

Although users must be registered researchers and visit one of the Library's reading rooms and research centers in order to access Stacks, anyone interested in learning about the digital content available in Stacks can do so through the Library's Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC). Users searching the Library's OPAC will see "Onsite Access Only" displayed as a part of the search results for titles with digital content available in Stacks.

The bibliographic records for these titles display the message "Available onsite via Stacks" with an accompanying link. Clicking on that link will start an automatic process to determine whether a user is authorized to access the digital content in Stacks. Each access request is verified by checking the IP address of the user and is either approved or denied following a set of rules. Users outside of a set of predetermined IP addresses are redirected to a website providing additional information about Stacks and how to access the requested digital content, including points of contact for the reading rooms and research centers containing public Stacks terminals. Authorized users within the list of approved IP addresses automatically resolve to the requested digital content.

The combination of these technical protection mechanisms and related functionality has significantly expanded the Library's

ability to provide secure, onsite access to rights-restricted digital content in its permanent collections to fulfill patron requests and meet research needs. Nowhere has this been more evident than with digital content held by the Library's special collections. Describing the combination of security and accessibility possible through Stacks, Chris Hartten, Assistant Head of the Acquisition and Processing Section in the Library's Music Division, said: "Stacks brings a new level of security, consistency, and functionality to the user experience that seemed like a distant possibility just years ago."

Digital content managers from across the Library of Congress are regularly adding new rights-restricted digital content to Stacks in accordance with the appropriate access and usage restrictions. I encourage everyone to visit the Library of Congress the next time you are in Washington, D.C., to experience one of the public Stacks terminals as a registered researcher, and to throw open the Library's treasure chest for yourself.

An Interview with AARON PURCELL

BY ELISE DEANDREA | JANUARY 2024

Winner of the Arline Custer Award in 2023 for his book *As Wolves Upon a Sheep Fold – The Civil War Letters of Ohio Surgeon William S. Newton*

Q: Can you tell us a little about yourself and what you do in your position at Virginia Tech?

A: I am the Director of Special Collections and University Archives at Virginia Tech. I began the position in 2007 after working at the University of Tennessee, the National Library of Medicine, and briefly at NARA while a library school student at the University of Maryland. I manage a department of nearly a dozen full time archivists and about a dozen student library assistants. I do a lot of collection development in our core collecting areas, which includes working with donors and manuscript dealers. Most librarians at Virginia Tech have faculty status so there is an expectation of professional involvement, research, and publishing.

Q: What is your book about?

A: As *Wolves Upon a Sheep Fold* is a book of edited Civil War letters from Ohio Surgeon William S. Newton. The book presents nearly 170 letters that Newton wrote from the battlefields in West Virginia and Virginia to his wife and children back in Ironton, Ohio. Newton's letters ruminate on camp life, personal and family matters, health, and the challenges of raising their children during the war. He provides some descriptions of military maneuvers, but as a non-combatant his perspective is much more personal. The book offers insights into the social and medical history of war, as well as the porous lines of battlefield and homefront in the Appalachian borderlands. (FIG. 1)

Q: What events led to you putting this book together?

A: Virginia Tech won the Newton collection at auction in 2017 with the expectation that researchers would take great interest in using it. The content, especially the description of the Battle of Cloyd's Mountain, which occurred about twenty miles from Virginia Tech's Blacksburg campus, was a perfect fit for Virginia Tech's already strong holdings in the Civil War in Virginia. In the next two years, however, there was little if any interest in the collection from researchers. I decided to begin an editing project with the intention of putting some, if not all, of the collection online with transcripts. With the help of a graduate assistant and also my daughter, I transcribed the letters. At

the same time, I mentioned the project to editors who I had worked with before at the University of Tennessee Press. They suggested that we do further editing and submit the letters as a book manuscript for their *Voices of the Civil War* series.

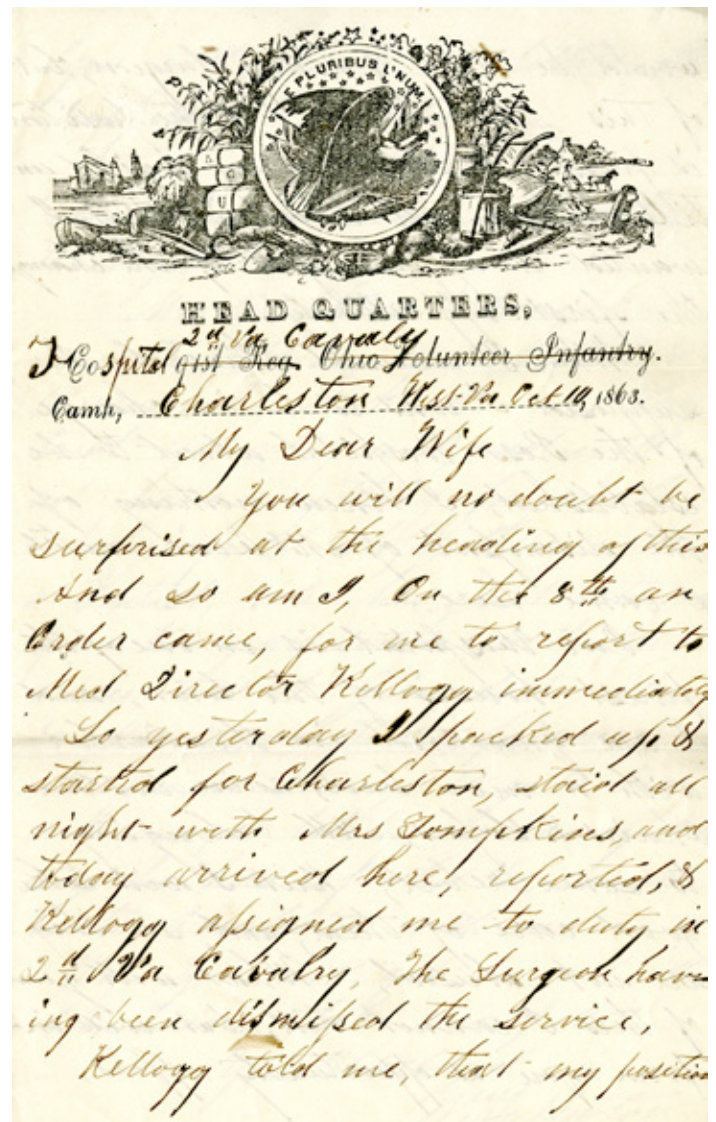


FIG. 1 October 10, 1863 letter from William S. Newton to his wife. William S. Newton Papers, Special Collections and University Archives at Virginia Tech. Image courtesy of Aaron Purcell.

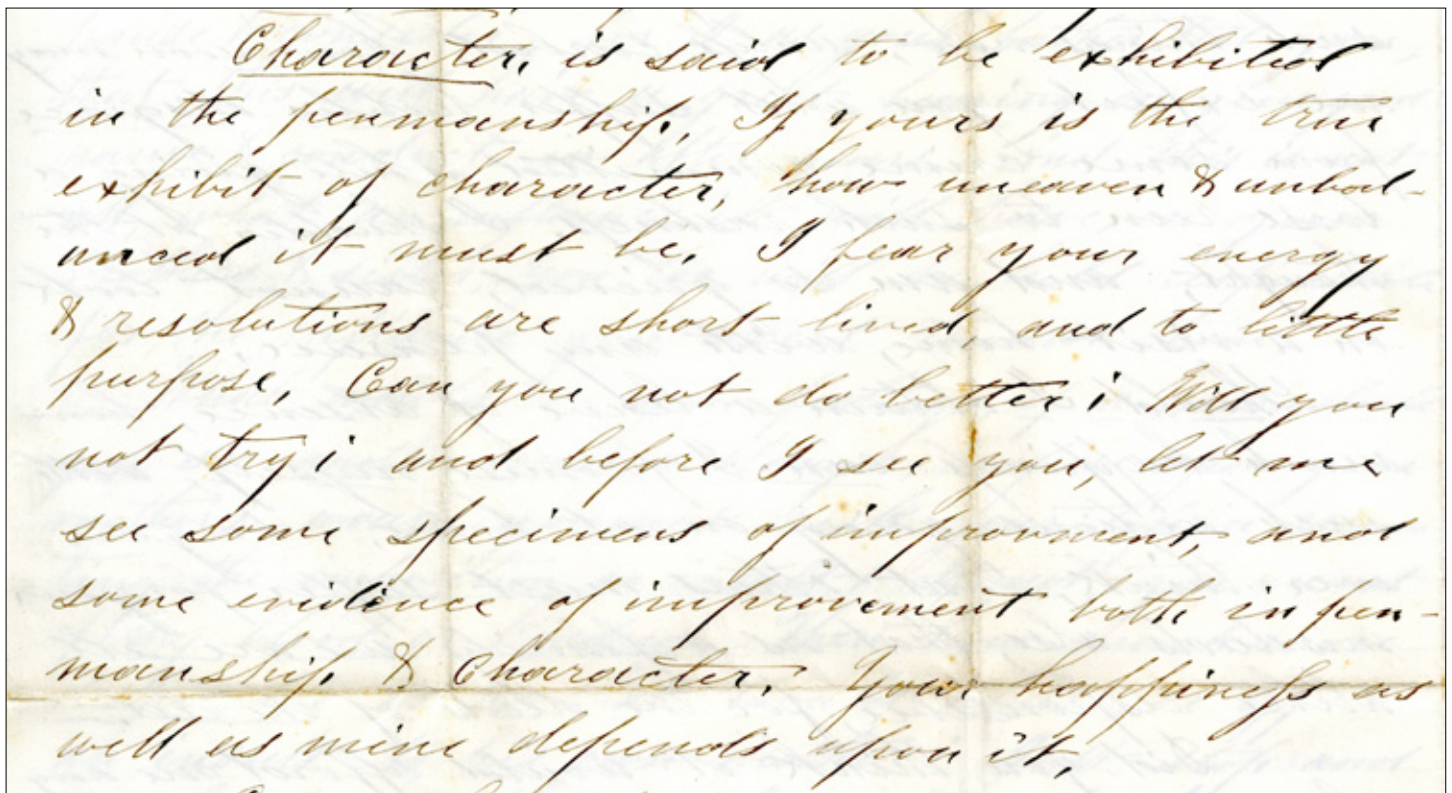


FIG. 2 February 24, 1864 letter from William S. Newton to his son Ned. William S. Newton Papers, Special Collections and University Archives at Virginia Tech. Image courtesy of Aaron Purcell.

Q: Can you tell us about the process and how long it took?

A: I've written several books on archival and historical topics, so the different parts of the processes were familiar to me. In fall 2019, I identified similar books of edited Civil War letters and started organizing the letters into chapters. In early 2020, I started the lengthy process of tracking down names, places, events, and other details in the letters. This involved many hours searching through Civil War books, websites, rosters, and other collections to identify the people, places, and events in the letters. I wrote brief introductions for each chapter and created an appendix of frequently appearing names and places. I submitted the manuscript in fall 2020. Following peer review, I located images from archival collections, and revised the manuscript which the press accepted in 2021. In spring 2022, I reviewed page proofs and created an index. The press published the book in fall 2022. From concept to published book took about three years, which is actually fast for an academic press.

Q: What were some challenges you faced while writing this book?

A: At the time I was conceptualizing the book, I was finishing up another book manuscript that included chapters from eight different authors. That project, and its sudden deadlines, took priority over developing something new.

Additionally, when the world shut down in early 2020 because of COVID-19, I had just started to track down names, places, and events for the Newton book. Like many other libraries,

we were not allowed in our building and thus I did not have immediate access to print sources. So I had to adapt and rely on online collections, especially print sources through HathiTrust. I was also unable to find an image of William S. Newton for the book. I even connected with one of Newton's descendants who located some unidentified family members from the 1870s, but we could never make a positive match.

Q: Do you have a favorite letter from the collection and why is it a favorite?

A: Many of Newton's letters to his wife Frances discuss their children. (FIG. 2) The antics of their teenage son Ned was a frequent topic. A handful of letters were addressed directly to Ned with specific instructions for personal improvement. My favorite was a February 24, 1864, letter from William S. Newton to his son Ned. He reminded Ned that he was a role model for his little brothers and sisters and needed to teach them good habits. Then, Newton referred to an incident where Ned disrespected his mother saying: "You certainly are not demented, or crazy, yet how could I suppose a boy almost 14 years of age, could commit such indiscretion. I truly hope no one knows of it." Even worse, he scolded Ned for brandishing a firearm saying: "Did you think it would afford me any happiness, to know that you were taking the gun out, contrary to my express command, and have you reflected that if, some accident should take place, how much misery you might cause to your parents & others." As a solution to Ned's teenage indiscretions, his father offered a simple solution: ▶

penmanship, yes, penmanship was the path to success. He closed the letter to Ned saying: “Character is said to be exhibited in the penmanship. If yours is the true exhibit of character, how uneven & unbalanced it must be. I fear your energy & resolutions are short lived, and to little purpose. Can you not do better! Will you not try! And before I see you, let me see some specimens of improvement both in penmanship & character. Your happiness as well as mine depends upon it.”

Q: Do you have any advice for archivists that may be interested in working on a project similar to this?

A: Good penmanship. Just like processing a collection, writing a book of edited letters is complex and sometimes daunting. Both involve similar components—develop a plan, use best practices, complete background research, decipher and interpret, expect something unusual that requires flexibility, and let the sources tell the story. I think the biggest challenge for archivists to write books like this is the commitment of time. There will always be daily duties for archivists to attend to, but there should always be a space on their calendars to do some sort of research and writing. Publishing material from an underutilized collection is an excellent way to promote collections and the archives program. That explanation of why you are writing a book works well with managers who do not see publishing as an ongoing professional activity.

Q: Anything else you would like people to know about your book?

A: Since the book came out there have been a good number of researchers using the collection and I expect that usage to continue. There were many secondary stories in the letters that deserve further research, especially Ned Newton’s post-Civil War life. The experience has given me a sharper eye for underutilized collections that may have publication potential.

The Arline Custer Memorial Award is presented annually to honor the memory of Arline Custer (1909–1975), MARAC member and editor of the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections. The award recognizes the best books and articles written or compiled by individuals and institutions in the MARAC region, with preference given to works by archivists. MARAC members are encouraged to submit any articles or books they’ve written in the past year when the call for submissions is issued later this year.

SAVE THE DATE: MARAC SPRING 2025 CONFERENCE

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ROOM RATE: \$169/NIGHT

Program Committee (PC) forming shortly, to join the PC please contact David Grinnell at grinnell@pitt.edu or Val Lutz at valerieanne1222@gmail.com.



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MARAC Committee Volunteers Needed

If you've been looking for a sign to get more volunteer work under your belt and get more involved with MARAC, this is it!

As a volunteer-run organization, MARAC is regularly in need of enthusiastic members to serve in a variety of capacities. In the coming months, many members will be rotating off non-elected committees, leaving open roles. We are especially interested in members who have never served the organization!

If you are interested in serving MARAC in a greater capacity, please fill out our [online interest form](#) by April 30, 2024.

Each position requires a different level of time commitment and not all require regular meeting attendance. The abilities and availability of those interested will be considered when being appointed to a committee. The following committees will have open positions:

- Communications
- Meetings Coordinating
- Education
- Membership
- Finance
- Web Team

For more information on the work of these specific committees and their roles in MARAC, see the Committees page. Please consider volunteering to serve MARAC; we cannot do the work we do without the help of our members. We are grateful for all you do and even more grateful for your service to the organization.

Questions? Contact Chair-Elect Ali Zawoyski at ajzawoyski@wm.edu or www.marac.info/committees



New Members

December 2023

Sara Forrest.....Henrico County Public Libraries
Alison O'Hare Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory
Miya Upshur-Williams Drexel University
Lizzy Zarate New York University

January 2024

Sarah Avvenire National Geographic Society
Megan Bardis Recent graduate
Nicholas Muller..... Essex County Department of
Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs

Eden OreloveDepartment of Transportation,
National Transportation Library
Donovan Reed Kutztown University
Molly Ward Bryn Mawr College

February 2024

Alexander Callahan MLIS student
Sarah Mayersohn ... Union Station Redevelopment Corporation
Karylee Velez..... Sergeant Memorial Collection
Gwen Wells Jones Memorial Library

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Treasurer's Report

FISCAL YEAR 2024 • 2ND QUARTER • OCTOBER 1–DECEMBER 31, 2023

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>1st Quarter</u>	<u>2nd Quarter</u>	<u>3rd Quarter</u>	<u>4th Quarter</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% Budget</u>
INCOME							
Membership Dues	\$40,000.00	\$18,287.00	\$1,569.00			\$19,856.00	50%
Conference Registration	\$68,000.00	\$33,012.00	\$9,080.00			\$42,092.00	62%
Conference Vendors	\$13,000.00	\$7,500.00	\$4,400.00			\$11,900.00	92%
Conference Sponsorship	\$5,000.00	\$4,300.00	\$0.00			\$4,300.00	86%
Publication Advertising	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$988.00			\$988.00	49%
Publication Sales	\$400.00	\$45.00	\$90.00			\$135.00	34%
Mailing List Sales	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			\$0.00	0%
Off-Meeting Workshops	\$3,500.00	\$1,315.00	\$0.00			\$1,315.00	38%
Bank Interest	\$300.00	\$113.77	\$322.08			\$435.85	145%
Investment Interest	\$2,000.00	\$184.55	\$2,990.70			\$3,175.25	159%
Gifts to Operations	\$800.00	\$285.00	\$1,540.00			\$1,825.00	228%
Miscellaneous	\$0.00	\$15.00	\$0.00			\$15.00	0%
Total Income	\$135,000.00	\$65,057.32	\$20,979.78	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$86,037.10	64%
EXPENSES							
Administrator	\$22,000.00	\$2,999.89	\$4,073.16			\$7,073.05	32%
Web Services	\$8,775.00	\$7,954.37	\$194.40			\$8,148.77	93%
Archivist	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			\$0.00	0%
Accountant	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			\$0.00	0%
Advocacy	\$1,800.00	\$0.00	\$1,800.00			\$1,800.00	100%
Insurance Policy	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			\$0.00	0%
Phone	\$600.00	\$149.27	\$149.62			\$298.89	50%
Postage	\$400.00	\$60.42	\$8.55			\$68.97	17%
Office Supplies	\$125.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			\$0.00	0%
Food	\$3,600.00	\$0.00	\$2,162.55			\$2,162.55	60%
Travel	\$1,350.00	\$0.00	\$478.74			\$478.74	35%
Equipment	\$800.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			\$0.00	0%
Printing and Design	\$2,500.00	\$752.77	\$260.71			\$1,013.48	41%
Conference	\$78,000.00	\$6,663.48	\$51,879.67			\$58,543.15	75%
Lodging	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$417.00			\$417.00	42%
Honoraria	\$1,600.00	\$800.00	\$0.00			\$800.00	50%
Awards and Prizes	\$1,450.00	\$62.75	\$500.00			\$562.75	39%
Scholarships	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			\$0.00	0%
Banking Fees	\$7,200.00	\$2,183.07	\$1,945.79			\$4,128.86	57%
Investments	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			\$0.00	0%
Miscellaneous	\$300.00	\$45.00	\$72.00			\$117.00	39%
Total Expenses	\$135,000.00	\$21,671.02	\$63,942.19	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$85,613.21	63%
Net Income or (Loss)		\$43,386.30	(\$42,962.41)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$423.89	

<u>Account Balances</u>		<u>Opening</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Debits</u>	<u>Closing</u>	
PNC Checking	\$81,608.53	Operating	\$43,386.30	\$20,979.78	(\$63,942.19)	\$423.89
PNC Savings	\$77,226.88	Restricted	\$142,595.13	\$670.00	(\$2,750.00)	\$140,515.13
Vanguard Bonds	\$88,360.14	Reserve	\$47,250.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$47,250.00
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$247,195.55</u>	Surplus	\$58,981.53	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$58,981.53
		Totals	\$292,212.96	\$21,649.78	(\$66,692.19)	\$247,170.55

Summary - Second Quarter FY 2024

Opening Balance	\$292,212.96
Total Income	\$21,649.78
Total Expenses	(\$66,692.19)
<u>Closing Balance</u>	<u>\$247,170.55</u>

<u>Restricted Funds</u>		<u>Opening</u>	<u>New Gifts</u>	<u>Spending</u>	<u>Closing</u>	
PNC Savings	\$52,154.99	Disaster Assist.	\$20,305.00	\$30.00	\$0.00	\$20,335.00
Vanguard Bonds	\$88,360.14	Education	\$107,443.51	\$620.00	(\$1,500.00)	\$106,563.51
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$140,515.13</u>	Graduate Schol	\$9,755.62	\$20.00	(\$1,000.00)	\$8,775.62
		Finch Award	\$5,091.00	\$0.00	(\$250.00)	\$4,841.00
		Totals	\$142,595.13	\$670.00	(\$2,750.00)	\$140,515.13

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