

broadSIDE



the magazine of the **LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA**

2024 | NO. 2

World War II in the Collections



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LIBRARIAN OF VIRGINIA

Dennis T. Clark

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THE INSIDE STORY

A Busy Spring

New initiatives address the Library's future

It has been a very full spring at the Library of Virginia, and I would like to share some of what we've been up to these past months.

First, I am excited to report that we've made several new hires, and I would like to mention two. Sarah Falls has joined as Director of Public Services and Outreach, succeeding Gregg Kimball. Falls joins us from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, where she was the university librarian. We also had a successful recruitment for a new Executive Assistant. Tracy Molnar has joined the Office of the Librarian from the Department of Labor and Industry and has extensive experience in federal service.

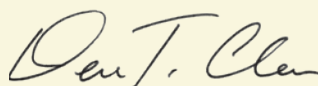
After discussions with library senior leadership, among others, the Library has joined CNI, the Coalition for Networked Information. CNI is a "digital library"—focused membership organization and is a part of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). Other Virginia institutions, including the University of Virginia and Virginia Commonwealth University, are also members. I had the opportunity to attend their spring meeting in California along with Paul Casalaspi, our Director of Information Technology. Much of that meeting was focused on understanding the potential application of artificial intelligence in libraries and educational institutions.

Next, I want to highlight two major initiatives that will have a significant impact on our future in the next few years. The first is our strategic plan. The Library will engage with an external consultant to assist us in creating a strategic plan for the next three to five years. My intention is that the plan will be inclusive with input from the users of the Library as well as all staff, the Library Board and the Foundation. That process should conclude by the end of the summer, and we'll highlight the new strategic plan in a future *Broadside*.

The second initiative involves a potential future renovation. I believe the Library has the opportunity to create new audiences by, among other things, establishing a permanent gallery of the most significant documents in our collection. We are still very early in this concept, and I have asked Deputy State Librarian John Metz to lead a study group to review this opportunity and make recommendations that can flow into renovation planning, should funding be available. To be clear, security and environmental control will be first and foremost in our planning.

Watch this space for more updates on these initiatives!

Sincerely,



Dennis T. Clark, Librarian of Virginia



The Library will engage with an external consultant to assist us in creating a strategic plan for the next three to five years.

ON THE COVER

Master Sgt. Sherrell E. Moore of Austin, Texas, Platoon Sgt. of the 428th Signal Communications Battalion, embarked on the USS General William A. Mann for overseas service on Jan. 30, 1944. U.S. Army Signal Corps Photograph Collection.



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

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HERE

Welcome to the Library of Virginia, the state's oldest institution dedicated to the preservation of Virginia's history and culture. Our resources, exhibitions and events attract nearly 100,000 visitors each year. Our collections, containing more than 130 million items, document and illustrate the lives of both famous Virginians and ordinary citizens.

INFORMATION

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Through Aug. 17, 2024

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LEAVING SERVICE

Troops of the 10th Mountain Division march under the "Welcome Home" arch at Camp Patrick Henry, Virginia, on Aug. 11, 1945. U.S. Army Signal Corps Photograph Collection.

Records Hold Veterans' Stories

Digitization and community outreach project provides access to military separation notices

The Library of Virginia's World War II Separation Notices Collection digitization project will make the records of more than 250,000 World War II-era Virginia service members accessible online with the help of volunteer transcribers. Begun last year, this three-year initiative focuses on digitizing the vast collection and then working with community and school groups, family members, educators and other individuals to uncover details and fill gaps in the stories of these individuals, potentially making connections and discoveries about the people of this era of history.

After leaving the U.S. military, individuals received official documentation noting separation from their branch of service. The Library's World War II Separation Notices Collection documents demographics, civilian life and military service history for men and women from across the state. Until recently, these records had been available only to veterans or their next of kin because of privacy restrictions on the content of the files. The records are no longer restricted, however, and can now provide new research opportunities for genealogists, students and historians, opening a window on the experiences of ordinary people during one of the most formative events in our history.

World War II Separation Notices project manager Lauren Caravati began working with the collection in June 2023. She oversees digitization, manages the metadata and images produced, handles the crowdsourcing component of the project and promotes the Library's World War II collections to researchers and the public through blog posts and community outreach efforts. "It's such a rich source of information," said Caravati. "The records contain details that can help with family history research and assist historians."

In March 2024, the Library's digitization vendor, Backstage Library Works, completed the digitization of 80 boxes of World War II Separation Notices, for a total of 525,580 images for 252,900 veterans. After digitization, Backstage staff members captured basic metadata elements for each individual, including name, branch of service, military occupation, military serial number and hometown. With that metadata, Caravati prepares the materials for upload to From the Page, the Library's crowdsourcing platform, where the public can fill in additional details, including personal information such as date and place of birth, physical description, race, sex, marital status and civilian occupation, as well as military details like places and dates of service, military occupation, battles, decorations and citations, wounds received in action, and reason for separation.

Since late 2023, more than 8,000 forms for veterans of the United States Marines and Army have been made available for public transcription on From the Page. One challenge in preparing items for transcription is the variety of forms that the military branches used to document separations from service. Currently 17 different forms have been found in the collection. The Marines have only one form, while the Navy and Coast Guard each have two slightly different forms. The Army, however, used 12 different forms during the World War II era. The large number of formats and types of separation notices make it difficult to use a universal transcription method, so forms are uploaded to From the Page by branch of service.

"Volunteers will have a slightly different experience transcribing for each branch of the military," said Kathleen Jordan, the Library's director of digital initiatives and web presence. "But the Library's volunteers love a good challenge, especially if it supports greater access to our materials and the stories of Virginia's veterans."

Once completed, the images and metadata will be available for research in the Library's digital collections. In addition, the raw data generated during the public crowdsourcing phase will be added to the Virginia Open Data Portal (data.virginia.gov), making the entire dataset accessible to demographers and data scientists interested in race and ethnicity and socioeconomic trends. "The project will allow people to engage with this era in new ways and ask questions of the data they never have previously," said Jordan.

Learn about volunteer transcribing and indexing opportunities for this project on the following page. ■

STORIES IN THE RECORDS

AT RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM: The separation notice for Clyde Louis Dishman (1915–1971) of Newport News shows that he served in the Pacific Theater toward the end of the war as a telephone and telegraph lineman. Separation notices and portraits are available for his brothers, Clarence and Otis, who also served in the war. Clyde L. Dishman photograph, Dishman Family Records, ca. 1940s. Profiles of Honor Digital Collection. The separation notice for Clarice G. Clark (1919–1989), who served in the U.S. Army's Women's Army Corp, reveals that she was self-employed as a beauty operator in Clifton Forge prior to the war and returned to her business there after her service. She married Walter Richard Starks in 1946. Clarice G. Clark portrait, ca. 1940s, Profiles of Honor Digital Collection.

"It's such a rich source of information. The records contain details that can help with family history research and assist historians."

**ENLISTED RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION
HONORABLE DISCHARGE**

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL
DISHMAN CLYDE L

2. ARMY SERIAL NO.
33 856 219

3. GRADE
7/5*

4. ARM OR SERVICE
SIG C

5. COMPONENT
AUS

6. ORGANIZATION
CO B 52ND SIGNAL BN

7. DATE OF SEPARATION
9 OCT 45

8. PLACE OF SEPARATION
CENTER FORT BRAGH N C

9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES
380 SAMPSON AVE HAMPTON VA

10. DATE OF BIRTH
30 APR 15

11. PLACE OF BIRTH
NEWPORT NEWS VA

12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT
SEE 9

13. COLOR EYES
BROWN

14. COLOR HAIR
BLACK

15. HEIGHT
5 5 1/2

16. WEIGHT
148

17. NO. DEPENDENTS
3

18. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO.
SHIPPING CHECKER (1-34.15)

19. MARITAL STATUS
YES

20. U.S. CITIZEN
YES

21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO.
SEE 9

22. DATE OF INDUCTION
23 MAR 45

23. DATE OF SEPARATION
9 OCT 45

24. DATE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE
23 MAR 45

25. DATE OF ENTRY INTO RESERVE
23 MAR 45

26. DATE OF ENTRY INTO NATIONAL GUARD
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Crowdsourcing Access to History

Volunteers needed to help the Library transcribe and index World War II records

The Library of Virginia seeks volunteers to help transcribe and index the World War II Separation Notices Collection. Individuals with a computer and an internet connection can participate online any time at the crowdsourcing sites viriniamemory.com/makinghistory and fromthepage.com/lva.

Transcribers view digital images of original documents and create typed versions of the text. Indexers view digital images of original documents and, rather than capturing all the text, find items such as names and dates within the document and then record that information. A tutorial video on indexing the World War II Separation Notices is available on the Library's YouTube channel (youtube.com/user/LibraryofVa).

Volunteer groups have also contributed to the crowdsourcing efforts, including the 2024 cohort of Virginia House of Delegates Pages and high school students from Henrico County Public Schools and Richmond's Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government and International Studies.

Library staff members can present either in-person or virtual crowdsourcing programs to offer a history of the World War II Separation Notices Collection, an overview of the project, and a discussion session at the end of the event. Groups interested in participating may contact digital collections specialist and World War II Separation Notices project manager Lauren Caravati at lauren.caravati@lva.virginia.gov or 804.692.3713 for more information.



THANK YOU!

Library of Virginia staff members posed with the 2024 Virginia House of Delegates Pages on March 4 during their visit to the building for volunteer work with World War II records.

COMMUNITY SERVICE SUPERSTARS

Virginia House of Delegates Pages volunteered for crowdsourcing duty

Each year, the Speaker of Virginia's House of Delegates appoints 13- and 14-year-olds from across the commonwealth to work in the Clerk's Office as House Pages during the regular session of the General Assembly and perform a variety of duties required for the successful operation of the House. While working daily during the session and keeping up with school assignments from their temporary home in Richmond, these students also must complete a group community service project.

Since 2022, the Library of Virginia's Making History volunteer transcribing and indexing program has been that project, with nearly 120 students taking part since the partnership began. This year's group of 35 House Pages dedicated more than 116 hours

to transcribing and indexing the World War II Separation Notices Collection during the General Assembly session.

The group started with an in-person transcribing event at the Library and then continued with online work on their own. Near the end of General Assembly session, they returned to the Library to share feedback, highlight some of the veterans' stories they had helped to transcribe, see the total number of hours they had contributed to group project and discuss what they had learned and what they would like to learn more about.

"Every time I transcribed, it felt like I was kind of honoring this person and giving them another opportunity for people in the future to search for them and find out more about their family," said Mina

Liu, one of the group's top three contributors. "I believe that everybody should be able to tell their family story. Everybody in history should be able to be known and recognized."

When asked about finding disturbing or challenging information in the documents, Blaise Broadbent, another top three contributor, said, "History is history. I mean, no matter how bad it is, what happens, it has to be known."

The Pages shared that they learned new facts about military service, like the range of jobs available, as well as the variety of backgrounds and education levels (or lack of education) among veterans at that time in history. The overall lesson learned was that each separation notice held the history of one individual whose story they were helping to be heard. The experience left them wanting to learn more about women in the military, fallen Virginia veterans, and the individual stories of the people whose records they transcribed, such as life prior to and after their military service.

Library staff members enjoyed engaging with these young Virginians and look forward to working with next year's cohort of House Pages. ■

THANK YOU TO OUR PROJECT SUPPORTERS

The World War II Separation Notices digitization project is funded in part by the Humanities Collections and Reference Resources grant program of the National Endowment for the Humanities and by NEH's special initiative, A More Perfect Union. Additional support is provided by the Virginia Genealogical Society, Dr. Linda K. Miller and Lara and Bob Wulff.

If you would like to support projects like this that help make valuable records accessible for family members, historians and the public, consider making a gift at lva.virginia.gov/donate or contact Elaine McFadden, director of development, at 804.692.3592 or elaine.mcfadden@lva.virginia.gov.

Saturday, June 29, 2024 | 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. | Free

HILL OF HEROES DAY AT THE VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL

621 S. Belvidere St., Richmond, VA 23220

This free community celebration for guests of all ages features military demonstrations, patriotic crafts, tours, a used book sale and more. View a display of 12,000 small American flags on the hillside of the memorial grounds — installed by volunteers the previous day — representing the nearly 12,000 Virginians who have been killed in action in military combat since World War II. Learn more at vawarmemorial.org/events.

WORLD WAR II IN THE COLLECTIONS



HONORING THOSE WE'VE LOST

The Virginia War Memorial in Richmond hosts a "Hill of Heroes Day" celebration each year in June.

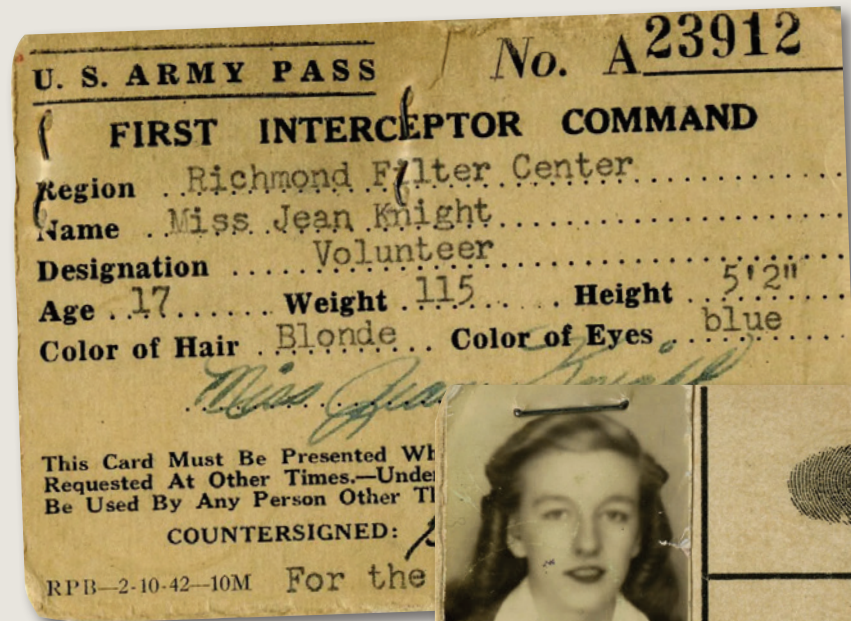
Virginia's War Dead Collection Documents Fallen Heroes

Volunteer transcription project will be launched at "Hill of Heroes Day" event on June 29

Notably missing from the World War II Separation Notices Collection is information on the backgrounds, experiences and contributions of the thousands of Virginians who served but did not return from the war alive. The Virginia World War II History Commission, established by an act of the Virginia General Assembly in 1944, collected questionnaires documenting the "Personal War Service Record of Virginia's Dead."

The next of kin of Virginia's deceased servicemen and women completed the questionnaires, which recorded personal and military information similar to that found in the Separation Notices. Photographs, letters, newspaper clippings and military service records often accompany the questionnaires. The Library of Virginia received the questionnaires as part of the same transfer of records that included the Separation Notices and has digitized the World War II Virginia's War Dead Collection. These questionnaires will soon be available for transcription on From the Page, the Library's crowdsourcing platform, expanding the scope of the World War II resources accessible online for researchers and family members of the deceased.

The Library will launch this transcription project on June 29, 2024, at the Virginia War Memorial's Hill of Heroes Day event in Richmond. Join us there to learn more. See details at left.



WOMEN WHO SERVED

ABOVE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Women veterans of World War II represented in the Profiles of Honor Digital Collection include codebreaker Dorothy Ramale, who performed cryptographic analysis work as a civilian for the Army Signal Corps, and Jean Knight, who was only 17 years old when she worked with maps as a volunteer at the U.S. Army's Richmond Filter Center.

PROFILES OF HONOR

Digital collection created by statewide scanning project preserves the stories of Virginia's veterans for future generations

The Profiles of Honor Digital Collection commemorates the service of Virginians in World War I and World War II by preserving digital copies of images and records donated by veterans and their families. In 2017, the Library of Virginia and the Virginia World War I and World War II Commemoration Commission partnered to create the Profiles of Honor Mobile Tour, an interactive exhibition that traveled to museums, libraries and historic sites throughout the state and invited visitors to bring their own war-related items to be scanned for inclusion in the project. That effort resulted in a digital collection of approximately 750 items that tell the stories of Virginia's veterans.

Materials such as photographs, letters, memoirs, diaries, memorabilia and manuscripts — some in fragile or deteriorating condition — are treasures that many families are reluctant to relinquish. By digitizing these items and providing online access, however, the project allowed individuals to retain their original items while sharing and preserving the intellectual and historical content of these valuable documents.

More items have recently been added to the collection, which is available through the Digital Collections Discovery section of the Library's catalog at bit.ly/LVA-digital-collections-discovery. If you would like to lend an item related to World War I or World War II to the Library to be digitized for the collection, please contact Trenton Hizer, senior manuscripts acquisition and digital archivist, at trenton.hizer@lva.virginia.gov or 804.692.3638.

WOMEN IN THE ARMED FORCES

The Profiles of Honor Digital Collection includes items such as photographs and other documents representing Virginia women who supported the World War II effort. Women served both overseas and in the United States in various branches of the armed forces, often

The project allowed individuals to retain their original items while sharing and preserving the intellectual and historical content of these valuable documents.

relegated to reserve or auxiliary sections set up specifically for them. Second Lt. Kathryn Yiensena Bough-Nicols (1909–2004), whose photograph is part of the collection, served as an Army nurse at the Tuskegee Army Airfield.

Civilian women also served within the Army structure. The collection includes a U.S. Army pass with an ID photograph for Jean Knight Childs (1926–2019), who worked with maps as part of the aircraft warning system at the Richmond Filter Center of the First Interceptor Command of the U.S. Army Air Force.

Dorothy Ramale performed cryptographic analysis work as a civilian for the Army Signal Corps in Arlington from 1943 to 1944. Born in 1921, she is one of the women featured in Liza Mundy's book *Code Girls: The Untold Story of the American Women Code Breakers of World War II*. In 2017, Ramale attended a Profiles of Honor scanning event in Fairfax, where she shared a photograph of herself dressed in uniform to be scanned and preserved for the project.

VIRGINIANS ON D-DAY

Eighty years ago this month, Allied forces landed on the Normandy beaches of France, launching the invasion that would push the Nazis out of France and eventually end World War II in Europe. The Profiles of Honor Digital Collection includes items representing several Virginia veterans who played a part in the events of D-Day.

Maj. Thomas Dry Howie (1908–1944), who taught at Staunton Military Academy prior to the war, served as the operations officer for the 3rd Battalion, 116th Regiment, on D-Day and was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his actions. He died during a mortar attack while leading his men in a night raid against German forces outside Saint-Lô, France. His men placed his body on the ruins of a cathedral, draped in an American flag. The story and photographs of the flag-covered body moved American readers, and war correspondents dubbed him “the Major of St. Lo.” Howie was one of the inspirations for the Capt. Miller character portrayed by actor Tom Hanks in the film *Saving Private Ryan*. The collection includes letters he sent home to his wife, Elizabeth Payne Howie, whom he called Bonnie, as well as the photograph of his flag-covered body.

Brothers Joseph Morton Daughtrey and John Harwood Daughtrey of Sussex County were both present on D-Day, and John died near Saint-Lô a few weeks later in a friendly fire incident. The collection includes a photograph of the brothers in uniform, a certificate of condolence for John, and a letter from a military chaplain to his sister, Mary Daughtrey Griffin. ■

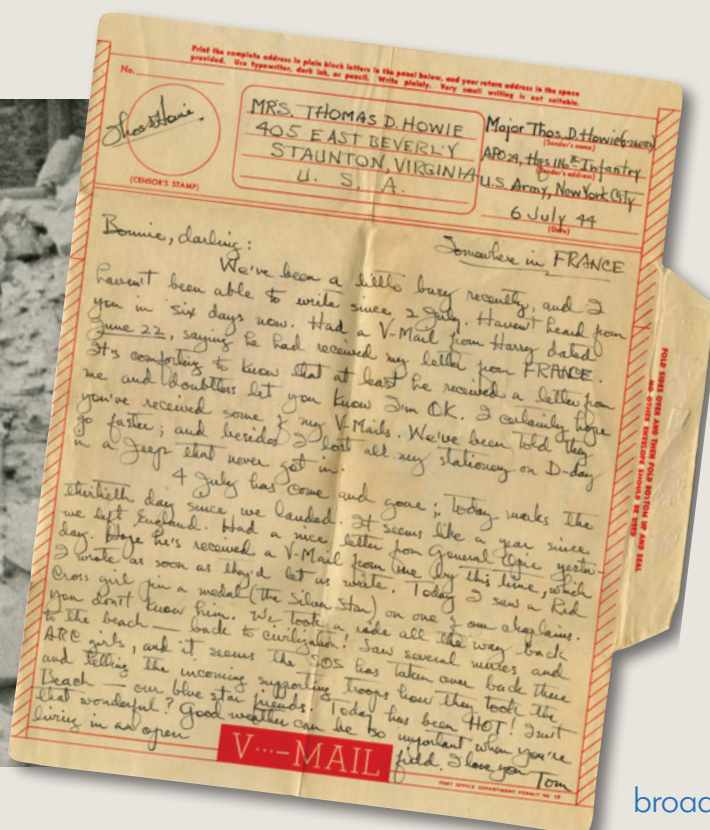
Portions of this article originally appeared on the Library's blog, [The UncommonWealth](#).

WORLD WAR II IN THE COLLECTIONS



AT NORMANDY

The Profiles of Honor Digital Collection includes items that represent several Virginia veterans who played a part in the events of D-Day. Brothers Joseph Morton Daughtrey and John Harwood Daughtrey (ABOVE), were present that day and John was killed a few weeks later. BELOW: Maj. Thomas Dry Howie received the Bronze Star Medal for his actions during a mortar attack while leading his men in a night raid. Shown here are a letter he sent home to his wife and a photograph of his body draped in a flag by the men he led in battle.



HOLDING DOWN THE HOME FRONT

Virginia civilian defense council publications guided life during wartime

During World War II, federal, state and local governments created civilian defense councils to organize effectively for protection in the event of an attack on American soil. Governor James H. Price created the Virginia Defense Council in May 1940.

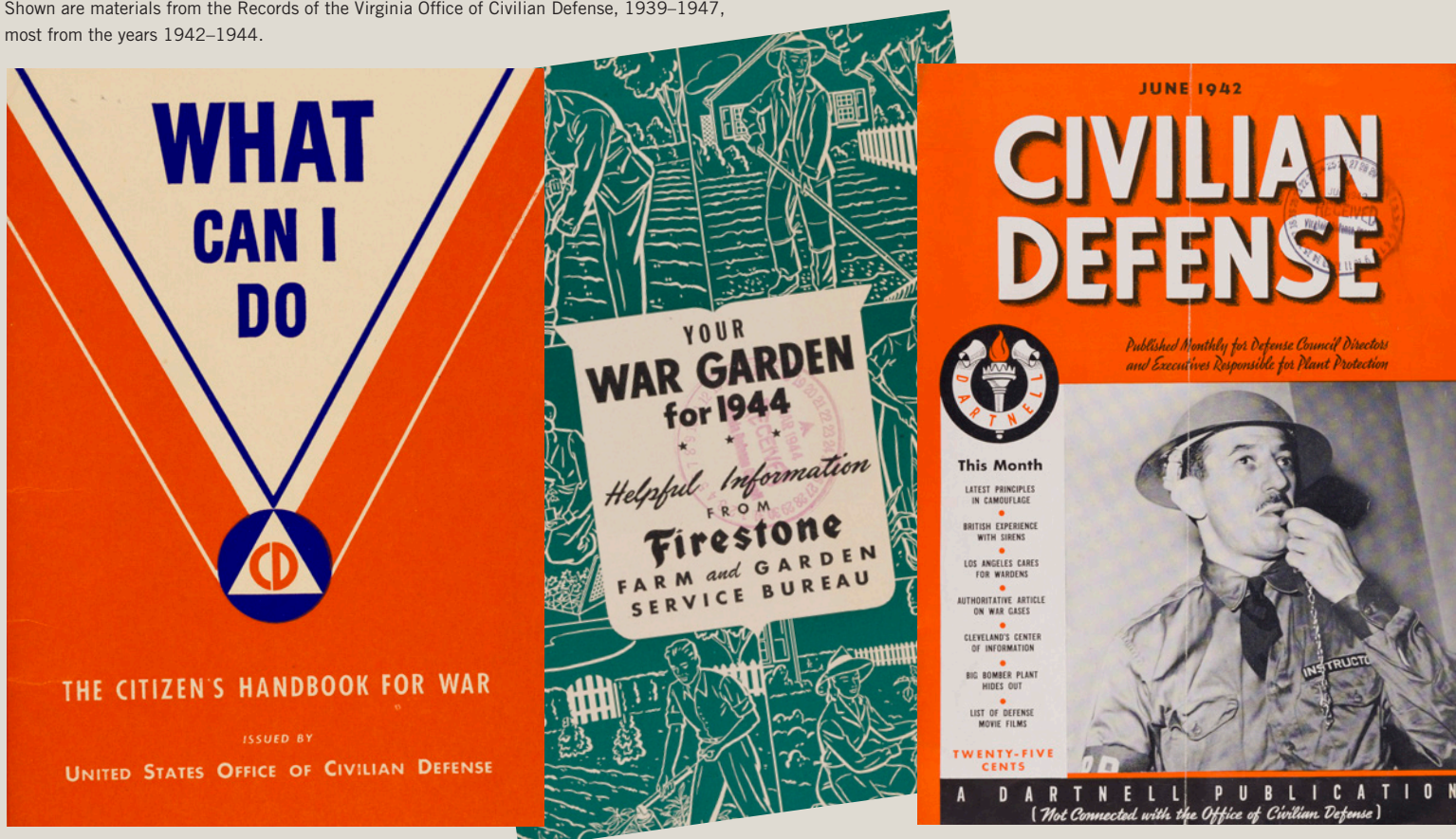
The Library of Virginia's Records of the Virginia Office of Civilian Defense, 1939–1947, part of the State Government Records Collection, contain documents related to council activities as well as photographs, posters and published materials such as those shown here.

The council organized programs that focused on civilian mobilization for the war and protection on the home front. Topics included air raid wardens and shelters, blackout testing, war bonds and stamps, nutrition services and “victory gardens,” recreation and youth group services, health and hospital services, consumer programs and more.

Publications and other materials about these programs promoted themes of nationalism and individual pride and duty. Civilians were told how essential it was to sacrifice at home and what steps to take to support the soldiers abroad and help the war effort. These materials provide information on activities that community members might have participated in during the war years. ■

HELPING FROM HOME

Government publications advised Virginia's citizens how to support the war effort from home. Shown are materials from the Records of the Virginia Office of Civilian Defense, 1939–1947, most from the years 1942–1944.



Forest Fire Prevention Posters



PUBLIC SERVICE CAMPAIGNS

Forest fire prevention was a theme of posters produced by the Office of War Information and the U.S. Treasury early in the 20th century. While Smokey Bear (FAR RIGHT) and other forest creatures (ABOVE) were used in the 1940s, Uncle Sam appears in this 1930s fire prevention poster (RIGHT). Designed by noted artist James Montgomery Flagg, it shows his iconic character in a Forest Service uniform pointing to a forest fire. A new addition to the Visual Studies Collection, this poster was recently conserved through the Library's Adopt Virginia History program.



A CLOSER LOOK

During World War II, the United States government, through the Office of War Information and the U.S. Treasury, mobilized the best advertising professionals available to create posters that would speak to the nation. These visually striking announcements, illustrating subjects such as recruitment and enlistment; communications; and the medical, social, economic and industrial aspects of the war, were widely distributed and prominently displayed in schools, workplaces, libraries and other public spaces. The images and slogans on such posters became deeply ingrained in the collective memory of the nation.

One of the most enduring public service advertising efforts in American history emerged during this time: the Smokey Bear Wildfire Prevention campaign. With a shortage of firefighting personnel and materials, and lumber critical to the war effort, protection of forests became a matter of national importance. Beginning in 1944, Smokey Bear educated multiple generations about their role in preventing wildfires. The original poster, created by illustrator Albert Staehle, is featured here. Two years later, the slogan was changed to "Remember, only YOU can prevent forest fires." In 2010, the campaign was once again revised to

WORLD WAR II POSTER COLLECTION

its current version, "Only you can prevent wildfires," in response to a significant outbreak of wildfires in unforested areas.

During the war years, the Library of Virginia diligently displayed and collected such posters. Following the war, the Library continued to expand its collection through donations and purchases. Today, the World War II poster collection at the Library of Virginia comprises more than 400 distinct designs. The collection is available online at bit.ly/LVA-digital-collections-discovery.

—Dale Neighbors, Visual Studies Collection Coordinator



LONGTIME LIBRARY CHAMPION

Patrice Owens Parker is a member of the Library's legacy group, the William Waller Hening Society. Photo by Hayes & Fisk Photography.

PATRICE OWENS PARKER

Board member, library user and donor

Inspired by her love for family and community history, Patrice Owens Parker, of Virginia Beach, has been a longtime champion of the Library of Virginia, as a board member, super user and steadfast donor. "The Library connects all of us to our collective American experience," says Parker. "When my brother, sister and I were considering where to place our family papers, it was clear to us that the depth and breadth of the Library's collections and its annual reach of more than 4 million users a year online and in person was the right place."

In addition to donating her family's records, Parker is a member of the Library's legacy group, the William Waller Hening Society. A planned gift through her estate will create a named endowed fund that will support the conservation of her family's manuscripts, books and ephemera as well as the Library's digital resource Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative in perpetuity. Parker believes, "Now more than ever, people are trying to find meaning to their daily lives. There is no better place to look for knowledge at the source than the Library of Virginia."

Join Patrice Owens Parker in support of the Library of Virginia. Go to www.lvafoundation.org to learn more and make your gift today or call 804.692.3813. ■

Now more than ever, people are trying to find meaning to their daily lives. There is no better place to look for knowledge at the source than the Library of Virginia."

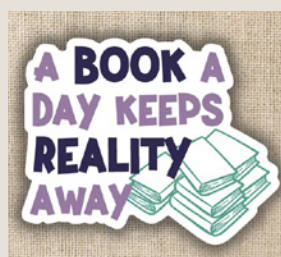
YOUR LEGACY IS OUR FUTURE!

For over 200 years, the Library of Virginia has championed the preservation of and access to the commonwealth's rich cultural heritage. People of all ages around the world use the Library's collections and resources to find their story or to understand Virginia's place in American history. When you include the Library in your estate plans, you are ensuring a bright future for those who seek knowledge at one of the greatest sources for Virginia's democracy, history and culture — the Library of Virginia.

With a gift from your will or living trust, you are helping the Library build a sustainable future that will allow it to respond to the evolving needs of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia and beyond.

Consider having a private conversation with Elaine McFadden, director of development, on how your legacy can impact the Library's future. Contact her at 804.692.3592 or elaine.mcfadden@lva.virginia.gov.

LOCAL & LITERARY GIFTS

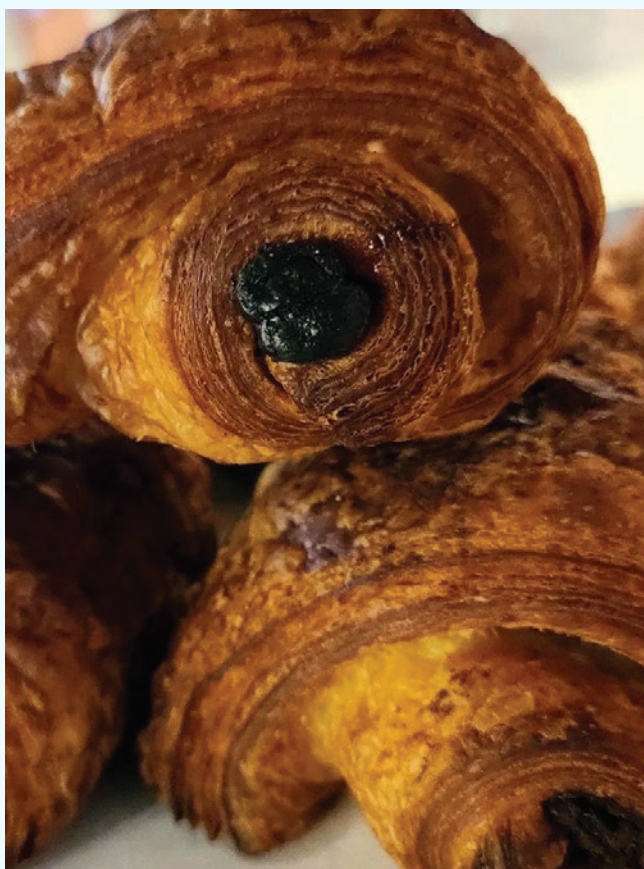


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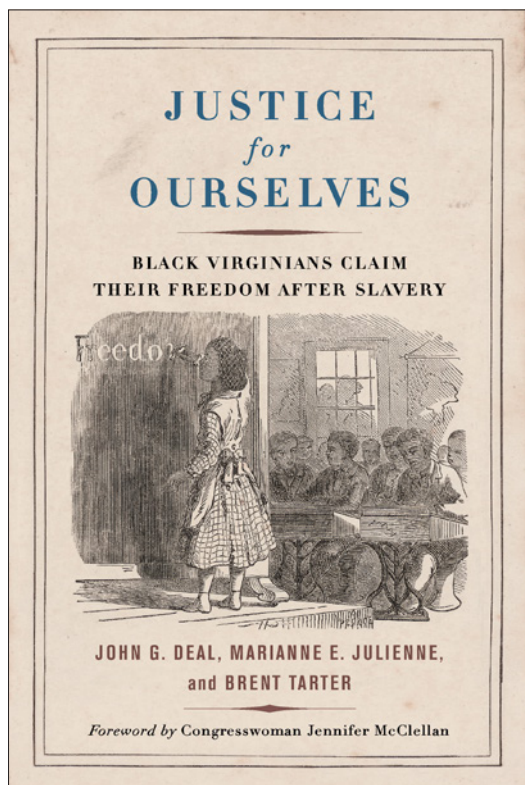
bit.ly/CanCanCafe-Ordering

PARKING

Limited free parking is available in the Library's parking garage accessed from 8th or 9th streets.

WWW.CANCANRVA.COM/CAFE

JUSTICE FOR OURSELVES



A new book from Library of Virginia editors sheds light on Black Virginians who defined and realized their freedom after the collapse of slavery

A new work from historians John G. Deal, Marianne E. Julienne and Brent Tarter, editors of the Library of Virginia's ongoing biographical reference work the *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, tells the story of remarkable men and women in the post-Civil War decades who persevered in the face of withering barriers to create a new world for themselves and subsequent generations.

Publishing in June 2024 from the University of Virginia Press, *Justice for Ourselves: Black Virginians Claim Their Freedom After Slavery* includes a foreword from U.S. Representative Jennifer McClellan, the first Black woman to represent Virginia in Congress, and an afterword from National Park Service interpreter Ajena Rogers, a descendant of James A. Fields, one of the early Black legislators whose stories are featured.

The book explores Black voices from across the state, including well-known Virginians like banker and Civil Rights advocate Maggie Lena Walker and crusading newspaper editor John Mitchell Jr., as well as less-familiar but significant African Americans such as Lucy G. Brooks, who founded an orphanage for children who had been separated from their parents during slavery; dentist and Republican leader Thomas Bayne; and state senator James William D. Bland, who sponsored the legislation to incorporate Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute (later Hampton University).

"Virginia's people are its history," said Julienne, "and these diverse and fascinating life stories are at the heart of the book."

The work examines regional differences, particularly between urban and rural residents, and between those who were able to become educated and take advantage of the new opportunities that freedom brought and those who were not.

"After the end of slavery, these men and women strove to define what freedom would mean for them and to work against almost overwhelming odds to claim full citizenship and economic independence," said Deal.

The social, political and economic institutions they built served many of them very well. Jim Crow racial segregation and discrimination placed insurmountable obstacles in the way of many thousands of other freed people who were not able to take maximum advantage of those opportunities, which left them mired in poverty or drove them to leave the state. African Americans who grew up in 20th-century Virginia relied on institutions that the first generations who lived in freedom created,



BUILDING NEW LIVES

Justice for Ourselves includes 40 maps and images, such as this photograph of delegates to the 1889 annual meeting of the True Reformers, one of the many social service organizations organized by Black Virginians. Image from the Library's Visual Studies Collection.

“By broadening the definition of who — and what — is important, these stories have reshaped the narrative of Virginia’s history.”

benefiting from the actions of the early leaders and their successors.

Justice for Ourselves builds on the work of the Library of Virginia’s *Dictionary of Virginia Biography* to document the lives of 19th-century African American members of the Convention of 1867–1868, the House of Delegates and the Senate of Virginia, as well as other Black Virginians during the decades after the end of slavery. It is based on extensive primary source research, much from the Library’s unparalleled collections, into the lives of political leaders, teachers, clergymen, journalists and entrepreneurs, as well as untapped surviving records of ordinary people and their life experiences.

“By broadening the definition of who — and what — is important,” said Deal, “these stories have reshaped the narrative of Virginia’s history.”

JOIN US FOR A BOOK LAUNCH EVENT

Thursday, June 20 | 6:30–8:00 p.m.

Justice for Ourselves: Black Virginians

Claim Their Freedom After Slavery

See details on page 16.



WHAT ARE YOU READING?

LISA VARGA

Executive Director,
Virginia Library Association

Start Here: Instructions for Becoming a Better Cook

By **Sohla El-Waylly**

During the pandemic, my middle son introduced me to *Bon Appetit* magazine’s videos and we began experimenting with lots of different recipes. Sohla El-Waylly became an instant favorite of ours and we eagerly awaited the arrival of her cookbook, *Start Here: Instructions for Becoming a Better Cook*. This heavy tome is a unique cookbook in that the recipes aren’t in the typical order you would expect, but they teach you how to confidently try new techniques and apply those to other recipes. It’s been a fascinating journey to watch El-Waylly go from the test kitchen to this helpful guide, complete with a trick of its own — every page opens flat for easier use! Crisp, clear pictures of steps, markings for dietary restrictions and notes about active and total times from start to finish make this my new favorite.



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27TH ANNUAL

Virginia Literary Awards

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honoring its authors and
their stories

Hosted by Adriana Trigiani

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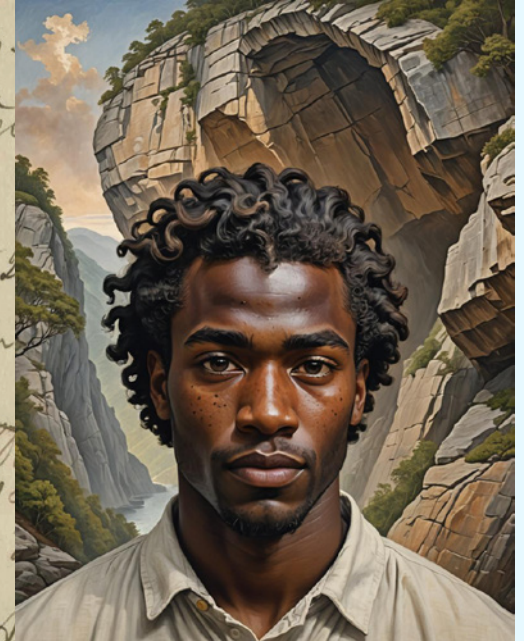
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**LIBRARY
OF VIRGINIA**



Virginia Court
No 25 - In the Clerk's office of Rockbridge county court April
18th 1821- Registered this day Duncan Henry a free
mulatto man who resides in this county - aged about
twenty five years - five feet six inches high
large Roman nose, freckled face, hair almost straight -



Envisioning Ancestors with AI

Workshop explores portrait creation with historic descriptions

BY SONYA COLEMAN & LYDIA NEUROTH

New image-generating tools present a unique opportunity to investigate what generative artificial intelligence can mean for archives. What could AI software produce with a 200-year-old description from the Library's records? What would it mean to have an image of a person of color who otherwise would never have had a photograph taken or portrait created?

Historic record books known as Free Negro Registers contain detailed physical descriptions of free Black and multiracial Virginians, including age, height, skin complexion and details of facial features. The Library is currently digitizing these registers as a part of its Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative project and is working with volunteers to crowdsource their indexing.

With the goal of engaging Library patrons in the exploration of the image-generating process, staff members created an image-generating workshop using

historic records and free artificial intelligence tools to create imaginative depictions of people from the past.

Held on Saturday, Feb. 10, 2024, the first

"Envisioning Ancestors with AI" workshop began with an introduction to the historic records in Virginia Untold and other collections that list physical descriptions of individuals. The AI portion of the program presented an overview of the technology, discussed limitations and ethical concerns and demonstrated three free AI text-to-image tools.

Participants were encouraged to bring their own descriptions of

"Genealogy is more than just data. It's telling a story, working toward a concept of a 3D human being. AI creates that 3D concept in your mind."

**—Viola Baskerville,
workshop participant**

NEWLY PICTURED

OPPOSITE PAGE: This page from Rockbridge County's 1805–1831 Register of Free Negroes describes Duncan Henry, a free man of color, as a “mulatto,” around 25 years old, 5 feet, 6 inches tall, with a large “Roman nose,” freckles and almost straight hair. Henry's brother had been hired by Thomas Jefferson as a caretaker for the Natural Bridge. AI image-generating software created these portraits of Henry, but it struggled to avoid stereotypical depictions of Black hair.

ancestors, but also had the option to work with descriptions from the Library's collections. Nearly all participants came equipped with their own descriptions, fully prepared to create portraits of their unseen family members.

The limitations of the technology quickly became apparent. One participant was trying to depict women of Jewish ancestry and knew that her ancestor may have been Middle Eastern. The AI tools continually produced women who appeared white or Anglo-Saxon, rather than darker-skinned or Middle Eastern. The participant became frustrated that she could not depict her own ancestor with a darker complexion. Any traits to be included in the image had to be clearly stated as part of the text prompt; otherwise, the AI tools sometimes made unwanted assumptions about skin tone and other details.

The participants also encountered difficulty producing images of people with mixed-race ancestry, such as a Black woman with blue eyes or someone with African and Indigenous ancestry. Some details recorded in Free Negro Registers such as marks and scars were difficult to produce through the AI tools, as were the nuances of Black skin tones that are sometimes included in historic descriptions.

Workshop participant Viola Baskerville created a portrait of her great-grandmother Jane Gentry Johnson, for whom no images survive. Johnson had been described as a Black and Native American woman with light-brown skin, long jet-black hair and high cheekbones. A description from family sources mentioned that she wore colorful beads in her hair and an ankle-length gingham dress. Baskerville used AI tools to combine this description of Johnson's mother with a photograph of Johnson's daughter Ellen Johnson Braxton — Baskerville's grandmother — to try to approximate what her great-grandmother could have looked like as a young woman. The text-to-image tools required Johnson's features to be fully described before producing an image representing both Black and Indigenous ancestry.

“AI provides a more personal human dimension to a long-lost ancestor,” said Baskerville. “Genealogy is more than just data. It's telling a story, working toward a concept of a 3D human being. AI creates that 3D concept in your mind. It's a more holistic picture and a sense of being and belonging.”

Despite the limitations of the image-generation tools, this workshop provided a way for participants to connect more strongly with their ancestors while learning about historic resources and exploring new technology. This free workshop will be presented at the Library again on Aug. 10. ■

Sonya Coleman is digital engagement coordinator and Lydia Neuroth is Virginia Untold project manager at the Library.



Envisioning Ancestors with AI

This free workshop will be offered again on Aug. 10, 2024, 12:00 to 2:00 p.m., at the Library of Virginia. See registration details on page 17.

ILLUSTRATING FAMILY HISTORY

Workshop participant Viola Baskerville created these portraits (AT TOP AND AT RIGHT) of her great-grandmother with AI text-to-image tools using a description and this existing photograph of her grandmother (AT FAR RIGHT).



calendar

SUMMER EVENTS

For the latest information, please follow us on social media and visit our Calendar of Events at www.lva.virginia.gov/lvaevents.

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.



Wednesdays: June 5, July 10 & Aug. 7

5:30–7:30 p.m.

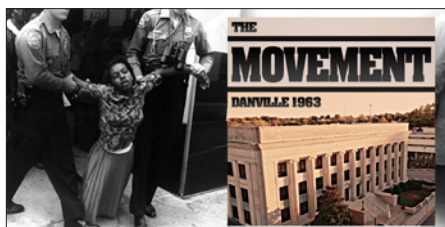
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Making History with LVA

Place: Online

Registration required: bit.ly/LVAvirtualvolunteer

Volunteers will transcribe handwritten pages and historical newspapers by reading text and typing it into digital form. Contact Sonya Coleman for more information at makinghistory@virginiamemory.com or call HandsOn Greater Richmond at 804.330.7400.



Thursday, June 6 | 6:00–8:30 p.m.

FILM SCREENING & PANEL DISCUSSION

Danville 1963: Legacy of a Movement

Place: Lecture Hall & Lobby

Registration required:

<https://lva-virginia.libcal.com/event/12269413>

Join us for a screening of *The Movement*, a documentary film that tells the story of the June 10, 1963, Civil Rights protest in Danville, Virginia, followed by a panel discussion with the filmmaker and participants from the protests. This event is presented by the Library of Virginia and Virginia Humanities. For more information, contact Vince Brooks at vince.brooks@lva.virginia.gov or 804.692.3525.

Saturday, June 8 | 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

CELEBRATION

Knit in Public Day at LVA

Place: Lobby & Conference Rooms

Registration suggested:

lva-virginia.libcal.com/event/12026800

Join us for a “Knit In” at the Library of Virginia! Bring your knitting project to work on, view historic knitting patterns — and items newly created from them — and other items from our collections related to fiber crafts and hear related talks. Refreshments and door prizes will be provided. For more information, contact Nan Carmack at nan.carmack@lva.virginia.gov or 804.692.3792.



Wednesdays: June 12 & July 10 | 6:00–7:30 p.m.

BOOK CLUB

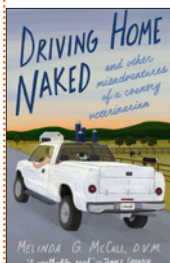
Literary Virginia Book Group

Place: Online

Registration required:

lva.virginia.gov/public/literary_virginia_book_group

On the second Wednesday of each month, join a virtual book group discussion. June’s book is *The Displacements* by Bruce Holsinger (a 2023 Virginia Literary Award for Fiction finalist). July’s book is *Raising Lazarus: Hope, Justice, and the Future of America’s Overdose Crisis* by Beth Macy (a 2023 Virginia Literary Award for Nonfiction finalist). For more information, contact Nan Carmack at nan.carmack@lva.virginia.gov or 804.692.3792.



Tuesdays: June 18 & July 16

6:00–7:30 p.m.

BOOK CLUB

Common Ground Virginia History Book Group

Place: Online

Registration required: lva.virginia.gov/public/virginia_history_book_group

Join a virtual book group discussion on compelling nonfiction books handpicked by Library staff members. June’s book is *Driving Home Naked: And Other Misadventures of a Country Veterinarian* by Melinda G. McCall. July’s book is *Indigenous DC: Native Peoples and the Nation’s Capital* by Elizabeth Rule. For more information, contact Rebecca Schneider at rebecca.schneider@lva.virginia.gov or 804.692.3550.

Thursday, June 20 | 6:30–8:00 p.m.

BOOK LAUNCH

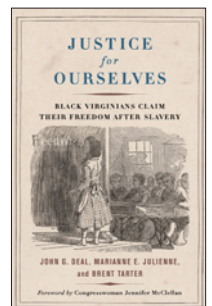
Justice for Ourselves: Black Virginians Claim Their Freedom After Slavery

Place: Lecture Hall

Registration required:

lva-virginia.libcal.com/event/12456579

Join us to celebrate the launch of a new book from Library of Virginia historians John G. Deal, Marianne E. Julienne and Brent Tarter that sheds light on Black Virginians who defined and realized their freedom after the collapse of slavery. The authors will be joined in a conversation with Congresswoman Jennifer McClellan, who wrote the book’s foreword, and National Park Service supervisory park ranger Ajena Cason Rogers, who contributed the afterword. For more information, contact Anne McCreery at anne.mccreery@lva.virginia.gov or 804.692.3568.



Saturdays: June 22, July 20 & Aug. 24

12:00–2:00 p.m.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Making History with LVA

Place: Computer Classroom

Registration required:

bit.ly/makinghistory-inperson

Volunteers will transcribe handwritten pages and historical newspapers by reading text and typing it into digital form. Contact Sonya Coleman for more information at makinghistory@virginiamemory.com or call HandsOn Greater Richmond at 804.330.7400.

Thursday, June 27 | 12:00–1:00 p.m.

EXHIBITION-RELATED BOOK TALK

Plain Paths and Dividing Lines

Place: Conference Rooms

Registration required: lva-virginia.libcal.com/event/11895642

Join us for a lunchtime talk with historian Jessica L. Taylor, Ph.D., who will discuss her book, *Plain Paths and Dividing Lines: Navigating Native Land and Water in the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake*. A book signing will follow the talk. For more information, Contact Ashley R. Craig at ashley.ramey@lva.virginia.gov or 804.692.3001.



Friday, Aug. 2 | 5:00–7:00 p.m.

EXHIBITION-RELATED EVENT

Indigenous Perspectives Closing Celebration

Place: Lobby

The Library presents an *Indigenous Perspectives* exhibition closing celebration featuring performances and displays from tribal representatives. A drumming circle, dancing and demonstrations of traditional crafts will celebrate Virginia's 11 federally and state-recognized tribes. For more information, contact Ashley R. Craig at ashley.ramey@lva.virginia.gov or 804.692.3001.



Friday, Aug. 9 | 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

INTERMEDIATE GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

Every House Tells a Story: How to Research the History of Your Home & Neighborhood

Place: Conference Rooms

Cost: \$25 (\$20 for Library of Virginia Foundation members)

Registration required: bit.ly/HouseStory24

This workshop offers guidelines on conducting and recording research for discovering the history of a particular building, including architecture, ownership, location and historical context. For more information, contact Anne McCreery at anne.mccreery@lva.virginia.gov or 804.692.3568.

Saturday, Aug. 10 | 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

WORKSHOP

Envisioning Ancestors with AI

Place: Computer Classroom & Online

Registration required:

lva-virginia.libcal.com/event/12456757

Imagine ancestors who would never have had their portrait painted or photograph taken in a free hands-on workshop. Participants will learn about Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative project and other historic records in the Library's collections and then experiment with artificial intelligence image-generating tools using descriptions from the records. For more information, contact Lydia Neuroth at lydia.neuroth@lva.virginia.gov or 804.692.3772.

EXHIBITION AT 800 EAST BROAD

INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES

Through Aug. 17, 2024 | Monday–Saturday, 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Exhibition Gallery & Lobby | Free

A multimedia exhibition highlights the commonwealth's Indigenous history and how the tribes remain a vital part of Virginia today. *Indigenous Perspectives* explores the voices and experiences of Virginia's tribal communities. View excerpts from video interviews with citizens of Virginia's tribes, archival records from the Library's collection that were collaboratively selected by the tribes and Library staff members, and objects contributed by the tribes — such as eel pots, regalia and quilts — that reflect their traditions and culture.

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LVA ON THE GO IS HEADING YOUR WAY!

Our custom-made van is bringing some of the vast resources and staff expertise of the Library across the commonwealth. For more information, contact Peter North at 804.692.3536 or peter.north@lva.virginia.gov.



SUMMER 2024 SCHEDULE

Saturday, June 8

George Mason's Gunston Hall

10709 Gunston Rd., Mason Neck, VA 22079

Friday, July 26

Pamunkey Regional Library

Goochland Branch Library
3075 River Rd. West, Goochland, VA 23063

Saturday, Aug. 3

Steppin' Out Festival

318 North Main St., Blacksburg, VA 24060

Saturday, Aug. 17

Bristol Public Library

701 Goode St., Bristol, VA 24201

Saturday, Aug. 24

Hampton Public Library

4207 Victoria Blvd., Hampton, VA 23669

behind the scenes

INSIDE THE RARE BOOK COLLECTION

*Questions for Audrey McElhinney,
Senior Manuscript, Map & Rare
Book Librarian*

Part of the Library of Virginia's Manuscripts & Special Collections, the Rare Book Collection contains more than 52,000 titles — some dating as far back as the 15th century — and includes broadsides, song sheets and sheet music in addition to books. With its origins as one of the earliest colonial libraries in the New World, the collection still includes books purchased for the Virginia colony. The titles focus on the history and formation of Virginia and the nation, as well as works on topics such as the arts and sciences, education, history, genealogy, theology and law. When originally assembled, the collection was intended to provide a wealth of knowledge on practical matters of the day. Since the Library's formal creation in 1823, those who acquire items for the collection have sought fine press books, shire histories, works that are highly illustrated with plates and maps, and unique items such as miniatures and books with fore-edge paintings — especially books that are specific to the commonwealth. Titles are occasionally moved from other areas of the Library to the Rare Book Collection because of changes in their condition or as they become more valuable over time. Senior manuscript, map and rare book librarian Audrey McElhinney answers some questions below about the collection.

How did you get into this line of work? What is your background?

Audrey McElhinney: I have always had a natural curiosity about the world and its peoples. My mom was a writer and editor for an environmental group, and my dad was a history teacher. They are both avid readers and regular museumgoers, so I was very fortunate. I received my undergraduate degree in anthropology from Longwood College and worked two summers as a cataloger for an archeological field school. My previous positions include work with museum and archeological objects for the National Park Service and archival museum work with the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art and National Museum of American History.



HANDLING RARE BOOKS WITH CARE

1. Senior manuscript, map and rare book librarian Audrey McElhinney displays one of the oldest books in the Library's Rare Book Collection, *Liber Chronicarum*, from 1493, an illustrated encyclopedia also known as the *Nuremberg Chronicle*.
2. The Rare Book Collection contains more than 52,000 titles.
3. The collection includes a first edition of *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, 1773, by Phillis Wheatley, an enslaved woman from Boston, who is regarded as the first African American woman to publish a book of poems.



My first day of work at the Library was also the day our current building opened to the public! While working here, I acquired my Master of Library Science degree with a concentration in special collections from The Catholic University of America. My current job is my fifth position here, all within Manuscripts & Special Collections.

HANDSOME VOLUMES

ABOVE: Books with unique features such as fore-edge paintings can be found in the collection.

What do you like about working with this collection?

AM: I am constantly impressed with the scope of this diverse and well-rounded collection. Many of our books are centuries old and still in good condition. I enjoy discovering amazing titles when patrons request items I never had on my radar before! Conversely, it's wonderful when someone requests to view a title that has been recently conserved. I'm responsible for selecting the titles we send for conservation, so it feels good to know my choice was warranted. I am amazed at how we have evolved from a library at the seat of government, to a library that served Virginia citizens in the 1870s, and now in our third century, the world.

What are some of the most interesting or unusual items in the collection?

AM: We have a first edition of *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* by Phillis Wheatley, an enslaved woman from Boston, who is regarded as the first African American woman to publish a book of poems. Printed in London in 1773, the book includes her image as the frontispiece — the only known likeness produced during her

lifetime. Later editions were published in the United States, but only after she had appeared before the royal governor of Massachusetts, Thomas Hutchinson, among others, for an interview to determine whether she was competent enough to be the author of her work.

There was an emphasis in our early years to collect incunabula, which are books printed from handset type, usually before 1500. We have five titles that are considered incunabula, including *Liber Chronicarum*, from 1493. Commonly referred to as the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, this illustrated encyclopedia tells the story of the Christian world and contains over 800 woodcut illustrations.

What kind of care and handling do old and rare books need?

AM: First and foremost, rare books need to be read and shared. Taking books off the shelves, opening and closing them and letting them breathe in our Special Collections Reading Room are some of the best remedies for their joints and bindings. Letting them flex helps prevent them from becoming too tight or rigid over time.

Rare books need to be handled with care, meaning slowly and gently. I have had to remind patrons to keep the books flat on the table or on a cushion. Sometimes people become so immersed in their reading, they forget the book is ancient and needs special care, and the book starts heading toward their lap.

Is there anything that would surprise people about the work that you do?

AM: I think there's a common misperception that librarians like to sit and read books, are not social and are fairly introverted in nature. While I do enjoy reading, I still like being social with everyone who comes into the Library. I enjoy working with patrons, finding out about their research interests and helping them discover resources in our collections. I also enjoy giving tours and presentations as a regular part of my job duties. Rare books contain so many wonderful treasures and surprises!

“Taking books off the shelves, opening and closing them and letting them breathe in our Special Collections Reading Room are some of the best remedies for their joints and bindings.”

Help Preserve Virginia's History!

Your support helps the Library care for its world-class Special Collections, which include rare books, private papers, maps, architectural drawings and more. Please consider making a gift at lva.virginia.gov/donate.

in circulation

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT THE LIBRARY



1. Panelists spoke to audience members after their discussion about Virginia's 1924 Racial Integrity Act, its impact on Virginia's Indigenous communities and its long-lasting legacies.

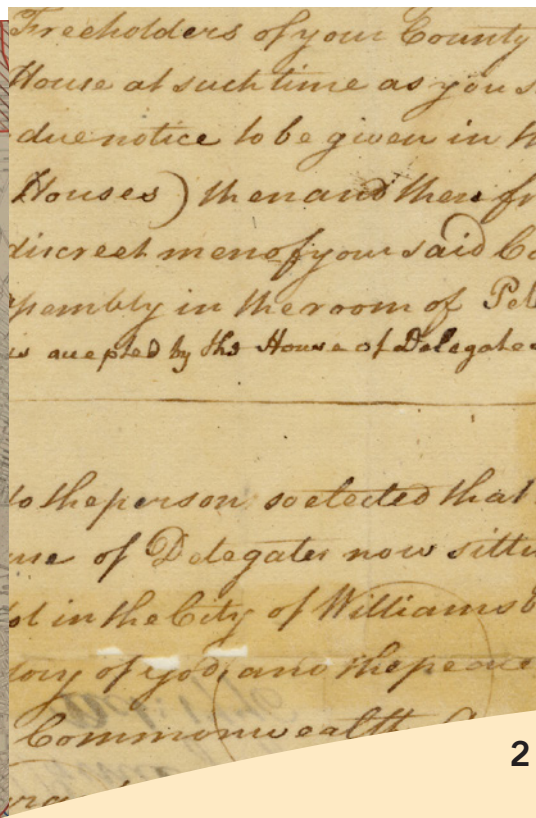
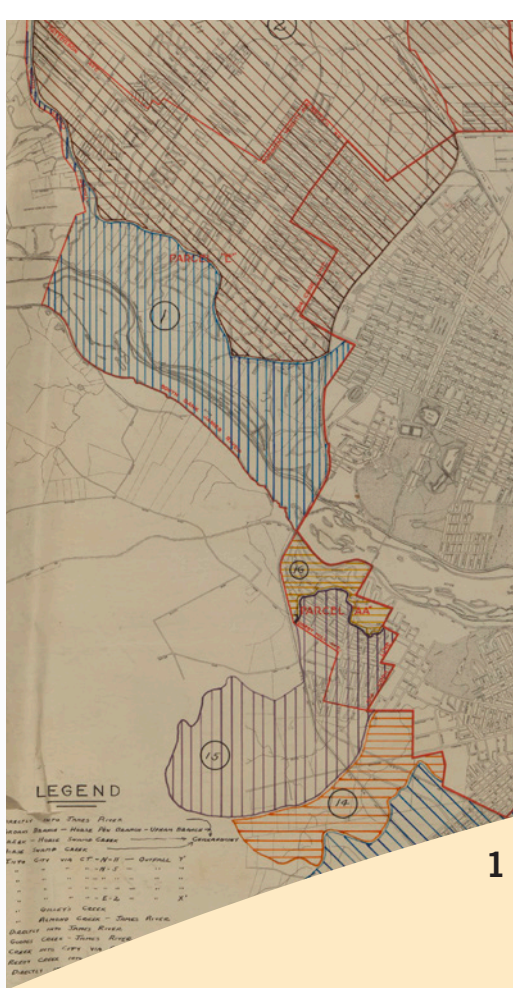
The March event complemented the Library's exhibition *Indigenous Perspectives*. Shown (LEFT TO RIGHT) are discussion moderator **Gregory Smithers**, Ph.D., professor of American history at Virginia Commonwealth University; **Assistant Chief Louise "Lou" Wratchford** of the Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe; **Chief Lynette Allston** of the Nottoway Indian Tribe of Virginia; and **Chief Robert Gray** of the Pamunkey Indian Tribe.

2. Authors **Rachel Beanland** (LEFT) and **Meredith Henne Baker** (RIGHT) engaged audiences in March with a Carole Weinstein Author Series talk on their different approaches to the 1811 Richmond Theater fire tragedy. Beanland created the historical fiction novel *The House Is On Fire*, while Baker wrote the nonfiction book *The Richmond Theater Fire: Early America's First Great Disaster*.

3. Attendees viewed a display of items from the Library's collections before a talk titled "Grave Artistry: New Findings from the J. Henry Brown Order Books" in April.

4. Anthropologist **Ashley Spivey**, Ph.D., presented a talk titled "'Union Tooth and Nail': Pamunkey Indians and the Civil War," in April. The event complemented the Library's exhibition *Indigenous Perspectives*.

5. Senator **Tim Kaine** signed copies of his memoir, *Walk, Ride, Paddle: A Life Outside*, after his Carole Weinstein Author Series talk in May.



ADOPT VIRGINIA HISTORY

Help the Library of Virginia conserve the treasures of the commonwealth. By adopting an item for conservation in your name, or as a gift to honor others, your fully tax-deductible donation will keep Virginia's history accessible and alive for generations to come!

Below is a selection of what is available for adoption at www.lvafoundation.org/Adopt:

VISUAL STUDIES COLLECTION

1. *Richmond (VA.) Office of the City Engineer, Records, 1809–1975, Proposed Annexation Map, Richmond, 1936* | \$500

LOCAL RECORDS

2. *Prince George County, Election Record, 1776* | \$1,000

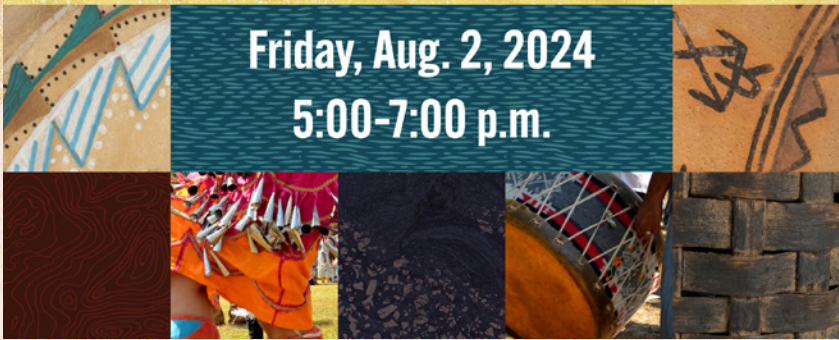
MAP COLLECTION

3. *Topographical map of Danville, Pittsylvania Co., VA., from actual surveys and records, 1877* | \$4,000

Adopt Virginia History items are updated regularly as items are identified for conservation. If you would like more information, please contact Elaine McFadden, director of development, at elaine.mcfadden@lva.virginia.gov.



INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES CLOSING CELEBRATION



Friday, Aug. 2, 2024
5:00-7:00 p.m.

The Library presents an exhibition closing celebration in its lobby featuring performances and displays from tribal representatives. A drumming circle, dancing and demonstrations of traditional crafts will celebrate Virginia's 11 federally and state-recognized tribes. No registration required.

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COMING SOON