



## ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER DESI AMERICAN (APIDA) RESEARCH AT THE LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

The Library of Virginia has limited but significant holdings that document Asian Americans and the connections between Asian countries and Virginia's government and citizens. The records and manuscripts date from the Colonial Papers' 1693–1694 bond of Thomas Carpenter and Richard Nusum to bring items manufactured in Asia onboard the ship *Mary and Ellery* (Accession 36138) to 21st-century websites from Virginia's governors and state agencies. The majority of the manuscripts and records date from the 1940s to the present.

### Records of the Governor and Executive Branch Agencies

References to Asian countries began to appear in Virginia agency records routinely by the mid-20th century, although there are occasional earlier references. For example, Governor William H. Mann's papers included a 1912 bill to establish an independent government in the Philippines (Accession 23349, 41428), and Governor Westmoreland Davis's Executive Papers include references to the occupation of Korea by Japan in 1918 (Accession 21567a).

From the latter half of the 20th century to the present, governors' executive papers routinely include records of trade missions and other economic initiatives, such as programs, correspondence, schedules, and pamphlets. The governor's office often has the support of other cabinet officials and departments, such as the Secretary of Commerce and Trade, the Secretary of Technology, the Secretary of the Commonwealth, and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The records of these international partnerships may be found in the supporting agencies' records as well. Trade missions began with Japan in the late 1960s. South Korea and Taiwan were added in the 1980s, China in the 1990s, and Hong Kong in the 2000s.

Also of note is the Virginia Asian Advisory Board, which was created in 2001 to advise the governor on matters concerning the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. The legislation to create the advisory board is contained in the records of the General Assembly, Senate, and House of Delegates, and their ongoing work is documented by the Library's archival web collections.

Virginia's governors also participate in diplomatic missions and visits, as well as events that simply support closer ties between nations. For example, Governor A. Linwood Holton (Accession 28101) met with the Japanese Governors Association in Williamsburg in October 1971. Governor and Mrs. George F. Allen hosted the emperor and empress of Japan in 1994 and the president of China in 1997. They also hosted events with Korean and Japanese Girl Scouts to forge closer ties between the organizations in the United States and abroad (Accession 35863). These visits were documented with photographs and other records that include itineraries, guest lists, and menus. Some records are in two languages. Prominent members of Virginia's Asian American community were often involved with these events.

The governor's executive papers and the records of cabinet officials also contain correspondence concerning events in Asian nations. The executive papers of Governors Mills E. Godwin Jr. (Accession 27210 and 22780) and A. Linwood Holton Jr. (Accession 28101, 28795, and 29488) contain correspondence concerning support of or opposition to the Vietnam War, as well as letters from the White House, information sheets on Vietnam, and records concerning refugee efforts.

### Military Involvement

Personal papers collections from those who served in the Pacific Theater in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War document soldiers' experiences. The focus is usually on military life, but some authors took the time to describe and even photograph their surroundings. Some individuals donated documents from the time, including items from World War II: Japanese language lessons that were used by future Virginia governor Abner Linwood Holton and photographs of Japanese I-400 class submarines that were captured at the end of the war (Accession 31535), a map of Luzon in the Philippines that was used by Browne Junior Phelps (Accession 50050), and Visayan language lessons that were used by Donald E. Croll (Accession 50364). The Charles Hackenburg Collection includes documentation of Operation Passage to Freedom and the evacuation of refugees from North Vietnam to South Vietnam during the Korean War (Accession 41615).

The World War II History Commission was created in 1944 to document Virginians' involvement in World War II. The records consist of office files; service records of those who died during the war; separation notices of those who sought employment in Virginia following the war; and, most importantly, the clippings, diaries, and memoirs that tell the stories of soldiers who fought in the Pacific Theater in the Correspondence and Data Files series. This series provides firsthand accounts of Virginians' experiences and reactions to World War II, including events in the Pacific Theater.

The Virginia General Assembly authorized the construction of the Virginia War Memorial in 1950 to remember those who lost their lives in World War II. Construction coincided with the Korean War, so when the memorial was dedicated, both conflicts were included. In 1981, those who lost their lives in the Vietnam War were added to the memorial. Most of the records of the Virginia War Memorial Commission (Accession 33938) document the building itself and its opening, but the collections also include photographs from and correspondence concerning a 1982 Vietnam veterans' march in Washington, DC, North Vietnamese currency, and a South Vietnamese flag.

### **Relief Efforts**

Records of relief activities and requests for aid may be found in several types of collections.

The records of Berryman United Methodist Church in Richmond (Accession 43173) indicated that they were involved with United Methodist Committee on Relief that aided Cambodian relief efforts in 1979.

The World War II History Commission's Correspondence and Data Files series (Accession 27544) and the Department of Conservation and Development's Division of History records (Accession 24806a) contain information on relief to China following World War II. A 1948 WRVA radio recording of "News Commentary with Dr. Gregor Ziemer" includes a segment on China relief aid (Accession 38210).

Governors' executive papers are also a source of information concerning aid. Governor Thomas B. Stanley's papers (1954–1958) include correspondence with the American-Korean Foundation concerning medical aid to South Korea and rebuilding after the Korean War. Governor Mills E. Godwin's papers (1966–1970) include a letter from the Blue-Horse Children's Home in Pusan, Korea, requesting aid (Accession 22780), as well as a request from student Young Seop Jeong of Seoul (Accession 27210).

### **Private Papers**

The Private Papers collections of personal papers, genealogical notes and charts, and the records of organizations, businesses, and churches contain a variety of types of records concerning Virginians' interactions with Asian countries.

Civilian diaries in collections of personal papers described the authors' reactions to world events, including their responses to wars, and are best accessed by looking at what was written on notable dates. William Gallagher Jr. (Accession 36505) commented on the bombings of Pearl Harbor and Manila, as well as on events during the Korean War. Likewise, Martha Ann Harris's diaries (Accession 36107) commented on the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the end of World War II.

Other collections of personal papers document business travel. The Allen Telford Edmunds Papers (Accession 43432) document his participation in the World Recreation Congress in Japan and Taiwan in 1964 through a variety of pamphlets and booklets, as well as a scrapbook. Some of the material is in Japanese.

Records of religious organizations include connections with Asian countries. St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Richmond (Accession 41476) documented with letters and photographs their involvement between 1965 and 1970 with a partner parish, St. Joseph's Church in Echague, Isabela, Philippines, which was a part of the Philippine Independent Church. The Richmond-based Women's Missionary Society of Virginia's ledgers (Accession 38158) documented their fundraising efforts from 1943 to 1958, particularly for the Southern Baptist Church's Lottie Moon Offering. Baptist minister Wallace Buttrick of Scarsdale, New York, (Accession 31869) was memorialized in 1926 for his service with several missionary organizations, including the China Medical Board. A memorial to Episcopal medical missionary to Japan Rudolf Bolling Teusler (Accession 37295) includes copies of speeches by Japanese dignitaries. The Simpson Family Genealogical Notes (Accession 32923) provide a biographical sketch of William Wallace Simpson, who was a Christian and Missionary Alliance as well as Assemblies of God missionary to China, Tibet, and Mongolia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Baptist missionary Jehu Lewis Shuck donated what is believed to be a list of heads of departments and the cabinet of a government that was written in Chinese (Accession 43728).

Some business records document work abroad. Universal Leaf Tobacco Company, Inc., was chartered in 1918 after a merger of six tobacco companies. Within a few years, the company expanded into other countries, such as Canada and Greece, as well as into Africa. In 1935, it expanded into China. Company records (Accession 41779) specific to Universal Leaf Tobacco of China Company in Shanghai are primarily mid-20th-century financial records that document contacts in the United States as well as Shanghai and Hong Kong. In addition, there is a set of minutes from 1941 to 1951. A separate set of correspondence of the Covington family (Accession 38905) includes documentation of James Edward and Annie James Covington's stay in Shanghai while he was employed by Universal Leaf Tobacco. The papers include business correspondence and the inventory of a residence in Shanghai from 1928.

The Organization Records collections include the records of several organizations that existed to promote the study of Asian culture. The Richmond Area University Center was formed in 1946 by several Virginia colleges. Other colleges, as well as Richmond Public Schools, joined the organization, and their name was changed to University Center in Virginia in 1958. The organization folded in 1978 because it could no longer afford to sponsor visiting scholars and lecturers. Its records (Accession 30396) include pamphlets and promotional materials concerning Asian studies programming for 1970.

The Pioneer American Society was founded in 1967 and incorporated in 1968. It disbanded in 1976, although it was later reestablished. The organization's purpose was to document the United States' cultural landscape, artifacts, and architecture, as well as to encourage research, educational programs, and preservation. Its records (Accession 40235) contain five folders concerning China from 1936 to 1978, including a bibliography, clippings, and fact sheets. There are also pamphlets concerning Japan, the Tanaka Memorial, and a 1946 article entitled, "A Report on Japan."

### **Virginia Museum of Fine Arts**

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts opened on January 16, 1936. Its exhibition files (1936–1992) document special exhibitions concerning Asian art beginning with 1943 exhibitions on Chinese jade, modern Chinese paintings, and masks from China, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Thailand. Files may include promotional material, exhibition lists and layouts, correspondence, clippings, and invitations. Directors' correspondence (1933–1977) may contain correspondence concerning loans and with individual artists and collectors.

Researchers may want to consult both series if searching for information on a particular exhibition. Exhibition files have not been processed and may contain privacy-protected information, so researchers are encouraged to contact the Library concerning the accessibility of the records.

### **Virginia Department of the Treasury Unclaimed Property Records**

Unclaimed property from banks, estates, or other repositories may come into the possession of the Virginia Department of the Treasury. If they are not claimed in 20 years, any records that are considered archival are transferred to the Library of Virginia. The papers and other items are filed by lot number, and each lot has a catalog record.

Several collections contain papers of Asian Americans. From the mid-20th century, there are naturalization certificates from two Chinese immigrants who resided in Norfolk, Ow Chuck Sam (Accession 31473, Lot 778) and Eng Yick Yu (Accession 42943, Lot 4976934). Cambodian Kuy So (Accession 52014, Lot 410 [250078]) left behind papers relevant to his admission to the United States as a refugee in 1983. The papers of Roger Williams Graham (Accession 50624, Lot 12497) and Bill Hunt (Accession 50624, Lot 12047) document their marriages in Seoul, South Korea, while they were serving the U.S. government there. The Hunt papers include South Korean and United States passports for Bill Hunt's wife, Duk Hyun Kim (Barbara Ann) Hunt. Two collections document women who were born in the Philippines. The Richard K. Wood Papers (Accession 50624, Lot 157932) document Josefina P. Gonzalez Wood, including her partially completed paperwork to become a U.S. citizen. The Luisita Lemaster Papers (Accession 50624, Lot 13073) include a record of her marriage to Billy Ray Weaver in San Antonio, Zambales, Philippines.

### ***New Virginians: 1619 & Beyond***

In 2019, the Library of Virginia collaborated with the Virginia Foundation of the Humanities to create an exhibition that focused on recent immigration to Virginia. An online version of the exhibition is available on the Library's education website (<https://edu.lva.virginia.gov/new-virginians>). Interviewees include immigrants and refugees from Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Japan, Laos, Mongolia, Philippines, South Korea, and Vietnam.

## Finding Records

There are several ways to find references to Asia, Asians, and Asian Americans in the Library's holdings. Records may be found by searching for "Asian American" or the name of the countries and their people, such as by searching for "China" or "Chinese," in the Library of Virginia's online catalog and in the finding aids that are available through the Virginia Heritage website (<https://vaheritage.org/>).

Archived websites of Virginia state agencies and other digital collections may be accessed through Archive-It ([www.archive-it.org/organizations/66](http://www.archive-it.org/organizations/66)).

When looking for an individual, basic genealogical techniques are required. Asian Americans may be found in many types of records, including federal census and passenger lists; state records, such those created by the Virginia Department of Health's Division of Vital Records; local records such as deeds and coroners' inquisitions; publications including school yearbooks, newspapers, and city directories; and the papers and records maintained by Asian Americans themselves.

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