

#### **NEWSLETTER OF THE**

## Virginia Conservation Association

Promoting the Care and Preservation of Cultural Materials www.virginiaconservationassociation.org

P. O. Box 7023, Richmond, VA 23221

May, 2016 Volume 25, No. 5

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear VCA members,

As we conclude our 2016 year I want to thank all of the Board members that I have had the pleasure to work with this year. We have made some changes to the Board and really tried to listen to the membership and help the organization grow and change. Our programs as usual have been wonderful and I think the programs chairs are already at work lining up exciting programs for next year.

I am excited and sad to say that I won't be able to continue as President of the VCA for the 2017 year. I have accepted the position of Collections Manager for the Preservation Society of Newport, RI. I have enjoyed being a part of the VCA for the past 10 years and look forward to continuing to hear about all of the exciting programs in the future. I will be at the last VCA members meeting of the year and look forward to seeing everyone there. If you are ever in Rhode Island please give me a call!

Best, Kathy Garrett-Cox, President

#### URGENT NEED FOR PUBLICATIONS CO-CHAIR

This position has recently been vacated and has a one-year term remaining. The newsletter is published 5 times during the year. If you can help, please consider volunteering:

Marla Curtis , curtisfineart@gmail.com or

Carey Howlett, fchowlett@mac.com

#### **VCA STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS TO BE AWARDED**

The VCA Board has voted to offer two \$250 scholarships each year to encourage students to further their professional development.

Applicants will need to submit a brief written proposal to the Board describing the activity, workshop, symposium or conference. The chosen applicant would also be required to write an article for the VCA newsletter following the event that would inform the membership about that workshop, symposium, etc.

The Board will receive proposals for this coming year beginning this summer.

Don't be bashful get those proposals in!

Mail to: VCA Student Scholarship, P. O. Box 7023, Richmond, VA 23221

## **VCA Members' Meeting**

Thursday, May 19
5:30 P.M.-Refreshments
6:15 P.M. – Program Followed
By Members' Meeting

Conservation of The Messiah By Benjamin West

Presented By
Scott Nolley, Owner
Fine Art Conservation of Virginia



Muscarelle Museum of Art College of William & Mary 603 Jamestown Road Williamsburg, Virginia 23185 Directions: Muscarelle.org

http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c094ca4ae2da/fd0-may19

(See Page 2 For More Information )

# Conservation of The Messiah Benjamin West (1738-1820)

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After West's death in 1820, his sons donated *The Messiah* to the United States as a gesture of affection toward their father's homeland. In 1829, the U.S. Congress returned the painting to London for sale at auction in hopes of raising much needed funds, having never displayed the image once.

A vigorous and complicated work, the painting's history included at least three transatlantic crossings and brought it in contact with fire and the attentions of a number of restorers possessed of varying skill sets - it is difficult to assess which was more damaging.

The painting recently resurfaced at auction in London, and the Muscarelle seized the opportunity to bring it back to America. We will examine the work and discuss its complex treatment history and the challenges this presented during its most recent treatment.

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The first American artist to study in Italy, West painted assiduously and embraced the embryonic Neoclassical Movement then developing over all of Europe. He met the right people and, by the time he reached London in 1763, was steeped in the newest artistic trends. His ability, ambition, modernity, willingness to experiment, and



social skills earned him widespread patronage. West met King George III, who appointed him a charter member of the Royal Academy of Arts in 1768 and by 1772 made him his historical painter.

Self Portrait of Benjamin West, ca. 1763

West had an enormous

influence on American art through his teaching of three generations of American artists. His first student was his friend Matthew Pratt, who came to London as an escort to West's fiancée Elizabeth Shewell. The artists that followed comprise a who's who of American painting: Charles Willson Peale, Gilbert Stuart, John Trumbull, Ralph Earl, Washington Allston, Thomas Sully, Samuel F. B. Morse, and many others.

Join us on May 24th beginning at 5:30 at Legend Brewing Company, 321 W. 7th Street, Richmond 23224 to send off our friend and reigning President, Kathy Garrett-Cox, to her new life in Newport, RI. BYOM\$ and stay for a few minutes or a few hours!

### Virginia Conservation Association Budget Proposal 2016-2017

#### Income:

Dues—Regular Membership \$2,400 (80 @\$30 each) Student Membership \$ 45 (3 @\$15 each)

Total: \$2,445

#### **Expenses:**

Publications	\$ 200
Refreshments	\$ 450
Web Management	\$ 350
Post Office	\$ 75
Programs	\$ 645
Outreach	\$ 200
Education	\$ 100
Membership	\$ 200
Miscellaneous	\$ 200
VA SCC	\$ 25

Total: \$2,445

#### Welcome New Members

Maeve W. Bristow, Conservator Black Creek Workshop

Tina Gessler, Conservator Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

### The Virginia Man: Respect, Responsibility, Rebellion

The Valentine—May 6. 2016 through January 29, 2017

Do clothes really make the man? Stories of respect, responsibility and rebellion, preserved in the wardrobes of Virginia men, will be on display in galleries dedicated to an exploration of the public and private character of the Virginia man.

# True Love Forever: Preserving the Legacy of Norman "Sailor Jerry" Collins

Conservation of the stencils, rubbings and sketches of this iconic WWII tattoo artist

Presented By Samantha Sheesley Paper Conservator, VMFA March 21, 2016 Cabell Library Lecture Hall



# Members Meeting March 21, 2016 VCU Cabell Library Lecture Hall

**Business Meeting:** 

- Nominating Committee introduced:
   Deborah Evetts
   Suzanne Collins
   Carey Howlett
- Fred Wallace working with a Task Force.
- Bylaws changes Eliminating Board positions:
- Bylaws Chair responsibilities to be absorbed by Vice President.
- ♦ Disaster Response Chair responsibilities to be absorbed by President. The President will form a D.R. committee as needed.
- Kathy Garrett-Cox put this proposal to the membership for a vote. Dianne Roland agreed to motion; Bill Ivey seconded the motion.
- Members present agreed, no one opposed. The motion was carried by a unanimous vote.
- May meeting will be held at the Muscarelle Museum at William & Mary. Scott Nolley will talk about the treatment on a painting by Benjamin West.
- There will be a field trip to Monticello on April 21<sup>st</sup>. Signup sheet was passed around for people who are interested and want more information.
- Education chair reported on the workshop held at Virginia House on conservation and preservation techniques for small house museums. It went well, and there were more people interested than there was room and requests for more of the same.
- Treasurer's report was given.
- Membership meeting: "Preserving the Legacy of Norman 'Sailor Jerry' Collins" presented by Samantha Sheesley, Paper Conservator at the Virginia Museum of Fine Art.

## **Current Treasury Balance:**

\$5189.85

~Nancy Beck, VCA Treasurer

## Minutes of the Board Meeting April 12, 2016 James City County Library

Attendees: Kathy Garrett-Cox, Dotty Robinson, David Shakibnia, Bill Ivey, Marla Curtis, Kate Ridgway, Keri Ragland, Nancy Beck, Karri Richardson, and Dianne Roland

- Marla gave update on Nominating Committee.
- There was a discussion on **website** management about keeping on a Web Master or hiring a company to manage the website, one that can handle the growth and changes including PayPal, etc. Decided we wait until next year, after nominations.
- Treasurer's report, issue with PayPal and how to handle fees to use it. Discussed charging people who choose to use it, or having it come out of the VCA budget. Need to make sure VCA is getting charged as a non-profit.
- Discussed using the money we have for hosting more educational programs and getting speakers and programs that can be of interest and use for outreach.
- Education chair spoke of interest in more practical programs on collections care for the smaller house museums in our area and membership. For example: Digital photography, Identification of types of photography
- Discussed setting up a **scholarship** for students to apply for to use towards attending workshops, seminars, etc. Board approved setting up \$250 each to go for two scholarships and open that up to the student members this year. To be put in newsletter and website.
- May meeting at the Muscarelle, discussed getting it catered. Do something special, extra nice.
- Outreach sent in report that there has been contact with Science Pub based on the popularity of the program with Samantha Sheesley. They are not committing to any future programs with us, but they will be willing to post our programs especially if it will be a scientific one.
- Kathy Garrett-Cox will be leaving the VCA and Richmond. Accepted offer to be Collections Manager for Rhode Island mansions. Leaves next month.
- Andrew and Catherine Baxter will be moving to Florida soon. Discussed having a casual event to say good-bye to Kathy and Andrew. Details to be sent out, as soon as possible.

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## Preventative Conservation Workshop Virginia House, February 24, 2016

The workshop was aimed towards the general public and those interested in conservation and preservation techniques as both an educational and outreach experience. The event was instructed by Mary Scott Andrews, Sandy Jensen and Kate Ridgway and was extremely successful with 14 individuals registered. It provided hands-on, in situ experience and attracted a variety of individuals from different local (and afar!) organizations. The group learned about caring for furniture, textiles, paintings, books, frames and variety of other conservation issues. Instructors also covered basic IPM and preventative maintenance management. Keri received positive feedback from the group, including suggestions for topics that we should offer in the future. Overall, this was a very successful program and could be considered as a workshop to offer in consecutive years.







## VCA Field Trip Monticello-April 21, 2016



VCA Members and their guests were treated to a day of behind the scenes talks and tours of Jefferson's Monticello. Here the group stopped long enough to pose in the third floor dome room.

Thanks go to the staff and volunteers who made this such an enjoyable Spring day on the mountain!

Melanie Lower, Curatorial Assistant Gardiner Hallock, Acting Robert H. Smith Director Of Restoration Diane Ehrenpreis, Asst. Curator of Decorative Arts

And of course thanks to our fellow VCA member Bob Self and friend Scott Nolley for their presentations and Mary Andrews for keeping us on schedule.



Scott explains the encapsulation of the Valade copy of the Benjamin Franklin portrait and the installation of the removable monitoring system



Bob Self takes the group through some of the steps involved in the restoration of the 2nd floor nursery



Gardiner Hallock talks about the projects taking place on Mulberry Row

