

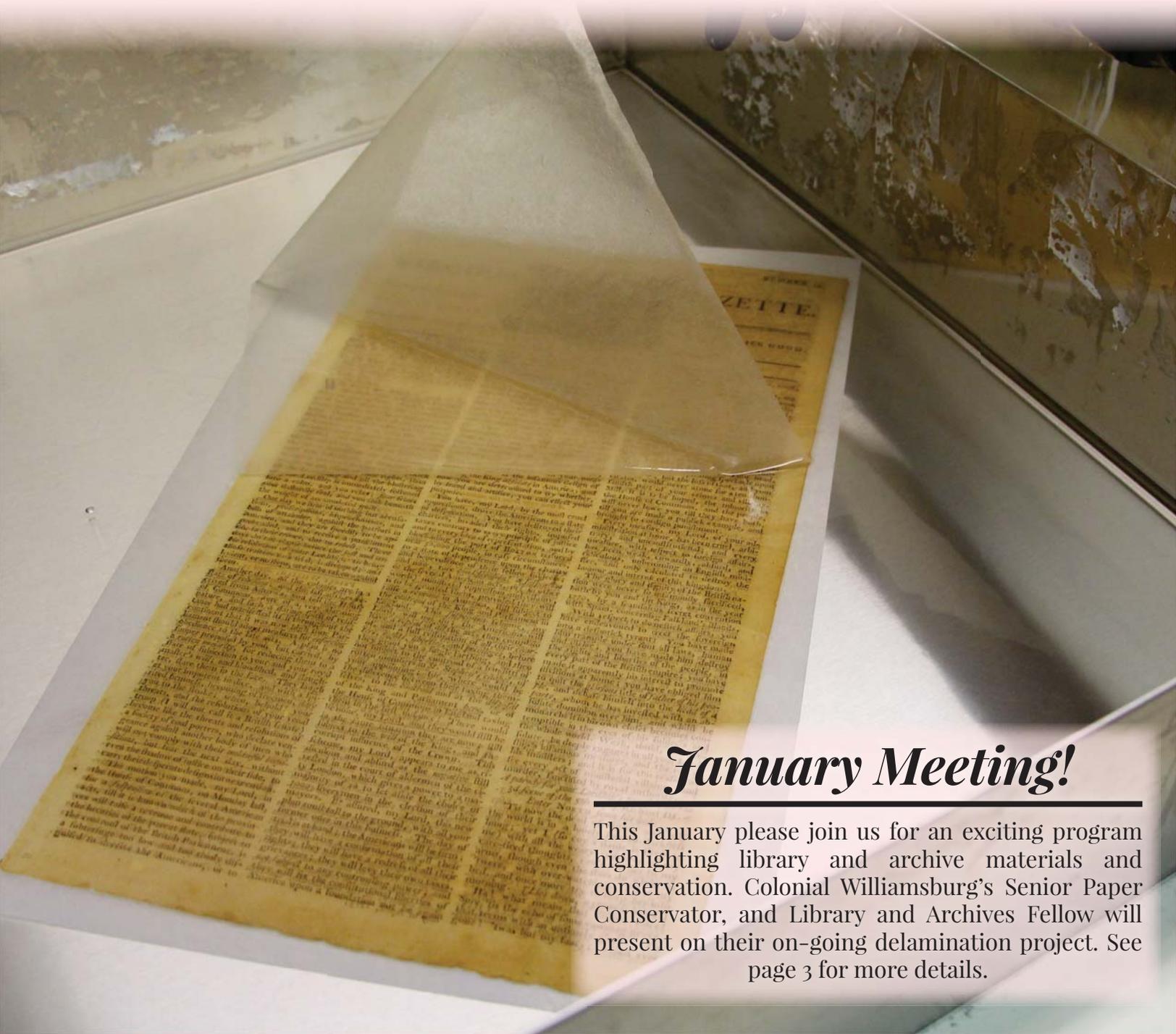
Virginia



The Virginia Conservation Association promotes the care and preservation of cultural materials. The VCA offers education and training for those involved in conservation and provides a forum for discussion of pertinent issues and new developments in the field.

CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

January 2018 Issue Vol. 27, No. 3



January Meeting!

This January please join us for an exciting program highlighting library and archive materials and conservation. Colonial Williamsburg's Senior Paper Conservator, and Library and Archives Fellow will present on their on-going delamination project. See page 3 for more details.

Letter from the President



KATE RIDGWAY, VCA PRESIDENT

Happy New Year everyone! I'm not a big fan of New Year's Resolutions, but I am a big fan of taking a minute to think of something small that I could change for the year to come that might improve life. My "resolutions" tend to be small, but I do manage to stick with them throughout the year. I don't always keep up with them beyond that. Some are just not worth it, but it's nice to try. This year my goal is to do a research project that I might be able to publish in a journal. That's a pretty gigantic goal for me. I usually pick something small, but this year it's a big one and I feel like I can do it.

In this vein, I'm hoping that you all might decide to pick something to do to improve your career. Learn a new conservation technique, give a paper at a conference, participate in a group project with a colleague, join the VCA board. Something you've never done before. It doesn't need to be major, but expanding yourselves as conservators is an important thing to do and something we should all take some time to think about every now and then. It's so easy to get stuck in a rut and say "Well I've always done it this way, so why re-think it?". That's a bit like professional death to a conservator. So take some time this new year and think about your career and how you practice conservation, or whatever museum field you practice, and maybe pick something to make an effort to improve upon. It's not easy, but it's a worthy goal to have.



January Program

*Wednesday, January 31st at 5:30 p.m. at James Branch Cabell
Library, 901 Park Ave. Richmond, Virginia 23284*

Please join the VCA and Colonial Williamsburg for a program highlighting the library and archive materials and conservation. Colonial Williamsburg's (CWF) Senior Paper Conservator, Pam Young, and Library and Archives Fellow, Sophie Barbisan, will present on their on-going delamination project. The lamination process was developed for the preservation field, but the use of cellulose acetate did not prove to be stable over time, and now laminated documents need to be reversed to preserve the paper artifacts. Pam Young is a long-standing member of the VCA and has worked at CWF for over 20 years. She holds a degree in conservation from the Cooperstown Program, now at SUNY Buffalo. Pam also has many years of experience in the private sector. She is a Fellow of the American Institute for Conservation and former Vice President. She humbly shares her wealth of knowledge with the preservation community and is herself a life-long learner. Her not-so-secret love is for pugs!

Sophie recently moved to Virginia from Washington, DC, but she originally hails

from France where she completed her degree in conservation at the National Institute of Cultural Heritage. While early in her career, she already brings extensive experience especially with respect to her research on rigid gels for cleaning paper. Her fellowship at CWF is dedicated to the Rockefeller Library Collection and the corporate archive.

Pam and Sophie will provide a brief history of lamination and focus in more detail on the treatment steps to safely reverse the lamination and preserve the documents. Their presentation will take place in the Richmond area at the end of January. The location is still being finalized, but we hope to offer the program in a library setting where you will also be able to see collections impacted by lamination and converse with special collections librarians.

The presentation will begin at 5:30pm and a reception with refreshments provided by VCA will immediately follow. We hope to see you for our first event in 2018!



Advocacy Day

Join us for this year's Museum Advocacy Day! In addition to visiting with legislators, we will also have some training for new advocates, and an evening reception for legislators at the Virginia Historical Society. Be sure to make plans to join us on February 21, 2018 at the Virginia Capitol, Pocahontas Building, and Virginia Historical Society. This year's Museum Advocacy Day will include several different components: Visit the chambers of the House and Senate to be recognized by legislators, a training session at the Library of Virginia, visits with individual legislators in pairs and small groups, Pocahontas Building, legislator reception and Top 10 Endangered Artifacts Awards Ceremony at the Virginia Historical Society. For more information, contact Jennifer Thomas:
jthomas@vamuseums.org

Register online: vamuseums.org/events



CW Fellowship

The Conservation Department of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation seeks applications for post-graduate fellowships in archaeological materials, objects, paintings, textiles, or wooden artifacts conservation to help support Colonial Williamsburg's preservation mission. Regardless of specialty, the fellow will interact with preventive conservation and materials analysis staff. The one year fellowship is a benefits-eligible full-time position with renewal potential. Job responsibilities include: carrying out established conservation procedures, including examination and treatment of Collection material, maintaining detailed records of conservation treatments, among other duties in the lab. Must have a master's degree in conservation to apply.

Apply online:
www.hrapply.com/cwf

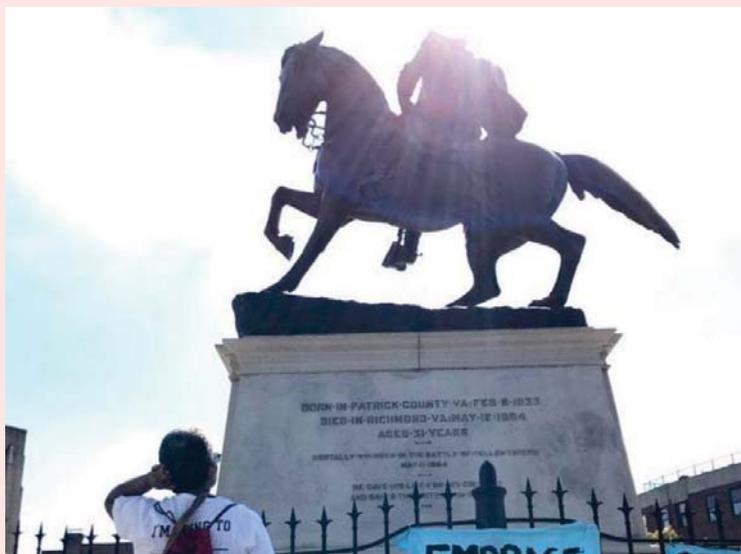


Painting Workshop

On March 24, 2018 the VCA will be offering a Decorative Painting Workshop led by Suzanne Collins, assisted by Kirsten Travers Moffitt. Learn how to produce and apply distemper/kalsomine, black and gold marble and wood graining including curly maple, birds-eye maple and mahogany. In addition a PowerPoint presentation will provide historic background information including reference materials detailing formulation and application of each type of painted finish. It will be held at Black Creek Workshop in Norge, VA. The total cost is \$110. All materials will be provided and a box lunch is included. The class size is limited to 12. Further specifics including payment information will be sent to respondents. Note that the workshop will be subject to cancellation if we fail to get enough people.

~~Please register by email at info@virginiaconservationassociation.org no later than March 1.~~

Please register by email at tsbhistory@gmail.com no later than February 15. Note: Blackcreek Workshop is in Toano.



Conservation and Conflict

VCA will host the third Salon addressing issues around Confederate Monuments on February 15th at 10:00 am at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. The program topic will be broadened to address the conservation of monuments and objects that are politically or ethically

“charged”. Speakers will be Jane Klinger, conservator at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Claudia Walpole, a private conservator on working on KKK artifacts, and Kate Ridgway, VCA President and conservator at the Virginia Department of Historic Resource on the challenges of handling artifacts of slavery. Please look for notification in February to confirm the time and place.

Previous Salons in this series are:

September 7, “Preservation and Museum Community Town Hall on Civil War Monuments.”

December 5, “Museums & Civil War Monuments: Why and How to Engage.”

As the conversation about Civil War monuments continues in our communities, museums and other cultural organizations have the opportunity to help shape the public dialogue. What role might your organization have in this discussion? How might you decide the best response – both for your museum and for your community? What are some of the challenges, as well as the opportunities? Speakers were staff of the American Civil War Museum including Christy Coleman (CEO), John Coski (Historian), Stephanie Arduini (Director of Education), Chris Graham (Special Curator).

Helping Hands

VCA is in the early stages of developing an AIC-inspired Angel’s Project to occur at some point next year. The goal of the project would be to assist a small or under-funded institution with a conservation or preservation-minded project. The project would ideally be more preventive than interventive, so that a wide-range of colleagues and conservators of any specialty could participate. For more information about Angel’s projects, visit this website for a list of past AIC hosted projects: www.conservation-us.org/annual-meeting/angels-project#.WZbiVz594dU.

Anyone interested in participating or with ideas of deserving institutions or projects can email Kate McEnroe, katelmckenroe@gmail.com, or speak to her at the next meeting.





November Program

Our November program was held at the recently opened American Revolution Museum at Yorktown. The meeting began with reports from the president and education officers about their activities and upcoming opportunities. President Kate Ridgeway spoke about the VCA's continued involvement in the ongoing discussions about Confederate monuments and the role of conservation in the discourse. Education co-chairs Terri Blanchette and Bob Self announced the results of the workshop survey and discussed the scheduling of a variety of events to take place next year including workshops in in-painting, gilding and mold-making, and decorative painting.

Following an introduction by Curatorial Registrar Jane Hohensee, Archaeological and Objects Conservator Melba Myers gave a presentation discussing her treatment of objects from the Caldwell Group, now on display in the museum. Sir John Caldwell was a British officer stationed in Canada during the Revolutionary War and he collected artifacts originating from Native American tribes in the Great Lakes region. Included in the discussion were a pair of epaulets, a silver gorget, a bone knife, a tinkle cone, and a leather scabbard featuring quill work. In describing each treatment, Myers spoke of the challenges that can arise when treating composite objects as evidenced by the treatment of the pair of epaulets. Both epaulets had silver planchets attached to wool, but the planchets on one of the pair were still attached with sinew. To keep the sinew intact, the planchets were cleaned in situ, requiring slow work and careful masking of the sinew and wool during treatment. Each object in Myers' presentation had unique considerations and provided interesting cases of treatment design.

Following the presentation, we moved outside to the front lawn where we were treated to a demonstration of a Mortar firing. This activity was presented in conjunction with a talk being given at the museum that same evening entitled "The Legacy of Henry Knox," presented by The Knox Museum curator Matthew Hansbury. From there we moved into the gallery space, enjoying new exhibits and speaking with VCA members Marla Curtis and Tom Snyder about treatments they had completed on two of the objects on display. Snyder shared his treatment of a lap desk used and owned by Francis Marion. His work included replacement of some hardware, toning of previous fills and wood species identification. Curtis spoke about her treatment of "The Portrait of Benjamin Thompson" that involved removing old layers of nicotine and varnish resulting in a brightening of the painting. The most exciting discovery was an inscription revealed during cleaning that dated the painting to 1785. With a good turnout and an evening full of interesting treatment discussions, it was a lovely meeting to round out 2017.

VCA BOARD MEETING MINUTES DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum of Colonial Williamsburg September 21, 2017

CALL TO ORDER: President Kate Ridgway called the business portion of our meeting to order at 5:48 pm.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Kate Ridgway gave an update on the Civil War Monuments discussion. The conversation is continuing. The Monuments Commission is getting a letter from the VCA and VAM concerning organizing more focused meetings.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Education: Bob Self and Terri Blanchette handed out copies of a chart showing the results of the education program survey. They reported that over two thirds of the membership responded to the survey. The top three results were In-Painting, Gilding and Mold-Making. Plans are being made to move forward with these workshops in the near future. In the meantime a decorative painting workshop and a metals patination workshop will be offered this spring.

Outreach: Casey Mallinckrodt reported that a VCA sponsored Salon is being organized to discuss socially and politically charged artifacts and how conservators deal with them.

Membership: Dotty Robinson sent a report that the directories are ready to e-mail. At this point there are 85 members. Members who would like a hard copy of the Membership Directory at a cost of \$2-\$3 should contact Dotty (*see Membership update below*).

ADJOURNMENT: Kate Ridgway adjourned the meeting at 6:18 pm

Respectfully Submitted, Deborah Pellmann, Secretary

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE: Directories

I hope you have all received your emailed copy of this year's VCA Directory. I have received several corrections and will be sending out an update after the first of the year. If you need to have the Directory PDF sent again, you can email me at dotrob327@verizon.net

Please let me know by January 18, 2018 if you would like a printed copy of the Directory. I estimate that the cost will be around \$3 or less and that includes postage.

You can help the VCA grow by encouraging your friends and colleagues to become members in 2018—it's never too late, and you are welcome to bring a guest to the members' meetings to introduce them to the VCA.

I look forward to seeing you in the new year.

Dotty Robinson
Membership Chair