

# Virginia

# Conservation Association

March 2019 Vol. 28 Issue 4



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 issue and developments in the field.



## Lending a Hand!

VCA members were hard at work during our Helping Hands event in February. Read about the work they completed and more upcoming events inside.

# Letter From the President



*Kate Ridgway, VCA President*

I'm not sure how others feel, but for a long time I have thought that the VCA cannot sustain itself in its current format. Whether this is due to geography, the fact that it is an overly top heavy organization with a huge Board, or a combination of many factors, I do not know. From my experience with the VCA as a member, as the Disaster Chair, and now as President, it seems to me that a lot of effort goes into creating programming and educational activities that very few members actually attend. Folks in Williamsburg are less interested when they have to travel to Richmond, and vice versa. The conservators in Newport News and Charlottesville have even farther to travel.

I would like to start a dialogue to create a plan to reorganize the VCA in an effort to make it a more effective and useful group. Maybe this means becoming an affinity group of the Virginia Association of Museums, maybe it means creating a once a year conference so that we can all meet and have a more compelling explanation as to why we need to miss work, or maybe there is another great idea out there.

I am not going to pretend like I know what the answer is or if members would even like a change, but having talked it over with the rest of the Board, I know that I am not the only one with concerns. All that having been said, I would like to create a working group with other VCA members to come up with a plan. I expect this group will meet a few times over the course of the next year and come up with something to present to the membership during a special meeting of the VCA.

If you hate this plan, think I'm crazy, or think that VCA is fantastic and I need to be stopped, great. Please run against me in May. However, if you think I'm right and think this is worth pursuing, contact me and let me know that you want to be in the working group. You can reach me at [katherine.ridgway@dhr.virginia.gov](mailto:katherine.ridgway@dhr.virginia.gov) or [katyridgway@gmail.com](mailto:katyridgway@gmail.com). If you feel like you can't dedicate time to this project, but have ideas, send them to me and I will bring them to the attention of the working group.

I hope that together we can make the VCA a sustainable part of the conservation community. I look forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting.

# April Meeting at Kittiewan

When: TBD (Saturday in Early April)

Where: Kittiewan Plantation,

Archaeological Society of Virginia Headquarters

12104 Weyenoke Road, Charles City, Va 23030



Copyright Archaeological Society of Virginia

Kittiewan Plantation lies near the banks of the James River just outside of Charles City. The site is the headquarters of the Archaeological Society of Virginia, housing their collections and research library. The Society cares for the 18<sup>th</sup> century plantation house and the grounds, which contains over 6,000 years of archaeology. Its owners and the site played a role in both the Revolutionary War and the Civil War.

Join us for a tour at the site. This is not your typical house tour! The previous owners spent decades collecting Americana with the purpose of turning the house into a museum. The ASV will guide us through the house, discussing the people who lived at Kittiewan and how the Society is preserving the site.

There is potential to explore the grounds and view the Civil War archaeology (weather permitting). Details about the date and time will be posted soon, but anticipate a Saturday outing starting at 10:30 am.

## Save the Date!

The VCA Spring Field Trip to Virginia's 'Horse Country'.  
Wednesday May 8<sup>th</sup> 2019.

The morning will include a visit to the National Sporting Museum & Library in Middleburg <http://nationalsporting.org/> with a tour featuring the recently conserved Sporting Screen.

(after) Thomas Butler (English, c. 1730-1760),  
Four-paneled Sporting Screen, c. 1860,  
hand-colored engravings and oils on canvas  
on a wooden frame,  
81 1/2 x 108 inches, Bequest of Sonia Phipps  
Seherr-Thoss, 2006



Andrew Baxter, Sculpture Conservator and long-time VCA supporter will head up our field trip and describe his treatments of Paul Mellon's equestrian bronzes at the museum.

In the afternoon we will have the rare opportunity of visiting Oak Spring Garden Foundation in Upperville <https://www.osgf.org/>, the home and estate of Rachel 'Bunny' and Paul Mellon. This offers the chance to see the newly replicated Schlumberger copper finial from Bunny's Potting Shed which was a collaboration between artisan Drew Reynolds and Andrew Baxter.

We will also have a guided tour of Bunny's library that contains her collection of books, manuscripts and art on plants, gardens, and landscapes.

Space will be limited. More information to come.

## Textile Conservation Contract Opportunity at National Air and Space Museum

The Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum has a requirement for the services of an experienced textile conservation professional to perform conservation treatment of the textile covering of an early historic aircraft at the National Air and Space Museum. The project will begin in November 2019 and will be for approximately 900 hours of service. All work will be performed at the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, Virginia.

Additional information about this project, including the Request for Quote documents, can be requested by contacting Elizabeth Beesley ([BeesleyE@si.edu](mailto:BeesleyE@si.edu)). Responses from interested parties, based on the Request for Quote document, will be due by 5:00 EST March 25th, 2019.

## VCA Student Scholarship

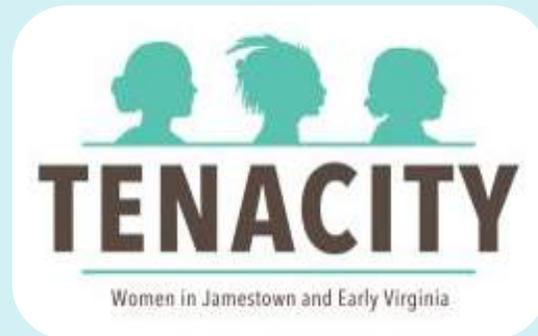


The Virginia Conservation Association will offer two annual scholarships of \$250 each to be used towards costs associated with furthering education in the field. Use of funds may include conference or class fees or another related use as approved by the Board. Applicants must be VCA Student Members to apply. Applications will be accepted throughout the year and will be approved or declined by the VCA Board.

Successful applicants will be notified within one week of the Board meeting and presented a check within the following 30 days. As a condition of the award, recipients will be required to summarize their experience as an article for an issue of the VCA newsletter. Applicants are welcome to apply again for consideration in the next year.

**See pg. 8 for application information.**

## TENACITY: Women in Jamestown and Early Virginia VCA Program on January 24<sup>th</sup> 2019 at Jamestown Settlement



There was a great turnout for our January program, with attendees traveling from as far away as Staunton! The evening began with delicious Thai food and the opportunity for the Jamestown Yorktown Foundation staff to meet members of the VCA. Kate Egner Gruber, Curator of Special Exhibits, extended a warm welcome to everyone and introduced the exhibition by asking:

“Can anyone name a female among the early settlers?”

Silence and blank looks...

“Exactly!” she exclaimed.

She went on to explain that the purpose of the exhibition was to give identities and personalities to the women of Jamestown and the early Virginia colony by using a wide range of artifacts to illustrate their lives and narrate their stories. Three individuals were chosen to represent distinctly different groups: Anne Burras Laydon, an English woman who arrived in 1608 at the age of 14 as a maidservant; Cockacoeske, a Virginia Indian woman who was recognized by the colonial government as the “Queen of the Pamunkey” and ruled until her death in 1686; and Mary Johnson, an African woman who arrived in 1623 and labored on a Southside Virginia plantation and later gained her freedom and became a landowner in Virginia.

Not surprisingly, given the fascinating and thought-provoking subject, people gathered around the exhibits in small groups, engaging in lively dialogue. Conservators on hand to discuss their treatments included Melba Myers who had treated African artifacts on loan from the Mercer Museum in Pennsylvania, Tom Snyder who had treated the ‘Ducking Chair’, a device used for public humiliation, and Kate Ridgway with artifacts from DHR (see link below for blog post).



Ducking Chair, English, traditional 17th century, Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation collection. A 1634 Virginia court case recorded that Betsey Tucker was punished in this way for “brabbling” or gossiping.



A needle case or hussif, dating to the early 1600s, recovered from a site called Causeys Care (44CC0178) in Charles City County, DHR Collection.

<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/spotlight-on-dhr-collections/spotlight-on-dhr-collections-tenacity-women-in-jamestown-and-early-virginia/>



## Helping Hands Re-cap

The first Virginia Conservation Association Helping Hands event, while small, was a great success! On February 9th about a half dozen VCA members came to the Department of Historic Resources and worked with Lisa Jordan of the Petersburg Preservation Group to rehouse some of their archives. The collections included original letters written by Henry Clay and stuck in old frames, currency from the Civil War mounted on acidic backing boards, and numerous loose papers that needed to be rehoused in archival files with buffered, acid-free tissue.

All in all, about ten boxes and a dozen or so mounted pieces were rehoused and sent back to the Petersburg Preservation Group in better shape than when they arrived at DHR. Not bad for a day's work. Lisa Jordan learned some simple preservation techniques that she can take back with her and teach her staff, which will help to preserve their collections for the future. Hopefully the VCA can have another Helping Hands project next year and continue to benefit the Commonwealth by sharing their expertise with another institution in need.

A special thanks to UVA Conservator Sue Donovan! Without her help the event would have been far less successful and her generosity with her knowledge of paper conservation made all the difference in the world. Also, thanks to Kate McEnroe who helped to organize this event!

## VCA BOARD MEETING MINUTES

James City Country Library, James City County, Virginia  
February 28 2019

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**ATTENDEES:** Kate Ridgway, Christi Barrange, Maeve Bristow, Lesley Haines, Jane Hohensee, Bob Self, Paige Schmidt, Chelsea Blake, Debbie Pellmann.

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Kate Ridgway called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM.

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**PRESIDENTS'S REPORT:** President Kate Ridgway introduced co-worker Chelsea Blake who is interested in serving on the Board in the coming year. Kate reported for Vice President Kate McEnroe that the Helping Hands project went well. Possible ways to invigorate the VCA and possible future directions that the organization might take were discussed.

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**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Treasurer Christi Barranger presented the Treasurer's report of activity from August 1, 2018 to February 28, 2019. Beginning balance in the checking account was \$6,973.01, income was \$2,168.95, and expenses \$1,278.98 with an ending balance of \$7,862.99. The Board put together a proposed budget for 2019-2020 that will be presented for ratification by the membership at the May meeting.

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### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

#### Membership:

- Paige Schmidt announced that physical directories have been printed and can be purchased for \$3.00 by members who wish to have one. There are currently 89 members.
- The new VCA website is live. The Board decided to maintain website care at a cost of \$25.00 per month to help manage the website, due to differing skills levels in future Web Management individuals.
- It was officially decided that there will be no comprehensive online directory for membership. Practicing conservators and preservation professionals who wish to be contacted for services may choose to be on the "Find a Conservator" tab. This option will be included on the 2019-20 VCA membership application.
- A Team Drive has been created through the VCA email address for \$5/mo, which will host all of our shared board information. Board members moving forward will need to have a google account to access and contribute to the Team Drive.

**Education:** Bob Self announced that the Website Workshop was canceled due to a lack of interest. The content and cost of a possible program to be presented in the fall was discussed.

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**Next Board Meeting:** Thursday April, 11 in Richmond

**ADJOURNMENT:** Kate Ridgway adjourned the meeting at 7:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Deborah Pellmann, Secretary

## Student Scholarship (from page 5)

Suggestions for applications: Applications should include a brief, one-page explanation of their proposed use of funds including information on the program, conference, class etc. Applicants should also explain their interest in conservation and how the VCA scholarship will benefit him or her in pursuing a career in conservation or a directly related field. Expenditures are welcomed but not necessary.

Applications can be mailed to the VCA, P.O. Box 7023, Richmond, VA 23221 or e-mailed directly to the current Education Committee Chairs.

## 2018 – 2019 Board Members

Kate Ridgway	President	katyridgway@gmail.com
Kate McEnroe	Vice President	katelmmcenroe@gmail.com
Deborah Pellman	Secretary	mpellmann@mindspring.com
Christi Barranger	Treasurer	gab1118@aol.com
Terri Blanchette	Education Co-Chair	Tsbhistory@gmail.com
Bob Self	Education Co-Chair	vabobcat@aol.com
Suzanne Collins	Membership Co-Chair	marion7@me.com
Paige Schmidt	Membership Co-Chair	paigelschmidt1@gmail.com
Casey Mallinckrodt	Outreach	casey.mallinckrodt@vmfa.museum
Maeve Bristow	Programs Co-Chair	maevebristow@gmail.com
Lesley Haines	Programs Co-Chair	lchaines86@gmail.com
Allison Kelley	Publications	allison.kelley22@gmail.com
Lorraine Brevig	Web Management	hisstah@aol.com
Jane Hohensee	Refreshments Co-Chair	hohenj@cox.net
Tom Snyder	Refreshments Co-Chair	thomassnyder2@cox.net

## New Website Management

The website has been revamped by West End Web Work. The new site is being hosted on our original domain, and can be found at [virginiaconservationassociation.org](http://virginiaconservationassociation.org). Membership and Webmaster Chairs will continue to update content.

## Board Position Openings

There are a number of board positions becoming available in the upcoming nomination period. The nominating committee will soon be announced. If you are interested in a board position, contact a member of the nominating committee. Elections will be held during the May members meeting.

The Board is Seeking the Following:

Vice President

Treasurer

Secretary

Programming Chair (1 seat available)

Education Chairs (2 seats available)

Outreach Coordinators (2 seats available)

# The Virginia Conservation Association

## Membership Application & Dues Payment

**\*Required**

\*Date: \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_

\* \_\_\_\_\_ New \* \_\_\_\_\_ Renewing

*(Name as you would like for it to appear in the Directory-Please indicate if you do **not** want to be included in the Directory)*

\*First \_\_\_\_\_ \*Last \_\_\_\_\_

\*Address: \_\_\_\_\_ \*City \_\_\_\_\_

\*State \_\_\_\_\_ \*ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ \*Telephone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

### I Identify As:

_____ Administrator	_____ Conservator	_____ Librarian
_____ Appraiser	_____ Conservation Technician	_____ Post Graduate-Intern/Fellow
_____ Collector	_____ Curator	_____ Supporter
_____ Collection Mgr./Registrar	_____ Framer/Preparator	_____ Student
_____ Other (Specify) _____		

### Areas of Conservation Expertise:

_____ Objects	_____ Furniture	_____ Paintings
_____ Ethnographic Objects	_____ Frames/Gilded Objects	_____ Painted Surfaces
_____ Archaeological Objects	_____ Textiles	_____ Conservation Science
_____ Architecture	_____ Books and Paper	_____ Preventive Conservation
_____ Sculpture	_____ Photographic Materials	_____ Accept Private Contracts
_____ Other (Specify) _____		

Are you willing to be a Disaster Response Volunteer in the event of an emergency? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you willing to serve as a Mentor? \_\_\_\_\_ Would you like to have a Mentor? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in serving on the VCA board in the future? (see website for details) \_\_\_\_\_

**Practicing Conservator/Consultant Conservators Only:**

Would you like your contact information included in our website's VCA Services Directory? \_\_\_\_\_

The Virginia Conservation Association is open to all interested individuals. To become a member, complete this form and return it with your check made payable to VCA for \$30 (Regular) or \$15 (Student: Enclose a copy of a valid student ID) to the address below. To join online, visit [www.virginiaconservationassociation.org/wp/](http://www.virginiaconservationassociation.org/wp/).

Application and dues payment must be received by **October 15th** to ensure inclusion in the VCA Directory.

**The Virginia Conservation Association**  
**P. O. Box 7023**  
**Richmond, Virginia 23221**