Maryland State Archives

Hall of Records Commission Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2016, 12:00 noon

Electronic Classroom, Maryland State Archives

The Sparrow Seal

Agenda

Call to Order by Chair

Opening Remarks/Special Announcements

Reports & Minutes of Previous Meetings

Special Meetings, Advisory Boards & Celebratory Events

Records Retention & Disposal

State Archivist's Report

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Forthcoming Special Meetings of the Commission & Events of Interest

Old Business

New Business

Next meeting

Adjournment

Maryland State Archives

Hall of Records Commission Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2016, 12:00 noon

Electronic Classroom, Maryland State Archives

Agenda with Details

Call to Order by Chair - The meeting was called to order at 12:15 p.m.

Attendees
http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000043/hrc_spring_2016_attendees.pdf

Morgan State University was not represented at the meeting. Susanne Brogan, representing the State Treasurer, attended by telephone.

Opening Remarks/Special Announcements

As June 14th is Flag Day, the Chair led the assembled group in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Chair then called for a moment of silence in remembrance of the victims of the June 12th terrorist attack in Orlando.

Special Guests

Pamela Q. Harris, *Maryland State Court Administrator*
Jean Russo, *President, Friends of the Maryland State Archives*

Tim Baker welcomed the special guests to the Commission meeting.

Reports & Minutes of Previous Meetings

Hall of Records Commission Meeting Minutes, November 16, 2015
http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000043/hrcfall2015minutes.pdf

Special Meetings, Advisory Boards & Celebratory Events

***November 18, 2015*:** Maryland State Archives hosted a public lecture and book signing with Gregory and Nicole Priebe, authors of "Forgotten Maryland Cocktails," in conjunction with the exhibition from the James H. Bready Special Collection at Casewerks Gallery, Baltimore.

***December 4, 2015*:** Archives staff presented the State House by Candlelight Holiday Program.

March 11, 2016: Baltimore City Archives hosted a meeting of the Maryland Historical Records Advisory Board

***March 19, 2016*:** Archives staff hosted the public program for Maryland Day at the Maryland State House.

***March 30, 2016*:** Archives staff hosted the Opening Reception for the Miller Senate Office Building Exhibits.

***May 2, 2016*:** Special Collections and University of Maryland Libraries co-hosted a Newspaper Wikipedia Edit-a-thon program at Maryland State Archives' electronic classroom.

Mr. Steele moved to approve the minutes as drafted and recognize the special meetings of the Commission, seconded by Dr. Ridgway. The motion was unanimously approved.

Records Retention & Disposal

Retention Schedules:
http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000043/hrc_retention_6-14-2016.pdf

Disposal Certificates:
http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000043/hrc_disposal_6-14-2016.pdf

Ms. Baringer noted that, since the last meeting of the Commission, 21 schedules had been approved by the Maryland State Archives and 18 by the Baltimore City Archives, Two hundred and thirteen disposal certificates were approved, with 165 coming in through the electronic website.

Mr. Steele moved to approve the Records Retention Schedules and Disposal Certificates as presented, seconded by Ms. Robertson. The motion was unanimously approved.

State Archivist's Report

Noting that an organization's priorities could best be seen in the activities of its staff, Mr. Baker directed the attention of the meeting to the chronology of staff outreach at:

http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000043/hrcspring2016chronology.pdf

Plats.net Roll-Out
Mr. Baker reported the first major overhaul of the plats.net system since its implementation in 2001, and asked Ms. Sheads to provide a demonstration of the system. Ms. Sheads emphasized the inclusion of multiple image formats to meet the needs of a diverse user community, the ability to retrieve a mid-document image, and the improvement of user education functions. Functional requirement development with the surveyor community and the Circuit Courts was central to the site's overhaul and that, along with extensive testing prior to

the “go live” day, resulted in a rollover to the new system that was as seamless as anyone could have hoped. This developmental dialogue has also led to a review of the process by which plats are recorded. Today’s surveyor creates a plat using computer software which, among other things, embeds metadata into the digital plat. Recordation, however, requires that the surveyor then print the plat to paper, thereby losing this valuable metadata. The Archives then rescans the recorded plat into digital format for display on plats.net. Mr. Baker noted that this was a good example of a fairly straightforward record series becoming more complex over time. Mr. Swanson added that plat legislation was often over 70 years old, enacted at a time when surveyors labored over a drafting table rather than a keyboard. Ms. Sheads said that she was hopeful that the partnerships formed in the overhaul of plats.net will result in a concerted effort to rationalize the recordation process, making it more efficient and preserving the valuable metadata contained in the original digital record.

Records Management Practices

Mr. Baker emphasized that the two most important priorities for the Archives were outstanding customer service and a back-to-basics focus on the centrality of good records management processes. He noted that the Archives and the Records Management Division had experienced some challenges in recent years with the marked decline in the quality of agency records management practices, particularly in the areas of records scheduling and description. Ms. Baringer then provided details of those challenges, noting that the turnover in agency staff has often resulted in the loss of institutional knowledge in the preparation of proper records inventories, how to include appropriate staff from across the agency in developing accurate and well-articulated retention schedules, and how to appropriately target records for transfer to the Archives. The result has been retention schedule record series descriptions and inventories that are too vague and incomplete to permit thoughtful appraisal decisions, agency requests to transfer non-permanent records to archival custody, and a general lack of understanding that the inventories and indexing necessary to provide access to permanent records in perpetuity must accompany, or even precede, the actual transfer of records. There appears also to be a general lack of knowledge as to whom among an agency’s senior staff needs to be consulted to ensure well-thought-out and complete records management decisions.

To address these challenges, the Archives and the Records Management Division have revitalized their relationship and have agreed to some key action items to focus on:

- Review and update records management forms and make them available for electronic review.
- Strengthen best retention practices guidelines and create model schedules for common record types.
- Review current COMAR records management regulations and, if necessary, make recommendations for update.
- Consider ways to strengthen records management activities within agencies, including possible legislation, as outlined in our 2015 JCR report to the budget committees.

Mr. Baker acknowledged the efforts of Michael Swygart of the Records Management Division in working with the Archives to address these issues. Mr. Baker also discussed the growing

complexity of records created by government. Using the example of adoption records, with five or more agencies involved in the creation of records in each case, Mr. Baker related how employees might understand the individual record created by their agency but not the larger context of its place within the adoption record series. Mr. Baker noted that the Maryland Judiciary has always done a commendable job in including knowledgeable senior staff in the records management process.

Professional Organization Involvement

Noting his commitment to participation in the Archival community at the regional and national level, Mr. Baker asked Ms. Bachmann to highlight Archives' staff members' involvement with the larger community. In this time of "more work less staff" Ms. Bachmann emphasized the importance of having a network of colleagues to call upon for their expertise and support. Notable participation included:

- Vicki Lee, head of Conservation and Preservation, is currently president of the Potomac Chapter of the Guild of Book Workers. The Archives hosted the Chapter's Artist Book exhibit "Life Along the Potomac," and was the venue for the Chapter's hosting of Girl Scout Troop 4959 in their completion of the Artist Book badge. Ms. Lee is also a member of the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation National Heritage Responder (*FAIC-NHR*) team as well as co-chair of the Working Group. She has been mobilized to Haiti, Germany, and locations within the U.S. in response to disasters that have threatened historic and irreplaceable records. As an educator she provided training at the recent American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works Conference in Montreal on "Building Emergency Response and Salvage Decision-Making Skills" as well as participating in a panel discussion on health and safety precautions during a disaster deployment.
- Maria Day, head of Special Collections, is active in the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives (MARAC) Conference. She is serving on the Local Arrangements Committee for the Fall conference here in Annapolis and is also scheduled to participate as a panel member at the conference. She has recently been elected to serve on the Scholarship Committee.
- Allison Rein, from the Special Collections department, is serving on the Program Committee for the Fall MARAC conference.
- Tim Baker is serving on the Program Committee for the upcoming joint conference of the Society of American Archivists and the Council of State Archivists. Mr. Baker has also been nominated to serve on the Executive Board of the Council of State Archivists. If elected to this office, he will serve as Vice President for the first year, then as President for the following year, then as immediate Past President.
- Rob Schoeberlein serves as the Chair of the Library Committee of the Maryland Historical Society and serves on the Friends Advisory Council of the Albin O. Kuhn Library, University of Maryland Baltimore County.
- Elaine Bachmann serves on the Collections Committee of the Maryland Historical Society and on the Board of the Society of Winterthur Fellows.

In addition, The Friends of the Maryland State Archives has initiated a program to support Archives' staff professional development by underwriting some of the costs of attendance at

professional conferences. So far this year, six staff members have requested and been granted support. The Council of State Archivists has also provided scholarship grants to staff engaged in coursework on electronic records preservation and management.

The State Song Advisory Group

Ms. Bachmann reviewed the role of the Advisory Group in developing a criteria for the evaluation of potential candidates for State Song, emphasizing that these criteria might be used by any state engaged in such a selection process. The State Song Advisory Group included experts in Maryland history, music history, military history, cultural history, and folklore. They met on October 7, 2015 and October 29, 2015 and corresponded electronically in developing their recommendations. The full report can be found at the following link: http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc5300/sc5339/000113/021000/021756/unrestricted/20160000e.pdf

Education, Outreach & Research

State House by Candlelight and Maryland Day Celebration

Ms. Squires reported on the success of both the annual State House by Candlelight event and the Archives' Maryland Day interactive timeline installation at the State House. Both events allowed Archives' staff the opportunity to meet with and educate members of the public in a fun and festive setting. Ms. Squires noted that the Maryland Day celebration took place while the House was in session, providing visitors with the juxtaposition of history-as-past and history-in-the-making. Over 600 guests took advantage of the holiday event and, despite very poor weather throughout the Maryland Day celebration, the Archives was able to serve 277 enthusiastic visitors.

Workshop Series

Ms. Squires also noted the successful launch of the Archives' new educational workshop series with the presentation of "An Introduction to the Maryland State Archives." Although this workshop was offered in person, the Archives staff used the opportunity to hone the presentation and create a script which will be used for filming educational video clips for placement online via an MSA YouTube channel. Ms. Squires reported that a dedicated A/V production area has been set up for this purpose. The next scheduled workshop, "Using Vital Records at the Maryland State Archives," which will cover our birth, death, and marriage collections in depth, is also slated for video presentation online.

Brick Wall Sessions

Ms. Squires reported on the success of the Archives' first *Virtual Brick Wall* session. A Facebook event in which we invited our patrons to submit questions online during a three-hour window, this online chat format allowed participation by guests who lived too far away to attend an in-person event. Ms. Squires emphasized the use of the event as a tool to introduce new

guests to archival resources and highlight many of the Archives' resources and services. During the *Virtual Brick Wall*, we received just over 100 questions and were able to provide direct assistance and complete answers to over 75% of them within the event timeframe. It was a very successful event that we are looking forward to hosting again. In the meantime, our Spring Brick Wall Session is an in-person event on May 14th and is already completely booked.

Summer Internship Program

Ms. Squires acknowledged St. John's College, Washington College, and the Maryland Commission for Women for providing funding support for this year's program. We are grateful for their essential assistance in making these enriching, educational opportunities available for students.

Maryland History Day

Ms. Squires reported on the participation of many Archives' staff members as judges in school-wide and county history day competitions organized by the Maryland Humanities Council. These events all serve to educate, encourage, and inspire middle school and high school age students who may very well be the archivists, curators, teachers, and historians of tomorrow. It is also personally very fulfilling for our staff to act as mentors and role models for these young people, who are themselves very inspirational in their enthusiasm, poise, and willingness to learn.

New Exhibits in the Miller Senate Office Building

Ms. Squires expressed the Archives' appreciation for the opportunity to create new exhibits for the ten exhibit cases in the Miller Senate Building. It allowed staff members from all departments to participate in selecting items to display, helping to write text, and positioning the material for maximum educational impact. On March 30th, the Maryland State Archives' staff hosted an opening reception for the new exhibits. First Lady Yumi Hogan attended the event, which features her artwork in a case about the evolving role of Maryland's First Ladies. The exhibits will remain free and open to the public through January 2017.

Maryland 400

Mr. Baker thanked former Adjutant General James A. Adkins of the Maryland Society Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) for a $10,000 grant which will allow Archives' staff member Owen Lourie and project intern Burkley Hermann to continue to uncover the lives of Maryland's first war heroes, the First Maryland Regiment, who fought in the Battle of Brooklyn. We are very grateful for the support of the SAR and for the continuing partnership of project founder General Adkins. For more updates, please continue to follow the project blog at: https://msamaryland400.wordpress.com/

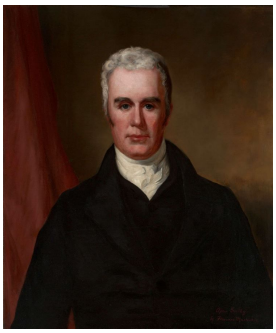
Commission on Artistic Property

Art Conservation

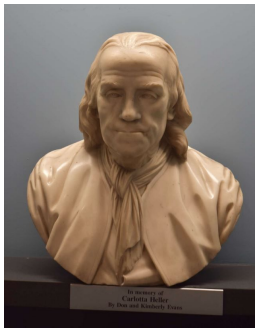
Ms. Bachmann related that the Archives receives $45-50,000 each year for conservation efforts, and provided a few examples of work completed within the past year. The staff of the Commission have overseen several projects to conserve works of art and objects in the collection over the past six months, utilizing funding appropriated by the General Assembly for FY2016.

In an effort to enhance the visitor experience in the State House and improve the aesthetic quality of the bronze plaques that are permanently installed in the rotunda, APC staff worked with conservators to clean and polish these interpretive elements which commemorate historic events and people associated with the building and Maryland history.

A *View of Baltimore*, painted by William Henry Bartlett, c. 1839, underwent a remarkable transformation as a result of conservation treatment by David Olin. This painting, part of The Peabody Art Collection, had long been in storage due to its poor condition. Selected by the curatorial staff for the Drawing Room of Government House, the canvas was restored and reframed in a 19th century frame by Gold Leaf Studios. Now installed opposite the portrait of Frederick Douglass by Simmie Knox, this view of Baltimore would be one that Douglass might have recognized during his lifetime.



The portrait of *Charles Ridgely of Hampton,* painted in the early 20th century by Florence MacKubin after the original by Thomas Sully, has also been conserved for display in Government House, where it will be installed in the Federal Reception Room. Ridgely was Governor of Maryland from 1816-1819; a portrait of his wife, Priscilla Dorsey Ridgely, was recently moved from the Federal Reception Room into the Victorian Parlor as part of Mrs. Hogan's initiative to display portraits of Maryland's First Ladies together in that space.



A sculptural bust of Benjamin Franklin, by Jean-Jacques Caffieri (1725-1792), has been conserved in order to travel for exhibition at Versailles later this year. Part of the Peabody Art Collection, it has been on display in the Peabody Library.

Two 19th century desks used by the General Assembly are currently being conserved by Bruce Schuettinger Conservation Services Inc. The desks were made by the firms Gould & Glanville (1858) and Harrington & Mills (c.1876) of Baltimore, MD. Both of these desks were auctioned to

the public when the state no longer had use for them. The 1858 desk was acquired by Daniel R. Randall, former Postmaster of Annapolis, and was donated back to the state by his descendents in 2008. The c.1876 desk was acquired by a former facilities worker of the State House in the early 20th century and was donated back to the State in 2015 by his grandson. Ms. Bachmann related that the desk had undergone minimal alteration under the grandson's ownership, though he had mounted a pencil sharpener to the side while using it as a school desk. The holes have been filled in and the desk will be featured along with one of the 18th century Senate desks in an exhibit showing visitors to the State House the types of furnishings used in the Legislative Chambers over the past two centuries.

Loan of the Portraits of the Lords Baltimore from the Enoch Pratt Free Library
The staff of the Commission are facilitating all aspects of the MOU between the State House Trust and the Enoch Pratt Free Library to borrow six portraits of the Lords Baltimore for display in the State House while the Library is under renovation. Displaying images of the portraits to the Commission members, Mr. Baker stated that the Archives would be working with the Department of General Services and the Historical Trust to make these portraits available to State House visitors.

Reference Services

Mr. McCormick reported on two items that have recently had a significant impact on services provided to patrons by the Reference Department's. One has significantly increased the department's workload and the other has provided new efficiencies.

At the Archives' request, the Office of the Attorney General has written a Letter of Advice which outlines restrictions placed on any files in Archives' custody which might contain medical records and communications from physicians and other health care providers. The Reference Department has responded by providing guidance to all staff members involved in the retrieval and preparation of legal case files requested by the public. This guidance calls for the close inspection of all files which patrons have asked to view or have copied in their entirety. Additionally, required questions have been included in the reference interview to both determine whether the patron actually needs to see the entire file and, if they do, whether they have the legal status to view all documents. Staff will ensure that the file is inspected and restricted material removed as necessary. Although this requirement calls for additional staff time and effort in processing patron requests it will help ensure that protected health information, and the dignity and privacy of the "person in interest," are well-guarded by the record's custodian. The Letter of Advice can be found at:
http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000043/letter_of_advice.pdf

As of April 1st, the Archives has fully implemented ServiceWise as its order and mail tracking system. Prior to this, mail and document orders received by mail had been logged in and tracked via ServiceWise, while orders received by phone, fax, email, and in person had been tracked via MSAREF. This dual system resulted in inefficiencies in report creation, duplication of order entries into each system, and difficulties in tracking the status of orders. ServiceWise software provides for configurable workflows, process and report management, email

notifications, and a searchable knowledge base. Mr. McCormick acknowledged the work of Kara Carter of the Information Technology Services department for her efforts in modifying the software to fit the Archives' needs and in writing a user's manual and providing hands-on training to order-fulfillment staff.

Baltimore City Archives

Mr. Schoeberlein reported that the Baltimore City Archives is doing well, highlighting the contributions of volunteers in cataloging collections and developing topics for Maryland History Day events. He also addressed the cost-effective disposal of non-permanent records through incineration rather than the more labor and cost-intensive practice of shredding. The Archives is also actively soliciting the mayoral papers of Stephanie Rawlings-Blake. Such a transfer would be the first regular transfer of mayoral papers since 1999.

Mr. Schoeberlein's complete report can be found at: http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000043/baltimore_city_archives_report_may2016%20%281%29.pdf

Recent Gifts, Deposits, & Acquisitions

Report on records received since last Hall of Records Commission Meeting: http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000043/hrc_spring_2016_transfers.pdf

Special Collections: http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/stagsere/se1/se14/000000/000043/speccoll_hrc_april2016_html.html

Additions to the state-owned art collection:

- Late 19th Century gilded frame for the painting, *View of Baltimore*
- *Mold of the Maryland State Seal for the U.S.S. Maryland Silver service,* by George Dumler for Samuel Kirk & Sons
- Early 20th Century Empire-style sofa

The Chair's motion to approve the resolution of appreciation for all recent gifts was unanimously approved.

Forthcoming Special Meetings of the Commission & Events of Interest

Mr. Baker encouraged Commission members and their guests to attend the following meetings and events.

***June 22. 2016*:** Attorney Malcolm Gross will discuss "The Trial of John Brown" at the Archives' *Brown Bag Lunch and Learn* series.

***June 29, 2016*:** Author Ross Kimmel will speak on "Freedom or Bondage: Slave Freedom Petitions in Colonial Maryland" at the Archives' *Brown Bag Lunch and Learn* series

July 1, 2016: Workshop Series - “Using Vital Records at the Maryland State Archives”

***October 1, 2016*:** The Archives will hold its Third Annual Family History Festival.

Old Business - No old business

New Business - No new business

Next meeting - Upon the call of the Chair.

Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Mr. Timothy D. Baker
State Archivist and Commissioner of Land Patents
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