

# THE CLAMSHELL

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Maryland State Archives

Box 2; Folder 1

Winter 2021

## A Letter from the State Archivist



Tim Baker and Governor Schaefer

For this edition of our newsletter, I would like to focus my message on saying “Thank you.”

Thank you to our patrons most of all. For your neverending support, for your patience during this pandemic and for your friendliness and comradery, thank you. You are the reason we enjoy our work.

Thank you to our volunteers who now number more than double our total staff complement. Whether you are working on our Family Search project to scan all probate records, or our online effort to index vital records through *FromThePage.com* or whether you volunteer in some other capacity, we could not do it without you!

Thank you to our elected and appointed officials who have supported the Archives throughout the years and who, more recently, have been working hard to keep us all safe during these troubling times.

Thank you to my many colleagues past and present who have made my job easy. As I look forward to my retirement from State service on July 1 of this year, I am fortunate to have so many to be thankful for in my career serving the citizens of Maryland.

*Timothy D. Baker*

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



Governor Larry Hogan and Tim Baker

## Archivist: A Definition

Many staff here at the MSA often receive a blank stare after claiming “Archivist” as their occupation, so we wanted to share a basic definition in our own words. An Archivist identifies, arranges, catalogs, preserves, stores and makes accessible collections of documents, books, art, photos, publications and artifacts. They help to determine what materials should be in a collection and for how long they are to be held. They create descriptions of materials, author finding aids and answer reference questions to help users locate and use collections relevant to their research. They choose proper protective containers, document storage locations and often create and manage digital copies of their materials to best preserve items making them widely accessible for generations to come. Unlike librarians, archivists do not often lend their materials unless they are being exhibited, but they do typically circulate them either in the archives’ reference room or digitally online. While we are not Indiana Jones, Archivists do have a broad range of very important responsibilities related to the care, understanding and presentation of collections.

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Rachel Frazier, Search Room Coordinator and Nate Miller, Reference Archivist



Archivist Joyce Phelps works to remove a grommet, a type of paper fastener, from a document.



We are proud to announce that we have re-launched our popular Lunch and Learn series as a virtual program. State Archivist Tim Baker kicked off the 2021 slate of presentations on January 14 with a discussion of the question, *What Role Should Archivists Play in the National Debate over Public Monuments?*. On February 11th, Deputy State Archivist Elaine Rice Bachmann and Archivist for the Legacy of Slavery in Maryland Maya Davis, presented on the new Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass statues in the Maryland State House. Both of these talks were recorded and can be found [here](#).

We are planning a new presentation every second Thursday of the month at 1pm online in collaboration with the Enoch Pratt Free Library

and the Maryland Four Centuries project. Upcoming topics this winter include the Evolution of Laws of Racial Oppression, New Archaeological Finds in St. Mary’s City, and Women’s Benevolence Societies of Baltimore.

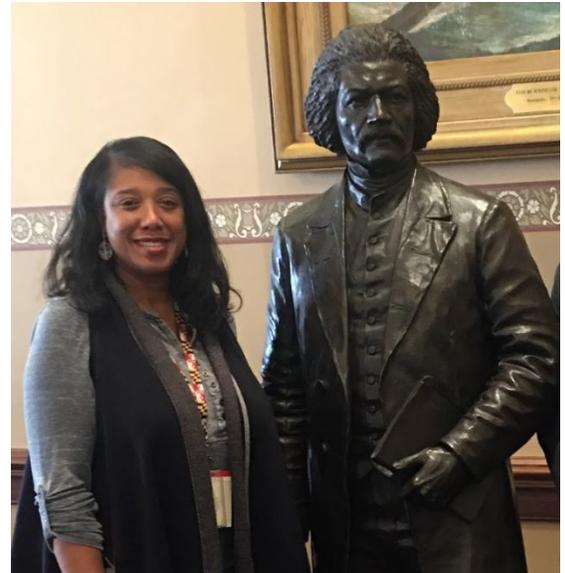
For more details and registration information, see our [upcoming events page](#).

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## Staff Updates

### Farewell and Thank You!

This month we bid farewell to Maya Davis, who leaves the Archives after fifteen years to become the Museum Manager of the Riversdale House Museum, part of the Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission. Maya has been instrumental in the research and development of the the Legacy of Slavery program over the past decade. Her outreach on behalf of the program has enhanced the Archives local partnerships, including with the University of Maryland iSchool, as well as internationally, where her collaboration with the University of Edinburgh has led to new insights into the life of Frederick Douglass. Over the past two years Maya has also served as the Archives legislative liaison, and served on the curatorial team to develop the statues of Douglass and Harriet Tubman which were dedicated in the Maryland State House in February 2020. Maya will be greatly missed by her colleagues here in Annapolis, and we wish her well on this exciting new opportunity.



### Congratulations!

The Council of State Archivists (CoSA) has awarded Kathryn Baringer, Director of Appraisal and Description, with this year's CoSA-Ancestry Leadership Award. State Archivist Tim Baker nominated Kathryn for her work in assisting the State Electronic Records Initiative or SERI. With the support of Ancestry, CoSA provides reimbursement of up to \$1,000 for the recipient to pursue professional development opportunities. Kathryn will use her award funds to complete the ARMA (Association of Records Managers and Administrators) Professional Leadership Certificate program.



# Tributes



Longtime colleague and Archives volunteer Robert “Bob” Barnes passed on January 19, 2021. After retiring from teaching after thirty-six years, Bob utilized his extensive knowledge of archival records, and family heraldry, becoming an esteemed genealogist and author. He generously gave his time and talents to patrons and staff at the Archives. On his visits Bob always made a point of walking around and greeting staff in their offices. The Maryland Manual staff recounted that he would prepare

elaborate movie quizzes, saying “he stumped us more often than we stumped him.” An experienced vocal musician, and a dancer, he particularly loved compiling ‘music in the movies’ questions. In addition to the Archives, Bob volunteered at the Maryland Center for History and Culture, and the Maryland and Baltimore County Genealogical Societies, where he was past president. His was a generous soul, and he will be missed by all of us at the Archives.



The First Citizen award is presented to Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera in 2018 by Senate President Miller and Tim Baker.

The Archives mourns the death of Senate President Emeritus Thomas V. Mike Miller on January 15. The longest-serving Senate president in American history, Senator Miller was also an active member of the Hall of Records Commission. His love of history kept him engaged in activities of the Archives, and his advocacy was integral to our ability to accomplish such projects as the implementation of the State House Visitor Experience Master Plan

(including the restorations of the historic legislative chambers), and multiple publications and outreach programs. In 1992, the Archives worked closely with Senator Miller to establish the First Citizen Award, to honor Marylanders who have been dedicated and effective participants in the process of making government work for the benefit of all. Senate President Bill Ferguson posthumously awarded his predecessor with this award, conveying for the first time the First Citizen medal, a new standard for the award going forward.



First Citizen medal, awarded posthumously to Mike Miller by President Ferguson.



## Maryland Day

Author and Maryland historian Dr. Jean B. Russo shares that Maryland Day commemorates the formal founding of the colony of Maryland, when the newly-arrived colonists erected a cross on St. Clement's Island, offered prayers (perhaps by saying Mass), and took "possession of this Country for our Saviour and for our sovereign Lord the King of England." According to one of the three versions of Father Andrew White's account of the voyage of the Ark and the Dove, this event took place on 25 March 1633/34 at the colonists' first landfall in Maryland. In the liturgical calendar of the Roman Catholic Church, this day is the

Feast of the Annunciation, or "our blessed Ladies day" as Father White termed it, referring to the Virgin Mary. After consulting with the "Emperor of the Paschataway" and the "King of Yaocomoco," Leonard Calvert, governor of the colony, negotiated the purchase of land on a nearby tributary of the Potomac River. This became the site of St. Mary's City, the colony's first settlement. Marylanders began observing Maryland Day in 1903, when the State Board of Education designated it as a day to be devoted to the study of Maryland history. In 1916, the General Assembly authorized the celebration of Maryland Day as a legal state holiday. As we recognize the history of Maryland's establishment as a colony, it's important to acknowledge the indigenous communities that were living here prior to colonization, descendants of whom remain in Maryland today. The Maryland State Archives is building a relationship with Native American communities to expand our understanding of the past and current historical narratives, and to promote broader perspectives.

Visit [marylandday.org](http://marylandday.org) for events being planned in the Annapolis area by the Four Rivers Heritage Area.

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## Documenting A Dark Chapter in Maryland's History

by Maya Davis, Legislative Liaison & Research Archivist

One of the darkest chapters in American History is the period between the late 19th and early 20th century when black men, women, and children were publicly lynched. Much like slavery, lynching is a taboo topic that needs to be discussed, but has often been left uninterpreted because of the shame and trauma connected to the events that took place. Over the years, historians and public facing institutions have grappled with how to respectfully acknowledge and share difficult histories, such as racial terror lynchings, with audiences. Today, there is an increased interest in documenting the events and circumstances of extrajudicial lynchings, bringing humanity to the victims, their families, and communities through truth and reconciliation.

Maryland, a state with its own difficult history, is working to uncover, document and reconcile its legacy of racial violence in the form of lynching. In 2019 a bill was introduced by Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk to establish the [Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) (MLTRC) to conduct research on

individuals who were victims of mob violence. The bill received overwhelming support in both the Senate and House of the Maryland General Assembly and was voted into law.

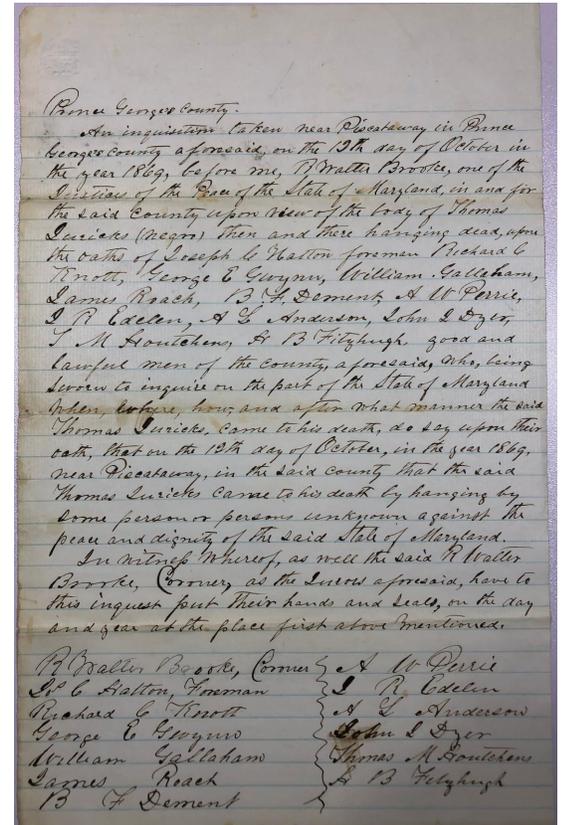
The Commission is an 18 member body that has representation from cultural heritage institutions across the state, including the Maryland State Archives, and four public members who were selected to serve based on their expertise. The members of the Commission will undertake researching lynchings that have occurred from 1854 through 1933 and also hold public hearings in the counties where an incident of lynching occurred.

The Maryland State Archives' Legacy of Slavery in Maryland program will be assisting the Commission in identifying records in the state's collection that document incidents of mob violence. Much of what is known to date about the lynchings that occurred in Maryland has come from local newspaper accounts that were compiled for an earlier project, [Judge Lynch's Court](#), where 40 individuals who were the victims of mob violence are listed. Since that effort, which began at the turn of the 21st century, more information has been uncovered by historians and groups such as Bryan Stevenson's Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) and the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project (MLMP). This renewed interest has led the archives' staff to prioritize identifying collections that will assist the Commission in documenting the truth and making the information more accessible to the public.

Truth seeking will be difficult to ascertain when many of the primary and secondary sources have been historically biased in the way in which information about African American citizens was recorded. Newspapers and government records of the time were often written by individuals that erased the humanity of African American victims who were presumed to be guilty of a crime and not afforded due process in a court of law.

Archives' staff are researching the incidents of lynchings in government records to help balance the narratives found in local newspapers of the time. In addition, extant biographical information will be gathered for each of the individuals as the commission's research committee works to bring humanity to who these individuals were and to understand the role and impact of community members -- including law enforcement and government agencies -- that participated in the incidents of lynchings.

As county records at the Archives vary, there is no one consistent record series that documented information related to mob violence which makes this work a huge undertaking. There are remnants of county coroner's inquests and governor's papers, but the years and counties for which this record material exists are limited within the archival holdings. To further make matters more complex, a vast majority of county records are unprocessed, without an index to guide researchers to the information. As a result, the Commission in partnership with the Maryland State Archives will be collaborating with the Maryland Lynching Memorial



Prince George's County, Circuit Court, (Coroner Inquests), 1719-1884 of Thomas Juricks.

[Click here to download/enlarge image.](#)

Project and its County Coalitions to reach out to other repositories across the state to help with documentation through manuscripts, photographs, and oral histories.

This vital research project will be shared with the public and is open for public participation as well. Outside of the primary stakeholders of the Commission, Archivists from MSA have met with local groups and individuals who are also researching incidents of racial terror lynchings in their counties to bridge the ownership of research with communities across the state. While the work of the Commission will be underway for at least three years, the work of the Maryland State Archives -- to preserve, document, and interpret African American heritage including the legacy of lynching -- will continue long after the life of the MLTRC.

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## **Designing the Library at Rolling Run: Layout, Furnishings, and Book Selection**

by Christine E. Alvey, Librarian

### **Bookcases:**

Certain architectural features determined the placement of bookcases in the space designated for the Library at the Rolling Run facility.

The space is an elongated rectangle off the front lobby accessible through a short hallway. (The State Archivist's office is also located off this hallway, close to the Library.) The Library has three interior walls and one exterior wall with windows. Bookcases were sited on the long interior wall and on the exterior wall between the windows, fully utilizing available space.

A large pedestal desk and chair were chosen for the use of the onsite staff librarian or archivist and placed just inside the door where you enter the Library. Five Fowler library tables were placed parallel to the staff desk and extend down the center of the room to the end wall.



This desk was originally used in the governor's office located in Government House, which is now interpreted as the Victorian Parlor. It was last used by Governor Albert Ritchie.

The pedestal desk was used by Governor Albert Ritchie in Government House; the chair, by Governor William Donald Schaefer. The Fowler tables are from the old Hall of Records on the St. Johns College campus, as are the two brass table lamps on the Fowler tables.

### **Scope of Material for the Library:**

The next task was to define the scope of material for the Rolling Run Library. It was broadly defined as Marylandia like the Library at Annapolis. The task after that was choosing books and ephemera from the State Archives in Annapolis that were appropriate to transfer to a location outside of Annapolis. The first body of material selected

was the Bready Library from Special Collections. At this time we were fortunate to be offered another Maryland historian's private library, the library of Willard Mumford. Almost simultaneously, we were offered many volumes from the private library of Maryland historian Burt Kummerow, which arrived in batches. Second copies of some titles ordered for Annapolis were also purchased for Rolling Run.

**Number of Holdings:** Over 1,000 items

**Organization of Library Material:**

The organization of items selected for the Library was determined by the format and shelving requirements of the material. The Bready and Mumford Libraries had special shelving needs because they contained pamphlets and other ephemera, as well as small hardbound volumes, some of which were quite delicate. This group of material could not go directly on the shelves. So we continued the practice developed at Annapolis of protecting material with two sizes of bankers boxes and acid free file folders. Labels are put on the file folders rather than directly onto the pamphlets and books. Each box is labeled with the range of call numbers it contains. A specific item can be located by thumbing through the files rather than by touching the material itself.



The Bready Library consists of books of different sizes, many of nonstandard dimensions, in both soft bound and hardbound bindings. This variety of sizes and formats made preparing custom protective coverings and enclosures impractical. So books were placed directly onto the shelves. To avoid damaging these materials, rare book ID tabs were used instead of traditional glue backed labels. Special Collections numbers had already been assigned to Bready Library material, so these were used instead of call numbers to keep material organized in a way consistent with Special Collections online cataloging. A second filing system worked in this case because Bready Library materials were shelved together rather than interfiled with the rest of the Library's holdings.



The first section of bookcases on the long interior wall was used for the Bready Library. The rest of this continuous run of shelving was used for most of the donations from Mr. Kummerow because of the large quantity of material appropriate for shelving. Most of these volumes were of a recent publication date; in excellent condition; and of the right size to be protected with Mylar covers. And because the books were covered, they could be safely labeled so that call numbers and author names were clearly visible. (The practice at State Archives is to use the alphanumeric combination of call number and author last name, substituting an author last name for the Cutter number.)

The three smaller bookcases set between windows on the exterior wall were reserved for series, for related subject matter, or for material in protective pamphlet boxes and magazine files. One bookcase houses a complete set of Maryland Manuals (series). A second bookcase on the exterior wall houses numerous publications about George Washington (related subject matter) from Mr. Kummerow's library. A third bookcase on the outside wall contains the set of pamphlet boxes and magazine files from the general collection. Clustering boxed material makes reshelving easier than if it is integrated into the general collection.



Antigone by William Henry Rinehart

Oversized atlases and other large books of special interest, such as Frank Leslie's *The Soldier in Our Civil War: A Pictorial History of the Conflict* (1890), were placed on the library tables to highlight some of the Library's holdings.

A set of Baltimore City Directories is located on the topmost shelves of the interior wall for display purposes. These can be reached only by using a step stool or library ladder. Electronic copies are to be used for general research purposes. Original print volumes can be consulted when necessary.

#### **Decor:**

Three 19th century marble sculptures from the state-owned art collection are on display in the Library: *Antigone* by William Henry Rinehart, *Hero*, also by Rinehart, and a reduced copy of Antonio Canova's *Venus*. These sculptures were originally part of the Peabody Art Collection and transferred to the state's Commission on Artistic Property in 1996.

Maryland State flag colors are used for walls and furnishings (upholstery on the loveseat and chairs, and carpet). Gold spine labels were selected for Rolling Run Library book labels in keeping with the room's Maryland color scheme.

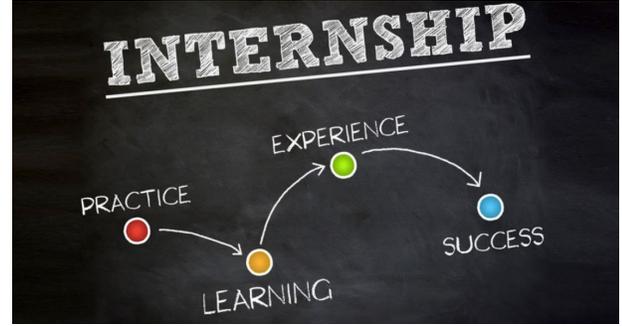
#### **Acknowledgments:**

I would like to thank the Special Collections and Conservation departments for their help with this work. In particular I would like to thank retired librarian Betty Gosnell for her assistance with cataloging. Her attention to detail and persistence were invaluable in correctly cataloging many nineteenth century books. Her tireless research provided detailed notes in the online Library catalog to highlight subjects of interest to the Maryland State Archives that were not captured in the subject headings.

# Get Involved

## Internships

Students looking for a volunteer internship placement should consider the Maryland State Archives. We are hosting students for academic credit, community service hours, co-ops, field studies, and professional development. [See here for more information and application instructions.](#)



## “Virtual” Volunteer

The Maryland State Archives is very pleased to announce that we are using the crowd-sourcing platform [FromThePage](#) to transcribe vital records, and we ask our friends, patrons, genealogists, and all those interested in making Maryland records accessible to help in this effort as “virtual volunteers”.

This project relies on volunteers to transcribe displayed documents using a simple interface. For our Maryland marriage certificate project this consists of a fielded form into which information such as names, dates, and certificate numbers are typed. Getting started as a volunteer is as easy as going to [fromthepage.com](#) and clicking on the “Sign Up” navigation button. You’ll give your name and email address and create a password for the site. Then just click on “Search” and type in Maryland State Archives.

Our current project involves transcribing marriage certificates from years for which indexing either does not exist or has significant gaps. Without an index finding the record requires a time-consuming manual search to locate a certificate, and our volunteers’ work allows us to create a usable index which can be posted online for all to use. Marriage certificates are among the most requested records here at the Maryland State Archives. These records are needed to apply for a driver’s license, passport, Social Security and health benefits, a mortgage, and for other important life events. Women especially need these documents to prove name changes over the course of a life that might include divorce, remarriage, or the death of a spouse. Marriage certificates are also very valuable to genealogical research.

If you have any questions about the Archives’ *FromThePage* projects please contact Liz Coelho at [liz.coelho@maryland.gov](mailto:liz.coelho@maryland.gov).



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