Note from the Archives Manager

Hello Mount Community,

I hope your fall semester is off to an excellent start! The archives have been very busy this Fall. In addition to the new exhibits and event updates that are included in this issue, we have had numerous researchers coming into the archives. Our Fall research stats include:

- Six different students logged a total of 11 research hours
- Students included five undergraduates and one graduate student
- Three outside scholars logged 10 research hours

I am excited to see so many of our students delving into our rich history and analyzing the documents of these great men and women first-hand. No doubt, these numbers will continue to rise throughout the semester.

Jessica Whitmore
Elder Family Papers Digitized

The original manuscripts of the Elder Family of Emmitsburg have been fully digitized and are now accessible on our Digital Archives website. The collection contains thirty-five original manuscripts dating from 1762 to 1888.

William Elder was born into the Catholic faith in 1707 in what is now Calvert County. He married Anne Wheeler who bore five children: William, Charles, Guy, Richard, and Mary. In 1728, William Elder and his family moved to the valley below the Catoctin Mountains, which he named Saint Mary’s Mount. The Elder family farmland would eventually be sold to Fr. John DuBois, our founder. The Elder family cemetery can still be visited on East Campus. This collection contains the papers of William Elder’s family and descendants.

View the Elder Family Papers.

Centennial Vestments Exhibit

Donated by the Daughters of Charity, these vestments were used in the university’s Centennial mass in 1908. The vestments are currently on display on the main floor on Phillips Library in our new textile display cases.

HIST 297: Introduction to Archival Science

The History Department will be offering “Introduction to Archival Science” as a new elective in Spring 2018. This course will introduce students to the science of caring for historic documents and photographs. Students will gain extensive hands-on experience working with archival materials from the Mount Archives. Major themes in this course will include: arrangement and description, preservation, and digital curation. Upon completion of this course, students will have the basic knowledge and background to confidently pursue internship opportunities in archives and historical societies. The course will be taught by Archives Manager Jessica Whitmore and will be held on Monday/Wednesday/Fridays from 12:00-12:50.
One of the premier artists of the late nineteenth century, John La Farge revolutionized the art of stained glass. His work, which rivaled that of Louis Tiffany, can be seen in buildings such as Trinity Church (Boston) and the Biltmore Estate (Asheville, NC). While specializing in stained glass, La Farge was also an accomplished muralist and an 1853 graduate of Mount St. Mary’s University.

The John La Farge Collection at Mount St. Mary’s University includes not only his original sketches and watercolors but also La Farge family letters and records regarding his student experience. The latter are essential to understanding La Farge’s background and who he was as a person and an artist.

This presentation will discuss how preserving American culture must also include preserving the stories behind the artist. By examining the lives of the men and women who shaped American art, we can better understand American culture.

Archives Manager Jessica Whitmore will be presenting as part of an expert panel at the 2017 Archives Fair to be held at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History on Saturday, October 21 at 11:00. This year’s theme, Performance and Preservation, “highlights the ways in which the preservation of archival collections translates into the preservation of culture through the performance and artistry of individuals and communities across the United States and around the world.”

Whitmore’s presentation is titled: “Preserving the Story of the Artist: The John La Farge Collection at Mount St. Mary’s University.” The abstract of her presentation is included below:
Freshmen students in Dr. Sarah K. Scott’s Honors Skills for Academic Success course examined archival artifacts as they learned about primary sources. Students worked in groups of 3-4 to answer: (1) What does this artifact tell me about life during the time it was used? (2) What questions do I have after examining this artifact? and (3) What sources would I used to learn more about this artifact and time period? Students then presented their findings to the class. The artifacts they examined included: a medieval illuminated manuscript, a Civil War sword belonging to Mount alumnus William Whelan, a rosary carried by a Mount alumnus into battle in World War II, and a balance that was used in a Mount science lab in the early 20th century.

On September 18th, the archives held the Founding Fathers Exhibit in Patriot Hall in celebration of Constitution Day. The exhibit including letters between John Dubois and Mount Vernon, as well as ship pass papers signed by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. Pictured is Mount Archives intern Ronnie Georgieff, C'18 and Archives Manager Jessica Whitmore.
On September 30th, we held the 2nd Annual Mount Scavenger Hunt. Teams of students raced across campus to track down clues related to Mount history. Congratulations to “The Mystery Gang” for winning this year’s hunt! Thank you to the Mount Intramurals Office for co-hosting this event with us!

Upcoming Events

Veterans Day Exhibit

Nov. 11, 10:00-2:00
Patriot Hall

#MountArchives

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