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N E A

NEWSLETTER

NEW ENGLAND ARCHIVISTS



C O V E R — Edward M. Kennedy, Jean Kennedy (both holding pumpkin jack-o'-lantern candy pails), and Robert F. Kennedy (right) pose in the yard outside the Kennedy family home in Bronxville, New York, wearing their Halloween costumes in 1934. KFC526N, Kennedy Family Collection. *Courtesy of John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum.*

I n s i d e — Camila Zorrilla Tessler, Elisa Graydon, Cassie Epes, and Nick Connizzo describe the challenges and opportunities of working from home (page 4); the Inclusion and Diversity Committee highlights anti-racist, social justice, and inclusive projects and organizations (page 16); NEA President Linda Hocking discusses important issues raised at the summer Board Meeting (page 8); Rona Razon reviews the Digital Archives Specialist certificate program, and Jane Kelly reviews Archive-It (page 13); board member spotlight from Michael Dello Iacono (page 19); Teaching with Primary Resources Roundtable update (page 7); and news from colleagues and regional repositories (page 9).

TAKING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE



New England Archivists

TAKING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE

7 Central Street • Beverly, MA 01915
<www.newenglandarchivists.org>

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Articles and **News** of interest to archivists, historical society members, historians, and other NEA members should be sent for consideration to the attention of: Katy Sternberger at <newsletter@newenglandarchivists.org>.

Requests for changes or updates to website content should be sent to: <webmaster@newenglandarchivists.org>

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From the Editors

- Danielle Castronovo

As we make our way through a fall unlike any other, the Newsletter Committee remains committed to bringing members dispatches on how archivists around the region are adapting to uncertain times and rethinking and reframing our work.

We continue to publish about working from home in the COVID-19 era with three articles: Elisa Graydon and Cassie Epes describe a revamped internship; Camila Zorrilla Tessler pivots from analog on-site processing to born-digital processing from home; and Nick Connizzo discusses consulting with institutions remotely (page 4). The Inclusion and Diversity Committee shares their compiled *Anti-Racist and Anti-Oppressive Readings and Resources for Archivists* and highlights anti-racist, social justice, and inclusive projects and organizations (page 16).


President Linda Hocking discusses service to NEA, action items related to NEA's *Black Lives Matter: Archivists Must Do Better* statement, and the new bridge rates for

webinars and in-person workshops (page 8). Rona Razon reviews the Digital Archives Specialist certificate program, and Jane Kelly reviews web archiving software Archive-It (page 13). We spotlight board member Michael Dello Iacono (page 19) and feature an update from the Teaching with Primary Resources Roundtable (page 7). And as always, we have news and updates (page 9) from colleagues and repositories across New England.

If you would like to contribute to the *Newsletter*, we are looking for a diversity of voices and are particularly interested in highlighting members who have not contributed before. If you are interested, please reach out to <newsletter@newenglandarchivists.org>. ■

Promote your photograph collections!

The *NEA Newsletter* is seeking submissions from repositories in New England for back cover pictorial features in This Season in New England History. Submissions should be in digital format at 300 dpi or better, along with a caption detailing the subject of the photograph. Please email submissions to <newsletter@newenglandarchivists.org>.

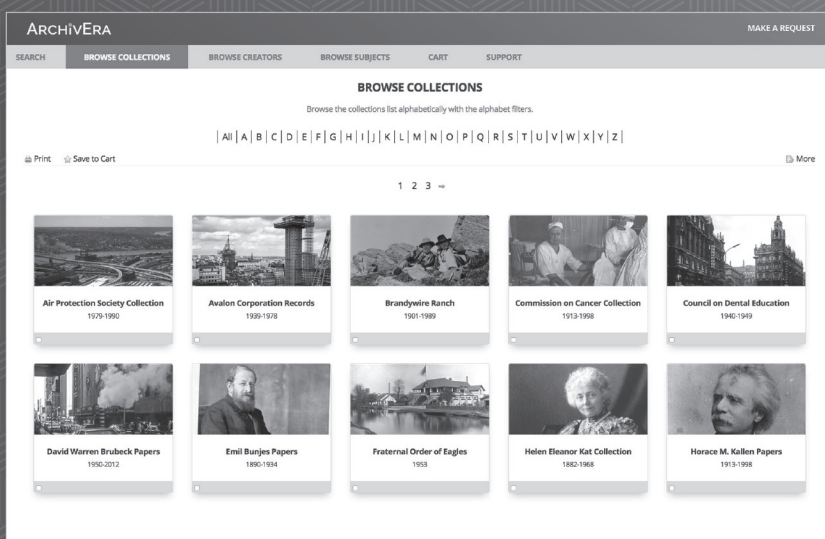


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Archivists @ HOME

Consulting in Place!

- Nick Connizzo

In many ways, life as a consulting archivist hasn't changed much during the pandemic. Working out of a home office is something with which, by now, many of us are quite familiar. I still collaborate with my colleagues almost exclusively through email, conference calls, and videoconferencing. Most of my work is collaborative through Google Docs. What's changed is everything else.

For some of the institutions with which I work, the pandemic has upended decades of practice. Archivists have been displaced, and both they and their communities don't have their usual access to their collections. As a digital archives consultant, most of my time is spent helping smaller institutions build their digital infrastructure. However, most of this requires long-term planning. These kinds of projects aren't hatched overnight. My clients have been focusing on doing what they can; at first, it was small projects that archivists and staff could take home. As the pandemic stretched on, the focus shifted to two things: the obvious need to build out digital infrastructure, and collecting and providing access to records specifically regarding the response to the pandemic.

The first step of my consulting process is defining and understanding the problem. However, given the environment, many of our problems have become difficult to define. Building a digital archive isn't easy when your institution is working well, but when your entire business model has to be adapted on the fly, it becomes even harder. Thus, there was a significant amount of collaborative refactoring of in-flight project plans and the creation of new ones. Among the obvious factors to consider have been budget, staff time, and access to physical materials (and to some digital resources located on-site). Less obvious factors that

need additional consideration are information security, due to increased traffic and/or newly-added web functionality, and communications.

One collaboration I'd like to highlight is my work with the Vermont Folklife Center (VFC) on their Listening in Place project <<https://www.vermontfolklifecenter.org/listening>>, a crowdsourced collection of sound including audio interviews, oral histories, and personal diaries created by average people and submitted to VFC. My role in this project was purely technological, and the problem was simply defined: how could a small institution like VFC put together the infrastructure to allow anyone from around the country to submit audio recordings?

Defined simply, VFC had these criteria:

- a) Allow anonymous submission (as creating accounts might be too onerous for some of the community)
- b) Allow collection of form data (most importantly for rights agreements)
- c) Not overburden their current server capacity
- d) Not overstretch their budgetary constraints
- e) Present custom branding (and preferably a recognizable weblink)

Given these constraints we initially investigated the feasibility of building a standalone website for this process, using webforms with captcha and PHP to upload files to a server. However, we quickly realized that we simply wouldn't be able to provide the necessary security—potentially hundreds of anonymous users uploading files to one's server. What could go wrong? We then decided to investigate different cloud platforms, as they already had security and file ingest capability. But many of these apps like Dropbox and Google Drive/Forms either required authentication or had limited tools for the budget conscious.

Eventually we settled on JotForm. With this platform we were able to:

- a) Embed a custom form in VFC's website
- b) Collect anonymous uploads and form submissions
- c) Limit the type and size of files to be uploaded
- d) Add captcha and other security measures to prevent malicious behavior
- e) Complete the work for a small fee or no fee

But the story is not about the tool—the tools come and go. The entire process (defining the problem, mapping the

requirements, looking for solutions, testing solutions, and iterating on design and implementation) was performed remotely and collaboratively. With the right tools, the work can continue like it did before the quarantines and lockdowns, and with the right approach, we can still accomplish great things together.

Pivoting to Born-Digital Processing While Working from Home

- *Camila Zorrilla Tessler*

When we were sent to work from home, I will admit to a selfish thought bubbling through all the fear of COVID-19: what was I possibly going to do with my time? I am an archivist who deals with primarily physical materials. Most of what I do happens at my processing table, and I love it. I had less than a week of work I could do without access to materials for what we initially thought might be a two-week long stint working from home.

I couldn't allow myself to be dragged like a stubborn mule into the new digital world. I didn't know, after all, how long we might be stuck at home. I will also be the first to admit that I wasn't good at pivoting like this. My struggle was that I wanted solid things, to read a letter while holding it in my hands. In born-digital processing, I felt that the content mattered less than the metadata. Every digital item felt like a minefield of potential places to make mistakes or to miss a critical element. I wasn't good at this kind of description, which invited impostor syndrome. If I wasn't good at born-digital description, touted as the future of my profession, what future would my career have?

Luckily for me, our department, and my unit especially, was ready to pivot to born-digital processing. My department set up working hours, with the intention of working through description that we were still in the process of learning. We all undertook learning Preservica, QuickView+, and Forensic Toolkit. This meant that our working hours were a mix of questions on description and technical support; there were as many questions about how to use a new piece of software as there were on how to apply DACS effectively to born-digital description. The use of Zoom meant that we could record explanations of programs and make them available for reference, which was ideal for when I forgot small steps or couldn't attend a working hour.

By collaboratively creating our new processing workflows, this also ensured that we pivoted quickly into born-digital processing. Because we were all working on it at the same time, we found that what we thought were strange exceptions were more common than we imagined. This allowed us to add these new instances to our processing manual.

Due to group working hours via Zoom with my department, I realized that we all found this work challenging and the struggle was not mine alone. Forming a community made me feel less isolated, made my questions feel less elementary, and helped me develop a new, more positive relationship with born-digital work.

Remote Internship during a Pandemic: How It All Worked Out

- *Elisa Graydon and Cassie Epes*

In December 2019, the Coast Guard Academy received a collection of scrapbooks from the family of Herbert Harris, who was a cadet in the 1940s and graduated early to serve in World War II. The Harris Collection is an important acquisition for the Coast Guard Academy, as first-person accounts of the Coast Guard Academy during that time period are rare. Because of the condition, age, and value of the collection, it was important to prioritize its processing and rehousing. Cassie Epes, a graduate student in history and library science at Simmons University, was scheduled to begin her internship through the university's archives internship program at the Academy during the spring 2020 semester, and it was decided that she would assist in processing the Harris Collection. We planned for her to work at the Academy to create an inventory and finding aid for the Harris Collection. As it turned out, that work could not happen in person, and she performed her internship remotely. The following is Cassie Epes's reflection on working with the Harris Collection and completing her internship remotely:

"By the end of the first (and only) day that I was able to work on-site at the Coast Guard Academy Archives and Special Collections, I was aware that the staff at the CGA Library were trying to work out a contingency plan in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Though it was still unclear at that point whether or not we would be able to return, Elisa suggested



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that we photograph all of the materials in the event that I would have to process the collection from home. Fortunately, we were able to utilize simple platforms like Google Photos and Google Slides to accession the photographs, which then made it possible for me to create a finding aid for the collection. While the finding aid may require revisions as the collection is physically processed, I was actually quite surprised by how much of it I was able to complete without physical access to the materials. With only about an hour and an iPhone, I was able to capture (almost) all of the information that I needed to complete my internship.

While I would have very much liked to work on-site, the unusual circumstances under which we were forced to operate gave me the flexibility to experiment with new ways of processing collections without physical access, a uniquely advantageous opportunity for a first-year graduate student with limited experience. Overall, I think that this crisis has compelled archivists to come up with new and innovative ways to carry out their functions remotely, many of which have the potential to be beneficial in the future. As students and professionals, archivists have much to gain from this experience and should continue to reevaluate the benefits of working remotely when possible. As a working, full-time graduate student I can say with confidence that working remotely actually enhanced the quality of the work that I was able to produce for CGA.”

There’s no substitute for in-person interaction. However, the outcomes worked for both the Coast Guard Academy Special Collections and Cassie Epes, who was able to complete her internship while also learning the fundamentals of working with archival collections. The work Epes produced was used immediately. Photographs from the Harris Collection were used in the 2020 virtual commencement to provide a connection to the past for the graduating cadets, who were unable to have an in-person graduation because of COVID-19, to the Class of 1945 whose time at the Coast Guard Academy was cut short because of World War II. ■

The NEA Newsletter Needs Your Help!

Help us make a vibrant newsletter that serves you.
Send your newsletter submissions and ideas to:

<newsletter@newenglandarchivists.org>

NEA Roundtable Updates

Teaching with Primary Sources Roundtable Reports on Summer Activities

It was a busy summer for the Teaching with Primary Sources Roundtable and its members. We continued our weekly kaffeeklatsches (held Thursdays at 11 a.m.), offering members a supportive space to check in with colleagues and to share plans for reopening and remote and hybrid teaching.

In June, members Molly Brown (Northeastern University) and Blake Spitz (University of Massachusetts Amherst) led the effort to develop our Anti-Racism Resource Bank for Teaching. We were very grateful for their leadership and labor.

Our Anti-Racism in Teaching Reading Group, led by roundtable chair Pam Hopkins (Tufts University), began on July 7 with chapter one of Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Our next book is bell hooks’ *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. The reading group meets every other week via Zoom.

On July 9, we welcomed Joe Schmidt, Maine Department of Education social studies specialist, who presented on his work in the K-12 space, touching on topics such as the Maine Learning Results for Social Studies, tools and resources teachers are using to access primary sources for their classrooms, and archivists as partners for teachers. We were grateful for his time and expertise. Great big thanks to roundtable member Heather Moran (Maine State Archives) for organizing the session!

To join or learn more about the TPS Roundtable, contact Pam Hopkins <psmhopkins@gmail.com>. ■

People

NEA member **Darwin H. Stapleton** recently released an e-book on urbanization, *A History of University Circle in Cleveland: Community, Philanthropy, and Planning*, published by MSL Academic Endeavors at Cleveland State University. ■

Inside NEA

FROM THE PRESIDENT

- Linda Hocking



This is an especially difficult year to write a letter in August that will be relevant in October, but there are a few things that will remain constant. One is your service to NEA. Yesterday the board held the summer executive Board Meeting via Zoom, and I was, as always, overwhelmed by the tremendous amount of volunteer effort devoted to running this organization. From newsletter content, to educational programs, conferences, and services, NEA's offerings are all brought to you by many hours of volunteer labor.

By now you will have seen several calls for service for open positions. If you have time and the interest, I urge you to consider a volunteer position or board service. NEA board meetings are open to the membership and will be held on Zoom for the foreseeable future. You are welcome to drop in or stay for the whole meeting. Meeting notifications and agendas will be posted to the listserv.

At the August Board Meeting, we created a list of action items to help move forward towards the goals laid out in the *Black Lives Matter: Archivists Must Do Better* <<https://newenglandarchivists.org/news/9019342>> statement issued on June 6, 2020. I am sure that as you read this, we are still working to advance this goal. NEA has committed to make real changes that will result in more accessibility and inclusion through improving representation at meetings, on the board, and on committees, and by continuing to devote meeting time to finding ways to be a more inclusive organization.

I am hopeful that those who are precariously employed are back at work and have a stable income, but I know that may not be the reality. You may have noticed that pricing

for webinars includes a bridge rate. The board also created a bridge rate for in-person workshops that will be in effect when they resume. We will continue to be mindful of ways we can adapt to meet our members' needs.

We may not be able to meet in person for a while, but we are fortunate to live in a time when we have tools that allow us to connect from wherever we are. We hope to use these to bring you the quality experiences you expect from NEA, and we may even find new and innovative tools and technologies that we will keep using in the future. ■



Save the Dates!

We're Going Virtual

The Spring 2021 Meeting Program Committee has decided to hold our annual spring meeting remotely the week of March 22–27, 2021.

The Spring 2021 Meeting theme, **Archives for a Changing World**, was inspired by the resiliency of the archives community. We pride ourselves on our ability to adapt to the demands of unexpected challenges and innovate solutions that build a stronger, more inclusive community. Let us seize this moment to examine and explore the ingenuity, resourcefulness, and curiosity that we as archives professionals bring to a world in a seemingly constant state of flux.

We look forward to sharing sessions on a variety of topics, including:

Anti-Racism | Crisis Management
 Social Justice | Professional Ethics | Self-Care
 Labor Practices/Professional Responsibilities
 Managing Remote Work | Rapid Response
 Collecting | Managing Change | Climate Change

Questions? Please contact the Program Committee chair, Rachel Jirka, at <rjrjirka@amherst.edu>.

Visit NEA online at:

<www.newenglandarchivists.org>

News and Notes

CONNECTICUT

Connecticut State Library Receives \$100,000 NHPRC Grant

The Connecticut State Library announced that the Connecticut State Archives has been awarded a \$100,000 grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC).

The grant will support a two-year project, “Uncovering Hidden Resources in New Haven Court Records, 1700–1855,” to enhance access to judicial records held in the state archives. The project continues the work funded by two earlier grants to identify records related to interactions with the court system by underrepresented groups, especially enslaved persons, free persons of color, and indigenous persons. The richness of court records provides additional insights into these communities.

The project will digitize case files, create a specialized finding aid, and create a database for cases related to these communities. It will also identify court records on selected subjects related to legal history, family history and genealogy, local history, and the history of Connecticut, as well as regional and national research interests.

Connecticut Historical Society Awarded Three Statewide Grants

The Connecticut Historical Society (CHS) announced it has been awarded three statewide grants totaling \$71,729.

A \$15,000 grant from the CT Humanities relief grant program, with funding provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to preserve jobs and help support organizations negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, will be used by the CHS for operating support.

A \$4,729 grant from the CT Humanities Quick Grant

program will enable the CHS to produce 3D-HD tours of five exhibitions. Funding will be used to create virtual presentations of two permanent exhibitions and online tours of the CHS’s three latest temporary exhibitions.

A \$52,000 grant from the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority (CHEFA) will be used to replace the failing roof of the 1971 wing of the CHS’s building complex with a thirty-year-guaranteed EPDM roof.

Connecticut Historical Society Awarded IMLS Grant

The Connecticut Historical Society (CHS) announced it has been granted \$238,604 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to inventory, rehouse, catalog, and digitize its Connecticut Cultural Heritage Arts Program (CCHAP) collection. Founded in 1991, CCHAP is a fieldwork-based program that employs original research in partnership with artists and communities to strengthen community-based resources.

The project will improve all aspects of the care, condition, management, access to, and use of the CCHAP archive. Museum staff will work with a project archivist and data technician to rehouse objects in the collection and create comprehensive object files and digital catalog records. Video and audio components will be digitized to preserve that collected material. Digital records will be available for public access through the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA).

MASSACHUSETTS

Suffrage School Offers Digital Teaching Modules with Primary Sources

In honor of the centennial of the 1920 ratification of the Constitution’s 19th Amendment, which declared that the right to vote could not be denied “on account of sex,” the Radcliffe Institute’s Schlesinger Library at Harvard University has invited researchers, writers, and teachers to create a series of digital teaching modules. Each lesson in the Suffrage School connects to the library’s Long 19th Amendment Project, tackling the tangled history of gender and American citizenship, and includes a short video in which the instructor shares a primary source from the

Schlesinger's collections. Lessons include a link to the digitized documents, questions to guide further reflection, and additional readings. For more information, visit <<https://www.radcliffe.harvard.edu/suffrage-school>>.

MBLC Held Virtual Symposium on Special Collections

On July 23, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), in collaboration with the Massachusetts Library System, hosted a virtual "Special Collections Symposium for Smaller Libraries." The event was moderated by Evan Knight, preservation specialist at the MBLC.

Local public memory collections provide important, unique, and sustainable opportunities to interpret a community's contemporary experiences as they change over time. Experts shared their strategies for addressing the challenges of building, preserving, and sharing these collections, especially among smaller libraries. The event was targeted toward library workers, librarians, archivists, and collections volunteers with various levels of experience.

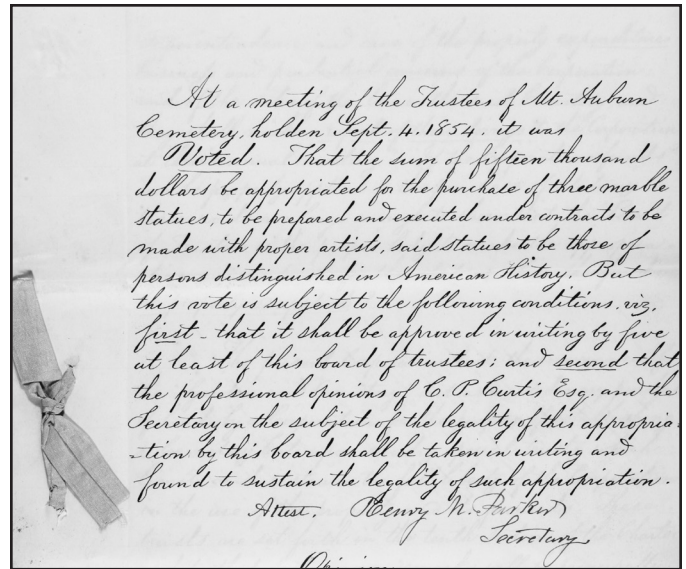
Presenters were Ken Gloss, proprietor of the Brattle Book Shop; Lisa Conathan, head of special collections at Williams College Libraries; Mike Kelly, head of archives and special collections at Amherst College; Cyndi Harbeson, head of special collections at the Jones Library; and Sara Trotta, librarian at the Congregational Library & Archives.

View the recording at <<https://vimeo.com/441103615>>.

Mount Auburn Cemetery Awarded NEH Grant for Transcription Project

America's first rural cemetery, founded in 1831, Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge has been awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant in support of an innovative new project that is making its rich history accessible to people around the world.

Spurred by the pandemic that caused the cemetery to temporarily close its gates, NEA member Meg Winslow, Mount Auburn's curator of historical collections and archives, launched a unique project that invites volunteers



In September 1854, Henry M. Parker recorded the Mount Auburn trustees' vote to purchase three marble statues of "persons distinguished in American History." The statues were commissioned by Mount Auburn for Bigelow Chapel and today are in the collection of the Harvard Art Museums. *Courtesy of Mount Auburn Cemetery.*

to transcribe nineteenth-century documents that tell the story of the cemetery. Anyone with a computer and internet connection can participate remotely using the FromThePage crowdsourced transcription platform.

Like other nonprofits, Mount Auburn has seen its fundraising revenue decline in the economic downturn. Support from the NEH emergency relief grant for cultural organizations, distributed through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, allows Mount Auburn to continue the transcription project, avoid furloughs, and engage with its community of dedicated supporters and volunteers.

For more information, visit Mount Auburn Cemetery online at <<http://www.mountauburn.org>>.

Project SAVE Archives Announces Online Photographic Collections Database

Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives, based in Watertown, launched an online collections database that provides worldwide, searchable access to hundreds of photographs, meeting demand for primary sources related to the Armenian community. View the digital collections at <<https://www.projectsava.org/gallery>>.



Kindergarten graduation class, Armenian Girls' High School, Adapazar, Turkey, 1904, photographer unknown. Courtesy of Arousiag Avedian Kashmanian and Marie Bedikian, Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives.

In particular, the missionary collection brings attention to the Adana massacres of 1909, which are less well known than the Armenian Genocide of 1915 to 1923; the contributions of American missionaries and relief workers who brought the ideals of democracy and universal education; women missionaries and relief workers who took on important roles such as physicians; and descendants of both missionaries and Armenians, enabling them to visualize how their ancestors may have lived.

Since 1975, Project SAVE Archives has brought to light the culture and history of Armenians by making photographs and their stories, which otherwise would be lost, destroyed, or forgotten, available for public and educational use.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Portsmouth Athenaeum Seeks Volunteers for School Records Transcription Project

While initially put on hold due to COVID-19, the Portsmouth Athenaeum is moving forward in its collaborative effort with the Portsmouth Public Library (PPL) and New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS). Earlier this year, NEHGS began digitizing the historic records of the Portsmouth School Department; the first set of records has been scanned and is ready to be indexed.

The Portsmouth school records, dating from 1846 to 1935, consist of 122 volumes containing valuable genealogical and historical information about the history of education in Portsmouth. The scanned and indexed records will be made available online via the NEHGS website, <<https://www.americanancestors.org>>.

Although an in-person informational session for volunteers had to be canceled, the staff at NEHGS is remotely providing training about the indexing process, and transcription is also done remotely. To volunteer, contact Rachel Adams at NEHGS and specify that you are interested in working on the Portsmouth school records project, <Rachel.Adams@nehgs.org>.

RHODE ISLAND

RIAMCO Participating in “Building a National Finding Aid Network”

The California Digital Library received a \$982,175 grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) for a two-year research and demonstration project to build the foundation for a national archival finding aid network. This work will be undertaken in collaboration with OCLC and the University of Virginia Library, in partnership with statewide/regional aggregators and LYRASIS (ArchivesSpace).

This project addresses the challenge that all researchers face: the significant barriers to locating relevant archival materials across the vast and unevenly supported field of cultural heritage institutions. It is rooted in the goal of providing inclusive, comprehensive, and persistent access to finding aids by laying the foundation for a national finding aid network available to all contributors and researchers.

The Rhode Island Archives and Manuscript Collections Online (RIAMCO), a statewide aggregator, is partici-

NEA Has Eleven Roundtables!

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pating as a partner. For more information about the consortium, visit <<http://www.riamco.org>>.

See the project wiki at <<https://confluence.ucop.edu/display/NAFAN>>.

OTHER NEWS

SAA Foundation Announces Archival Workers Emergency Fund

In April, the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Foundation announced the creation of the Archival Workers Emergency Fund (AWEF) to support archival workers experiencing financial hardship during the COVID-19 crisis. Grants of up to \$1,000 will be awarded to financially vulnerable and at-risk workers.

As repositories have been forced to temporarily close or institute remote work in response to the novel coronavirus pandemic, many archival workers—particularly those in contingent positions—are facing significant financial and employment challenges. The AWEF will help to meet urgent financial needs. Developed based on a proposal from an ad hoc group of concerned archivists, the fund will be administered through the SAA Foundation, which is providing seed money of \$15,000. Tax-deductible donations to the AWEF are being accepted.

Applications will be considered on a rolling basis up to December 31, 2020. Visit <<https://tinyurl.com/yyg76hs5>>.

Season Four of SAA's *Archives in Context* Podcast Released

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) released season four of *Archives in Context*, a podcast highlighting archival literature and technologies, and most importantly, the people behind them. Cosponsored by SAA's Publications Board, *American Archivist* Editorial Board, and Committee on Public Awareness, the podcast explores the often moving and important work of memory keeping. Season four features interviews with the following people:

- **Lae'l Hughes-Watkins** and **Tamar Chute** on Project STAND (Student Activism Now Documented);
- **Lydia Tang** on her collaborative work to revise the *Guidelines for Accessible Archives for People with Disabilities*;
- **Ashley Farmer** on her viral essay “Archiving While Black”;
- **Trevor Owens** on his award-winning book *The Theory and Craft of Digital Preservation*;
- **Liza Posas** on the workbook she is developing for the *Protocols for Native American Archival Materials*;
- **Jennifer Johnson** on her contribution to *Leading and Managing Archives and Manuscripts Programs* in SAA's Archival Fundamentals Series III; and
- **Courtney Dean** and **Grace Danico** on *Acid Free*, the online magazine of the Los Angeles Archivists Collective.

Listen to the full season via Google Play, Spotify, iTunes, and the *Archives in Context* website <<https://archivesincontext.archivists.org>>. ■



Portrait of Bishop James Augustine Healy (1830–1900), the first bishop in the United States of African ancestry. He was born in Georgia to a man from Ireland and an enslaved woman of mixed race. Healy and his nine siblings were enslaved in Georgia until the end of the Civil War. He was appointed as the second bishop of Portland, Maine, in 1875. *Courtesy of the Diocese of Manchester.*

Reviews

Review of the Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) certificate program

–Reviewed by Rona Razon

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) describes the Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) curriculum and certificate program as designed to educate and train archives professionals, regardless of experience level and job responsibilities, about the “appropriate practices for appraising, capturing, preserving, and providing access to electronic records” <<https://www2.archivists.org/prof-education/das>>. The DAS curriculum is divided into four tiers of study: Foundational; Tactical and Strategic; Tools and Services; and Transformational. On-site workshops and webinars in each level of study progress from introductory themes such as Basics of Managing Digital Records to advanced, managerial topics such as Assessment and Certification of Digital Repositories. Anyone who is interested in earning a certificate is required to take nine courses within twenty-four months, obtain a passing grade for each course exam (made available to all attendees at the end of each workshop or webinar), and complete the comprehensive exam within five months of completing the required courses. DAS courses are also available to individuals who simply want to keep abreast of the evolving field and/or become acquainted with the growing digital preservation community, without committing to the full program.

I decided to pursue the DAS certificate in 2013, rather than the certification offered by the Academy of Certified Archivists, because I wanted to hone my foundational knowledge in digital preservation. Although the Department of Library and Information Science at Catholic University offered courses on information systems and digital libraries when I was a graduate student between 2007 and 2009, the curriculum lacked attention to the issues surrounding the management and preservation of digital assets. Similarly, while digitization became a necessary trend in our professional discipline, discussions on overseeing and implementing digital preservation were, at that time, largely confined to established organizations, such as the Library of Congress, and to specific details like digitization specifications, systems, and equipment. Overall, I wanted to satisfy the gap in my education and previous work expe-

riences and to gradually familiarize myself with the sprouting field of digital preservation, curation, and stewardship.

To take full advantage of what I was learning from the program, I applied the relevant concepts and practices in the e-records management initiative that I worked on collaboratively with former colleagues at Dumbarton Oaks between 2013 and 2015. The primary goals for the initiative were to reappraise and centralize all e-records from multiple external hard drives into a local area network (LAN), to define the records’ function and retention schedule, and to standardize the staff’s saving and storing practices. I found these courses particularly useful: Arrangement and Description of Electronic Records (Parts I & II), Appraisal of Electronic Records, and Accessioning and Ingest of Electronic Records. I learned about the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model and the National Digital Stewardship Alliance (NDSA) Levels of Digital Preservation, which gave me a framework for envisioning a workflow for digital preservation and to design a storage architecture that emphasized a division of retrieval between archival master files and access copies in the LAN. Fixity and checksums were also some of the activities that I learned about and subsequently applied at work, particularly during the process of transferring the e-records from external hard drives to the LAN. Although there were still moments of uncertainty during the project, even with guidance obtained from the DAS courses, my former colleagues and I felt encouraged to move forward with the initiative. We were motivated to strengthen our relationship with the IT team and to understand and abide by the existing digital preservation standards or best practices, even in the absence of a digital preservation program in the organization.

SAA’s DAS curriculum and certificate program proved to be advantageous not only for my own professional development but also to the colleagues whom I worked with during the e-records management initiative at Dumbarton Oaks. The courses broadened my perspective on archives management and preservation—managing digital assets is not significantly different from the way analog collections are appraised, processed, and preserved. Although digital preservation may continue to be an intimidating topic to me and other archivists, the DAS program has definitely helped me understand how to steadily approach the complexities of digital preservation, even with insufficient resources, just as we would approach an unending backlog of paper collections. Finally, I appreciate the active learning

approach of the program, with the course options, exams, and certificate renewal process, because it encouraged me to take a proactive attitude when reviewing and applying the lessons, tools, and best practices that I learned.

Review of Archive-It <<https://archive-it.org/>>

–Reviewed by Jane Kelly

Archive-It is a hosted web archiving platform that allows you to collect, describe, preserve, and provide access to archived web content. If your workplace has considered web archiving, Archive-It has almost certainly been proposed as one possible tool. Archive-It uses a crawler, also called a spider or robot, to “crawl” content. The user sets parameters to tell the crawler what to capture. These parameters might tell the crawler that you want to capture a single web page or an entire website, that it should run for one hour or three days, or that it should have a hard limit on how much data is collected.

Once the crawler has captured the content, you can view the results in the Wayback Machine. The Wayback Machine takes the files that were captured during the crawl and reconstructs the content as it looked on the date that you ran the crawl. Archive-It has a graphical user interface, a GUI, that allows users to do this collecting work easily. It may take some time to understand the reports for each crawl, which tell you what was captured and what was not, but tweaking the parameters of your crawls is easy.

I have used Archive-It at Harvard Law School Library’s Historical & Special Collections, the Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America at Harvard, and Tufts University’s Digital Collections and Archives. At Harvard Law School Library, I collected student organization websites <<https://archive-it.org/collections/8420>> to document student life on campus. We sent each student organization a notification email to inform them that their website had been added to our Student Organizations collection and provided information about collecting other records. As a result, several organizations followed up to discuss donating records.

Following this project, I worked as the web archiving assistant for the grant-funded #metoo Digital Media Collection <<https://archive-it.org/collections/10866>> at

Schlesinger Library. I learned how to use Archive-It most efficiently in this role. Working on a large collection taught me how to crawl sites and use scoping rules in broad strokes: I set hard data limits and blocked many hosts to keep data collection as low as possible.

Working on this material also taught me about self-preservation and self-care in archival work. Working with content that is emotionally taxing takes a toll, and I quickly established a few strategies. I took frequent breaks and identified work that would not be emotionally draining to break up my time. These kinds of strategies are important for any collecting initiative that requires us to work with difficult material.

Currently, I contribute to web archiving work at Tufts’ Digital Collections and Archives, where we are responsible for collecting institutional websites and those that support manuscript collections. Since March 2020, we have also collected content to document the university’s response to COVID-19 <<https://archive-it.org/collections/13686>>. We are looking for content that is very recent, and we must capture many single web pages on a one-time basis. We do not know when we will stop adding to this collection.

One of the most challenging parts about Archive-It is troubleshooting crawls that don’t look the way you would expect. Although many websites take only a few clicks to capture, other sites, especially those with a lot of embedded media and content that relies on user input, may seem impossible to crawl. In other cases, crawling a simple website may result in many gigabytes of data. Investigating the crawl reports is important at this stage, and you can look at “hosts” to see where data comes from. You might discover, for instance, that the crawler has captured a lot of content from Google Video, but there is no relevant video on the site that you need to capture. Simply blocking content from Google Video in the next crawl can address this type of issue.

Access is another challenge. The Archive-It website is typically the point of access, but how do you make sure users know that material is there? Some institutions create MARC records in their OPAC for each collection in Archive-It, while others might add links to Archive-It from a finding aid or their institutional website. Each institution will need to situate Archive-It within their existing discovery systems so that users can find the collections alongside other archival material.

From the Archive-It website users can search within an institution's collections. Full-text search is available, but the question of metadata remains. How much metadata is enough? At what level is material described? The URL? The collection? Is the metadata in Archive-It duplicated in other discovery systems? The answers to these questions vary widely across institutions and will depend on staff time and expertise, size of the web archive, and user needs. Some guidance can be found in OCLC's "Descriptive Metadata for Web Archives: Recommendations of the OCLC Research Library Partnership Web Archiving Metadata Working Group" <<https://tinyurl.com/y2yxtnq8>>.

Here are some tips and tricks to help get you started:

- Search the help documentation. Known issues are listed, but may not be up to date. The web changes constantly, which means Archive-It staff frequently have to adjust their tools and documentation.
- Submit tickets. There is ample assistance when you run into trouble, but make sure you fill out the ticket as completely as possible: include all the relevant links to crawl reports and the Wayback Machine.
- Run test crawls. There is no risk here; you won't accidentally use your whole data budget if you run a test crawl. Experiment with time limits, data limits, and scoping rules.

- A common challenge is that it is hard to keep track of what you have tried to do in order to troubleshoot a tricky crawl. Consider what kind of tracking spreadsheet or database is useful for your purposes and whether that documentation is more time consuming than it's worth.

My main advice is to stop worrying and get started! It can be easy to get sidetracked with questions of metadata, access, and collecting scope. When so much web content disappears before it can be preserved, it's best to preserve content while you still have the chance. URLs in Archive-It can be set to private so that you can crawl content without letting users discover it, which can give you time to make other decisions. Web archiving is complex, but I would advise against letting the perfect be the enemy of the good. If your institution is not grappling with tough ethical questions around web archiving, as is frequently the case when documenting current events, I encourage you to get started. Archive-It support and the growing community of experienced web archivists across the region is here to support you along the way! ■



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WHO'S MISSING FROM THIS TABLE?

About the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, social justice, and diversity within the archives profession and NEA.

Black Lives Matter: Social Justice, Anti-Racist, and Inclusive Archives Projects, Organizations, and Collectives

By the Inclusion and Diversity Committee

Since Spring 2015, the IDC has edited “Who’s Missing from This Table?” to explore issues of inclusion within NEA and the profession as a whole. From the beginning, Anna Clutterbuck-Cook, NEA’s inaugural inclusion and diversity coordinator (who encouraged NEA to support the creation of what is now the Inclusion and Diversity Committee), used “Who’s Missing” to “feature contributors challenging us to consider how welcoming we are to the un- and underemployed among us; what we might learn from grassroots political organizing; and the realities of systemic racial injustice within our professional community.”*

This table represents the archives field. Bernice King (@BerniceKing) tweeted on June 17, 2020, “Even the statement, ‘Let’s invite more Black people to the table,’ implies ownership of the table and control of who is invited. Racism is about power” <<https://tinyurl.com/y2fg6o7a>>. Even if we invite more people to the table, or point out who is missing at the table, we need to examine and dismantle the systems of oppression within archives and the archives field to build a new table.

Archivists and archival organizations contribute to a professional culture that is largely populated by white people, fails to retain Black people, Indigenous people, and People of Color (BIPOC) as invaluable colleagues, and relies heavily on precarious labor. Archivists have the power to shape historical narratives, to choose what to preserve, to describe collections, to control access to historical evidence, to separate materials from communities and creators, and the privilege to perpetuate myths of archival neutrality.

This month’s column uses the Inclusion and Diversity Committee’s space to highlight social justice, anti-racist, and inclusive projects, organizations, and collectives. We invite you to explore these projects, and to explore our compiled resources to work toward a just society and more transparent, accountable archival practices: ***Anti-Racist and Anti-Oppressive Readings and Resources for Archivists*** <<https://tinyurl.com/yyqjhacr>>.

The Blackivists <<https://www.theblackivists.com/>>

“A collective of trained Black archivists who prioritize Black cultural heritage preservation and memory work.”

The Blackivists is an organization of Black archivists whose mission is to “provide professional expertise on cultural heritage archiving and preservation practices to document historically underdocumented communities.” The founding members came together in Chicago in 2018 to establish an organization that would address the gaps in the city’s historical record.

Recognizing that they each had specific skill sets in archiving and memory work, the Blackivists used their individual community networks to connect with organizations and people that wanted to document the city’s history, particularly the underrepresented Black community. Group members have worked as consultants on projects, including an oral history project with the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party and documenting the Black performing arts group Honey Pot Performance. Their goal is to prioritize the collecting and care of archival materials that could fill the gaps we find at larger institutional repositories.

In recent months, the anti-racism protests occurring across the country and throughout the world have spurred archivists and activists to document them. The Blackivists have played an integral part in educating others in how to safely and equitably document these events. The Blackivists

Visit NEA online at:

<www.newenglandarchivists.org>

recognize that a crucial aspect of this work is to protect protesters from additional police violence both now and in the future.

We Here <<https://www.wehere.space/>>

We Here seeks to provide a safe and supportive community for Black and Indigenous folks and People of Color (BIPOC) in LIS professions and educational programs. We Here started as a private Facebook group for BIPOC in late 2016 and has grown to include private groups on Slack and Google Groups. We Here's private communities provide crucial peer mentorship for BIPOC on everything from job applications and interview tips to technical help, networking, and advice and solidarity when navigating primarily white institutions in our primarily white field. They also produce two newsletters: a private newsletter for job opportunities and a public newsletter with news.

We Here strives to recognize, discuss, and intervene in systemic social issues that plague our profession. To that end, they have developed the We Here Community School, a learning community with opportunities for personal and professional development based in anti-racism pedagogy. The first course, *Just What Is Critical Race Theory and What's It Doing in LIS?*, was taught by Sofia Leung and Jorge López-McKnight in June and July of 2020. More offerings including events, webinars, courses, and digital downloads are in the works.

You can follow We Here's critically important work by becoming a subscriber on their website and following them on Twitter and Instagram.

Project STAND <<https://standarchives.com/>>

Project STAND (Student Activism Now Documented) is a grassroots project to create a centralized digital space highlighting and providing access to archival collections about student activism. Project STAND's goal is to foster conversations and provide resources for the ethical documentation of contemporary and past student movements, especially activism by marginalized or underdocumented student populations. The project aims to highlight the struggles, victories, and challenges of student movements throughout history as well as provide resources and best practice guidelines for safely and ethically documenting current activism.

Project STAND was founded in 2016 by Lae'l Hughes-

Watkins, university archivist at Kent State University, and Tamar Chute, university archivist at the Ohio State University. The project has grown significantly beyond its original intention of bringing together academic institutions across Ohio to discuss ways of sharing student activism collections and materials on their campuses. Featuring collections from over seventy academic institutions around the country, Project STAND provides access to digital and analog primary sources from more than 175 years of social justice movements, protests, and other student activism.

Project STAND's work goes beyond providing a centralized hub for accessing collections about student activism. In 2019 and 2020, the project held four community-building symposia at Clark Atlanta University, University of Rhode Island, University of Chicago, and Arizona State University. In addition to helping to create a network of archivists, activists, scholars, and other community members, the symposia provided forums to begin discussing the complexities of documenting, archiving, and preserving the activism of students. Videos from the symposium sessions are available to watch on Project STAND's website. The project has also developed the *Archiving Student Activism Toolkit* <<https://standarchives.com/project-stand-toolkit/>>, which provides resources and best

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practice guidelines for archivists documenting student activism. In recent months Project STAND has begun compiling official statements made by academic institutions, students, and student organizations following the murders of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and George Floyd.

Project STAND was awarded NEA's Archival Advocacy Award in 2020 <<https://tinyurl.com/yy64cpma>> for its role in ensuring that the work of student activists, especially those from traditionally marginalized communities and groups, will be represented, recognized, and valued in academic archives and institutional narratives.

Documenting the Now <<https://www.docnow.io/>>

Documenting the Now (DocNow) builds and supports tools and community practice on the ethical collection, use, and preservation of social media. They encourage archivists supporting each other in this work. For instance, they put out a call, *Archivists to Support Activists* <<https://tinyurl.com/y4h4sboo>>, where archivists could provide their names and services to help those who were trying to document the police violence at protests in the wake of George Floyd's murder.

DocNow started in 2014 in the midst of the protests surrounding the killing of Michael Brown, an unarmed Black teenager in Ferguson, Missouri. At the SAA annual meeting, discussions revolved around the importance of capturing the dialogue that was unfurling on Twitter as well as the web and video produced across the web around these protests. This led Bergis Jules, archivist and scholar, and Ed Summers, research faculty at the Maryland Institute of Technology, to collaborate. DocNow started with two key goals: the first to develop open-source tools that allow researchers, archivists, and the community to collect, analyze, and preserve social media postings; and the second to cultivate a conversation around the effective and ethical use of social media content.

The project has grown and developed; current collaborators are Shift Design Inc., the University of Maryland, and the University of Virginia. The team has developed several tools, including DocNow, to help with the appraisal of social media; Twarc, which scrapes Twitter; and Social Humans, a set of labels for ethically labeling and sharing social data. A white paper written in 2018 by Jules, Summers, and Vernon Mitchell Jr. titled "Ethical Considerations for Archiving Social Media Content Generated by Contemporary Social Movements: Challenges, Opportunities, and Recommendations" <[\[tinyurl.com/y2n7qvnw\]\(https://tinyurl.com/y2n7qvnw\)> outlines the ethical issues in collecting social media content and provides recommendations for archivists working with social media.](https://</p>
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Texas After Violence

<<https://texasafterviolence.org/>>

The Texas After Violence Project (TAVP) is a multifaceted archival endeavor focused on restorative justice and the documentation of violence committed against individuals and communities in Texas, particularly in regards to the death penalty, the criminal justice system, and the carceral state. For over a decade, the project has done reparative, liberatory memory work, including the collection of oral histories, photographs, case files, artwork, and other documentation of trauma. While a collaborative relationship with University of Texas Libraries has made many materials collected by TAVP available in the Human Rights Documentation Initiative repository, recent funding received from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation will enable TAVP to build and maintain their own digital archive.

Among TAVP's participatory projects is their most recent effort, *Sheltering Justice*, which focuses on the experiences of those at the intersection of COVID-19 and mass incarceration. Ongoing projects include *Death Penalty and Trauma Therapy*, which has produced advocacy efforts and extensive mental health resources. The project's work to ethically produce and preserve documentary research that centers dialogue and human experiences.

The project also offers trainings on documenting state violence, conducting oral history interviews, and performing community-based archival work. A grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services will help TAVP continue their work to build e-learning resources, but the project also relies on volunteers and interns to help keep the project going, so there are chances to become involved with this important work! TAVP is a nonprofit organization. You can learn more about their work by following them on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and Vimeo.

The Inclusion and Diversity Committee includes Rosemary K. J. Davis, Rose Oliveira, Stephanie Bredbenner, Joan Ilacqua, Michelle Chiles, and Gaia Cloutier. ■

Note: Anna J. Clutterbuck-Cook, "Who's Missing From This Table?," *NEA Newsletter* 42, no. 2 (April 2015): 8–9.

NEA Board Member Spotlight



Name:

Michael Dello Iacono

Board member title:

Treasurer

Affiliated institution:

Suffolk University

Job title or career stage:

University records manager, mid-career

How did you become interested in the archival field?

I think I've always wanted to be an archivist, even before I knew what it was! When I was growing up in Everett, Massachusetts, I used to hang out after school in the History Room at the Shute Memorial Library and pore through their small collection of old cookbooks, photos of the city in the early 1900s, and even things like city council meeting records. It fascinated me, and when I found out one could do this for a living, I was hooked.

What are some of your focuses and interests in the archival field?

I really enjoy outreach, community-building activities, creating exhibits, and anything that showcases our treasures and brings more awareness of the value of archives to the general public. I love talking about archives and connecting with people who are unfamiliar with what we do.

What is your role on the board and what are your responsibilities?

The NEA Treasurer is responsible for managing and reporting on the financial assets of the organization, developing annual budgets for board approval, paying bills and issuing checks, submitting proper tax and yearly financial reports to Massachusetts and federal authorities, and generally maintaining NEA's financial health and fiscal responsibility.

What are you looking forward to about being on the board?

I've had many roles over the years—newsletter editor, rep-at-large, registration/meeting coordinator, mentor, panelist, moderator—but as treasurer I am looking forward to learning more about the less “glamorous” internal workings of NEA.

What do you hope to accomplish while on the board?

To learn more about QuickBooks, our accounting software. There's a bit of a learning curve for me in this role, so I hope I adapt quickly and make no errors!

What do you see as the most pressing challenge for archives? Also for NEA?

Aside from the ever-present challenge of dealing with digital records, I've always felt that advocacy and outreach are essential functions that increase awareness of the role of archivists and how we can be of service to the general public as well as to historians and scholars. The larger our audience, the wider our message will spread, which (hopefully) translates into more support for archival institutions.

What's an interesting fact about you or an unexpected talent or interest? Alternatively, what would you do on your ideal day off?

Last year, two friends and I received a Massachusetts Cultural Council grant to create Beverly Talks, a podcast of interviews with residents of Beverly, Massachusetts (the town where I live). The first season of the podcast recently launched with fifteen interviews revealing unique life stories. The second season launch was delayed due to the pandemic, so we hope to be back in the studio recording commentary and posting episodes in early 2021. The Beverly Public Library will preserve the oral histories in its permanent archival collections. I'm very proud to have done something like this and very happy that it's successful enough to continue. And please listen if you like podcasts <<https://beverlytalks.com/>>.

What are your hopes for the archival profession?

In general, I hope we can more effectively translate our value as archivists into the power to advocate for support at the highest levels possible. If we were able to spend less time finding resources, money, and staff, we could focus more on making our collections available globally, strengthening the diversity of our holdings, and educating the public on our value. ■

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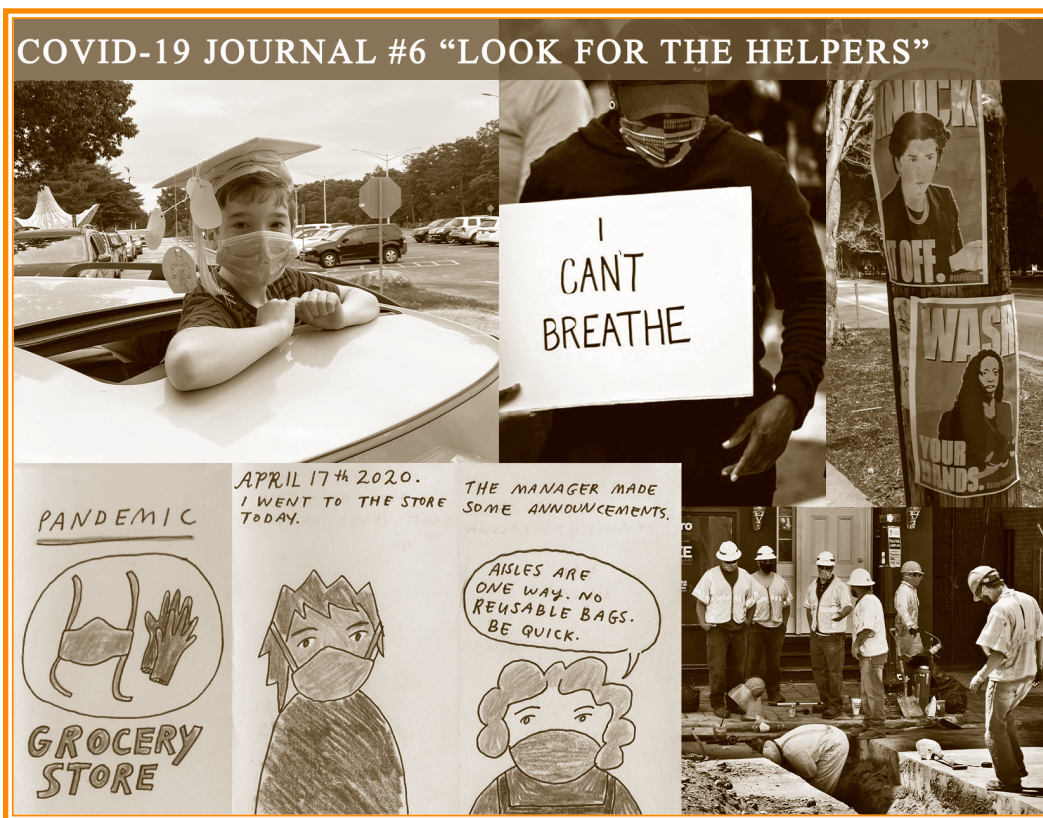
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Mosaic of contributions to the Rhode Island COVID-19 Archive, a crowdsourced public digital archive documenting life during the pandemic, hosted by the Providence Public Library and the Rhode Island Historical Society. Included here are: “Drive Through Graduation HBS” by Martha Kuhlman; “COVID-19 Journal #6 ‘Look for the Helpers’” by Lfj Gill; “I Can’t Breathe” by Stephanie Georgia, from *Providence Diary*, edited by Lisa Limer; “Masked Crew Perform Road Repairs” by Alan Roseman; “A Minicomic About Grocery Store Shopping” by Julia Gualtieri; and “Photo of Two Posters on a Telephone Pole at Night” by Dragan Gill. *Courtesy of the Providence Public Library and the Rhode Island Historical Society.*