OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

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2015 Society of American Archivists Presidential address
(http://americanarchivist.org/doi/full/10.17723/0360-9081.79.1.6)

• “…talking about the ‘why’ is what leads us to be inspired about what we do and then to inspire others to understand, value, and support it…Archives have impact, archives matter – and it is up to us to show people the truth of that, to give them the opportunity and benefit of what archives can do.”
If books are dead, how can libraries be more popular than ever? McGill Library is hosting a colloquium exploring how libraries – and the oldest and most rare of their holdings – can increasingly become the heart of university campuses and community hubs in the 21st century.
Beyond the four walls – special collections and community engagement

- Jonathan Bengtson, University Librarian, University of Victoria
  - intentionality
  - create avenues to open up Special Collections and Archives to the community
  - the institutional mission
  - geography matters

Engaging the University Community

- Tim Pyatt, Dean of the Library, Wake Forest University
  - Creative uses of collections (beyond just the traditional classroom and research settings)
  - Take the collections to the community (when possible)
  - Highlight the value of institutional records through alumni engagement and support of campus anniversaries
  - Use Archives as evidence to support administrative decisions
Mission

We promote university and individual success through service and collaboration.

Vision

Strategic partners providing innovative solutions.
George Mason University – A university for the world

Mission – Who we are and why we do what we do

A public, comprehensive, research university established by the Commonwealth of Virginia in the National Capital Region, we are an innovative and inclusive academic community committed to creating a more just, free, and prosperous world.

The Mason idea – Our core institutional characteristics

- **Innovative** = We question current thinking and try new ideas. We honor time-tested academic principles while striving to create new forms of education that serve our students better and new paths of research that can uncover solutions to the world's greatest challenges.

- **Diverse** = We bring together a multitude of people and ideas in everything that we do. Our culture of inclusion, our multidisciplinary approach, and our global perspective, make us more effective educators and scholars.

- **Entrepreneurial** = We put ideas into action. We educate students to create as well as carry out jobs; become agents of positive change; and add value through government or business, for profit or nonprofit organizations, academia or the arts. We pursue discoveries that can make a difference in the world. We help our community thrive socially, economically and culturally.

- **Accessible** = We are an open and welcoming community. We partner with public and private organizations in our region and around the world. We proactively engage with our community. We define our success by how many talented students with potential we serve, not how many we leave out.
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)

“The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at George Mason University offers intellectual and cultural experiences in a welcoming atmosphere to Northern Virginia residents in their retirement years.”
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- Civil Rights events in Metro DC area in 1968
  - Faculty participation
  - OLLI members and Mason community
  - Increased attendance
  - Collection development contact
CIVIL RIGHTS PANEL DISCUSSION
CIVIL RIGHTS PANEL EXHIBIT TOUR
Oh, Joy Unbounded
A Celebration of Gilbert and Sullivan

http://gilbertandsullivan2017.gmu.edu/
MAISON OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Oh, Joy Unbounded
A Celebration of Gilbert and Sullivan
JMU OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT: FILIPINO ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION CELEBRATION
JMU OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT: FILIPINO ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION CELEBRATION
Fall Semester 2014
Digital Rhetoric course
Student-directed project to create a prototype digital archive documenting life in the Shenandoah Valley, both past and present.

Special Collections materials used:

-- 1855 Cookbook
-- Urban Renewal Photograph album
-- Oral history interviews of Shenandoah National Park residents

Public presentation at public library
Uncovering Urban Renewal project:
http://sites.jmu.edu/shenandoahlivingarchive/uncovering-urban-renewal/

Turning the Page project:
http://sites.jmu.edu/shenandoahlivingarchive/prototype/turning-the-page/
SHENANDOAH LIVING ARCHIVE PROTOTYPE
CELEBRATING SIMMS COLLABORATION
CELEBRATING SIMMS
COLLABORATION WITH SPECIAL
COLLECTIONS

Fall 2015 – The Celebrating Simms internship
  8 students
  Memory parties
  Met with community members
  Research at local institutions
  Basics of arrangement and description
  Digitization best practices

Spring 2016 – The “Representing Black Harrisonburg” class
  Learned digital technologies – JMU’s Center for Instructional Technology
  Continued memory parties
  Installed exhibit
**Special Collections Work:**
Processing training for students to use with the Celebrating Simms project.

**Labor Trade:**
Re-foldered the William Ingham Papers
94 Hollinger boxes
http://omeka.jmu.edu/simms/