

Bryn Mawr College

## Scholarship, Research, and Creative Work at Bryn Mawr College

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Mirabile Dictu: Newsletter of the Bryn Mawr  
College Libraries

Bryn Mawr College Publications, Special  
Collections, Digitized Books

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2021

### Mirabile Dictu: the Bryn Mawr College Library Newsletter 24 (2021)

Bryn Mawr College Library

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# Mirabile Dictu

Newsletter of the Bryn Mawr College Libraries

Fall 2021 | Issue 24

October 1, 1964

COLLEGE NEWS

Page Five


## THE SUMMER AND SOCIAL ACTION

### E. Perkins Works With C.O.F.O. in Miss. Murders No Shock to Trained Workers

By Betsy Greene

Edna Perkins, '66, worked with the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), a coalition of groups in Meridian, Miss., after their arrival in Meridian. "Most of the experienced people knew they were reported missing," said Edna. "No, it didn't affect us much, at least our morale."

Goodman and James Chaney the day after their arrival in Meridian. "We weren't supposed to demonstrate or picket or even test the Civil Rights Act," she said. "The emphasis of the summer was on political work and education, and we wouldn't have been much help."



Downtown CORE (of New York) Negro children in Meridian (Miss.) right is Mrs. Cheney, whose son rights workers killed in Philadelph

## Housing Gre In Chester, 1

By Jeanne Trubek, '66

This summer I was on the staff of the Economic Research and Action Project of the Students for a Democratic Society in Chester, Pa. Chester was one of the test

Special Conference Edition

## "Second American Revolution" Convenes Today

Reflection on the historical causes of the present crisis, from the Restoration and before, is, however, balanced by increased knowledge and understanding of the history being made by today's reformers of a nation's concept of civil and human rights.

James Farr

Each has sought the same goal; equal rights for all Americans. But the methods and philosophical groups differ. The expression of these different means for achieving the same goal is a substance of reflection.

In the seminars a common interest in material and the same sessions; however, di-

Reflected conclusions may be by exploring such speakers as the author of The For School Segregation, understanding of both items at hand can

Ideal reflections American Revolution to effective present situation also has made the implications," Howard Zinn, or to the Stu-

Coordinating sees conder- realize the ces of the be present "Beyond Ed,

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# The College News

ARDMORE and BRYN MAWR, PA., WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 1960

© Trustees of Bryn Mawr College, 1960

PRICE 20 CENTS

VOL. XIV

## WHO BUILT BRYN MAWR?

Miss At A

Alum At

Miss Carey 7 celebrat versary night of Art sentati from 3 speak

Aw prize, Chair ors thus spor those or hon

Mawr family, but becom selves recognize the combination

## Sixty-two Students Picketers Stand So That All May Sit

### Bachrach Praises Student Picketers

The students who picketed Woolworth's last Saturday "did a worthy deed" according to Mr. Bachrach, Professor of Political Science at Bryn Mawr. Mr. Bachrach spoke on "Political Action, Re: Picketing." Monday evening.

There are four major objections to picketing. To those who feel it is not an effective means ameliorating the present intension problem, and who have left the picketers to prove its effectiveness, Mr. Bachrach answered that negative action is also tion. The burden of proof, therefore, doesn't any more rest on the initiator of action than on those



Students turn out for Bryn Mawr Picket.

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Marianne Hansen

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Marianne Hansen

Allison Kelley

Eric Pumroy

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Katy Rosenthal

Juliet Smith

Nava Streiter

*Mirabile Dictu* is published annually through the Friends of the Bryn Mawr College Libraries. Support from the Friends helps to provide contemporary facilities for learning and scholarship; underwrite opportunities for students, faculty, and the public to engage with Bryn Mawr's extraordinary collections; support the development and stewardship of those collections; and enable new forms of scholarship, exhibition, publication, and conversation centered on the collections. To join the Friends of the Libraries or to renew your membership, please visit:

[brynmawr.edu/lits/friends-library](https://brynmawr.edu/lits/friends-library)

Read this, and earlier issues of *Mirabile Dictu*, online at <https://repository.brynmawr.edu/mirabile/>

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**← On the cover**

**1960s Students Confronting Race**, a campus-wide exhibition organized by a team of student interns, opens this fall. Headlines from the *College News, 1960s*



The support of wonderful Friends like you has made possible student internships and exhibitions, many projects focused on College histories, multi-disciplinary study of the mineral collections, and completion of the cataloguing project for the Ellery Yale Wood '52 children's book collection. May you be inspired by all the new endeavors you read about in these pages to stay engaged with the Bryn Mawr Libraries and to invite others you know to partake of the exhibitions, Friday Finds, lectures, and more throughout the year.

Those of you who have received *Mirabile Dictu* over the years may be noticing this year's fresh design. This contemporary look for the newsletter, simpler links to related online content, and behind-the-scenes enhanced template for the editorial process were brought to us by designer Nathanael Roesch (BMC PhD 2017).

I want to thank Dale Kinney and Rebecca Bushnell for their Friends Board leadership this year. During her leadership term, Dale catalyzed new outreach strategies, supported by updated print and web materials that she helped us to develop, all toward ensuring that the Friends of the Bryn Mawr College Libraries and its Board remain vibrant into the future. We are fortunate that Rebecca has taken the leadership baton, electing to devote some of her phenomenal capabilities and very relevant experience at Penn, the Folger Shakespeare Library, and beyond to generous service for Bryn Mawr as my new Friends Board Co-Chair. Rebecca is helping to chart a strategic course for the next phase of the Friends, and the rich conversations we've had with each member of the Board will inform those future directions. One of the things that is abundantly clear is that we'll retain the best of what has emerged through the pandemic, namely more diverse opportunities via online programming to connect an expanded group of Friends with Bryn Mawr's phenomenal collections, exhibitions, and projects.

I hope that you will find delight this year through connections, in person and online, with the fantastic materials, programming, and people of the Bryn Mawr College Libraries.

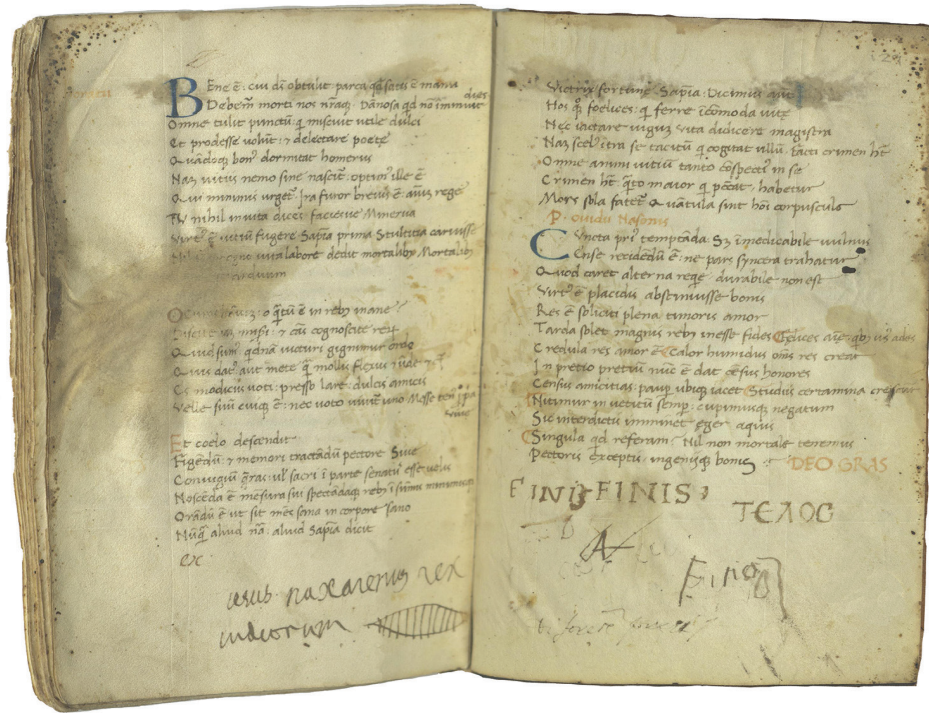
Gina Siesing  
Chief Information Officer & Constance A. Jones  
Director of Libraries

## 'Wonderful to Relate'

We are very glad to be fully on site for the start of this academic year, with a wonderful new exhibition, *Private Lives of Old Books*, joining the College history exhibition, *Who Built Bryn Mawr?* at Canaday Library; with our new Makerspace officially launching; and with our Collier Science Library phase two renovation underway.

Highlights of the renovation project will include a beautifully redesigned reading room, additional study space for students, and a digital collaboration classroom to support the information literacy, digital competencies, and data science workshops that Library & Information Technology Services staff teach for students across the curriculum.

This has been a time for honoring both place-based and virtual modes of research. Many years of digitizing unique collections meant that we were able to continue to enable rich scholarly engagement with special collections during the pandemic. You'll read in this issue about <https://digitalcollections.tricolib.brynmawr.edu>, the TriCollege Libraries' new core platform for digital asset management and preservation and a key resource for enabling discovery of our growing collections into the future.



Compilation of Latin grammar texts, with notes in Italian. Copied in Florence and dated October 1474. Bryn Mawr College MS 58

# Private Lives of Old Books

**Eric Pumroy**

Director of Special Collections

In the summer of 1885, Gertrude Allinson was provisionally accepted as a member of the first class at Bryn Mawr, on the condition that she retake the Latin sight-reading examination when school started in the fall. In putting Allinson through the trial of a new test, Bryn Mawr was upholding the long tradition in the West that made proficiency in Latin a prerequisite for advanced education and a professional career.

The new exhibition in Canaday Library this fall, *Private Lives of Old Books: Recovering Personal Histories from Early Books of Latin*, will examine how individual people contended with Latin by looking at the notes, drawings, and doodles that readers have left in their Latin books over nearly a millennium. The examples are drawn from the College’s extensive holdings of medieval manuscripts and early printed books, as well as Bryn Mawr’s Latin entrance examinations that were such a challenge to Gertrude Allinson.

The exhibition is organized by Kate Barnes, a PhD candidate in the Department of Greek, Latin, and

Classical Studies, and Catherine Conybeare, Leslie Clark Professor in the Humanities and Professor of Greek, Latin, and Classical Studies. The idea for the exhibition came from Catherine’s work as the editor of a new series of books from the Cambridge University Press called *Cultures of Latin from Antiquity to the Enlightenment* which will feature books that chart the reading and writing of Latin as a continuous tradition.

In her introduction to the exhibition catalog, Catherine writes about the approach that we are taking with this exhibition of Latin texts, an approach that focuses on the people who read the books rather than on the books themselves:

“We can’t undo the historical cachet of Latin or its association with the ruling classes. What we can do – what we are doing in this exhibition – is to particularize it. Instead of an idealized bastion of Latinness designed to repel the unworthy, we are showing the encounter of individual people with individual pieces of Latin. They struggle; they try harder; they mark passages; they gather little bits of erudition; they give up altogether and doodle or scribble or color in the pictures.”

Kate Barnes discusses her experiences working on the exhibition in her essay:

“I was not sure what to look for, so I simply looked. As a classicist, my scholarly work is obsessed with text. However, I became fascinated with these books as material objects and archives of easily overlooked and yet immensely relatable histories of use. Books – and old, rare, precious books are no exception to this – were, and still are, living objects.”

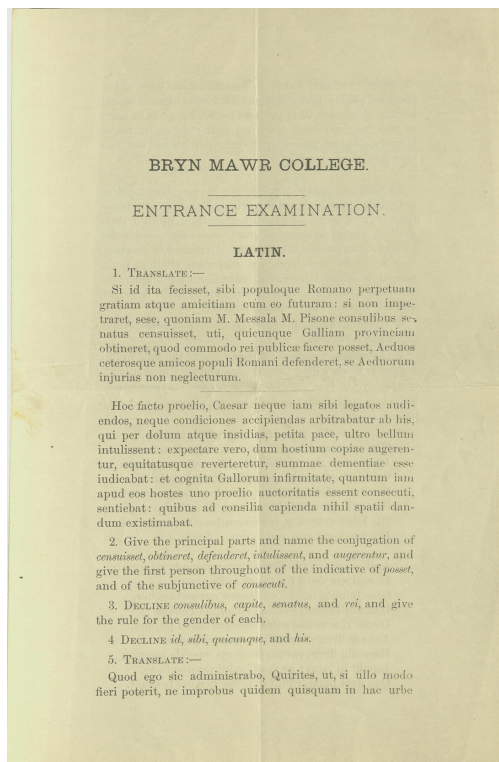
An additional essay in the exhibition catalog by Jason Scott-Warren, University of Cambridge, explores traces of use, misuse, and accident in books, and how they reveal not just their readers, but also the variety of acts that make up and define “reading.” And Eric Pumroy, Seymour Adelman Director of Special Collections, introduces the collectors who helped shape the College’s collection of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts and printed books.

The exhibition will open on Friday, September 24, and will run through Friday, December 17. The opening events will include a talk by Joseph Farrell, Professor of Classical Studies at the University of

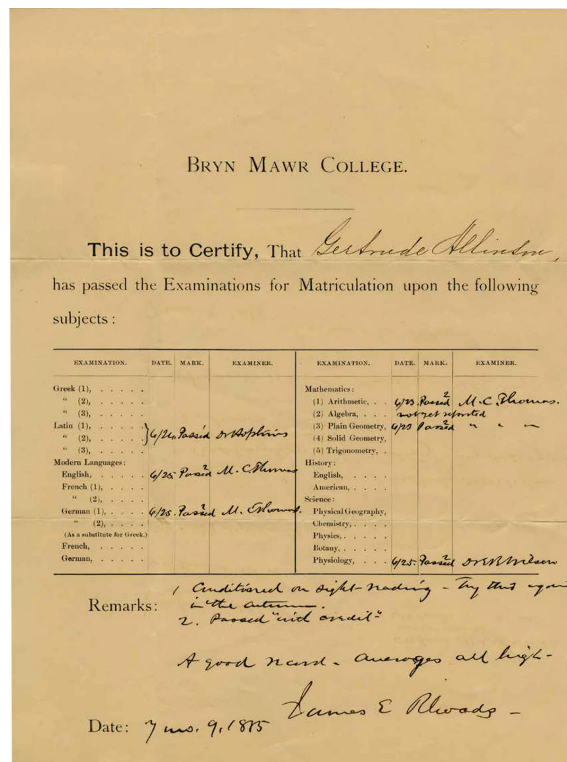
Pennsylvania at 4:30 pm in Carpenter Library 21. Also speaking in conjunction with the exhibition will be Marjorie Curry Woods, Sue Goldston Lebermann Professor of Liberal Arts at the University of Texas, and author of *Weeping for Dido: The Classics in the Medieval Classroom*, 2019. Her lecture takes place on November 8.

Assisting Catherine and Kate with the exhibition’s development are Carrie Robbins (MA 2009, PhD 2013), Curator/Academic Liaison for Art and Artifacts; Eric Pumroy, Director of Special Collections; and Marianne Hansen, Curator/Academic Liaison for Rare Books and Manuscripts. The exhibition and catalog design were done by Nathanael Roesch (PhD 2017).

→ Private Lives of Old Books events and info [brynmaur.edu/PrivateLives](http://brynmaur.edu/PrivateLives)



Examination for Matriculation, Latin, 1895



Examination Certificate for Gertrude Allinson, June 9, 1885

## Who Built Bryn Mawr? A Beginning

*Who Built Bryn Mawr?* is an ongoing project that supports research and curatorial opportunities for students interested in changing the way the College understands its history. The first exhibition in the project was launched in 2021. *A Beginning*, located in the lobby of Canaday Library, celebrates four individuals instrumental in creating the Bryn Mawr we know today. They are: Sally Brown, a maid who worked in Merion; Umeko Tsuda, the founder of the first women's college in Japan; Hilda Worthington-Smith, the first director of the Summer School for Women Workers in Industry; and Enid Cook, a pioneering virologist. While some of these women may be more familiar to us than others, all of them played a vital role in students' lives, and all of them changed the nature of the College.

*Who Built Bryn Mawr?* is supported by the Office of the President and by the Friends of the Bryn Mawr College Libraries, and facilitated by Library and Information Technology Services, Special Collections, and the Makerspace.

*Who Built Bryn Mawr?* Summer 2021: Bankston Creech (2022), Katy Rosenthal (MA candidate), Keyla Benitez (2024), Elliot Fleming (2022), Emma Burns (2021), Carolina Molina (2023)

## 1960s Students Confronting Race

### Bankston Creech

Who Built Bryn Mawr? Intern

The first phase of *Who Built Bryn Mawr?* is joined this fall by *1960s Students Confronting Race*, a campus-wide exhibition organized by a team of four undergraduate interns, a post-bac, and a graduate student advisor who worked for ten weeks this summer in Special Collections. In conducting their research, the interns found a common interest in mid-century events at Bryn Mawr that struck them as important or resonant, but which have been forgotten by the College community. Rather than selecting specific individuals as was done in *A Beginning*, the interns highlight the ways in which Bryn Mawr students in the 1960s used ideas and experiences influenced by the national Civil Rights movement to shift the culture of the College.

Initial academic investment soon became personal. Carolina Itzel Molina was drawn to the student campaign against the old maids and porters system because of her experience as a First Generation, Low Income Latine student working in dining services. Elliot Fleming felt that the Second American Revolution Conference and Black Arts Festivals



## EXCHANGE STUDENTS



*The Livingstonian* (1964) p. 67. Yearbook of Livingstone College, Salisbury, NC. Caption: "Visiting students from Bryn Mawr College and Haverford College in Pennsylvania"

were significant events that could not go on being overlooked. Bankston Creech was interested in the connection between Bryn Mawr students and Black civil rights activists in her home region of the South. Keyla Benitez was intrigued by the exchange program between Bryn Mawr and Southern Historically Black Colleges and Universities since she had attended a charter school for educationally underserved communities where the administration emphatically encouraged students to apply to Primarily White Institutions. Postbac advisor Emma Ruth Burns continued her senior thesis work on the beginning of Bryn Mawr's Black Studies Program.

*1960s Students Confronting Race* aims to establish meaningful links between student-led movements in the past and the present, inviting community members to question who built the Bryn Mawr we experience today. Multiple installations around campus will offer encounters with the topics and encourage deeper engagement with the material through the exhibition's website, which is also open to anyone unable to see the exhibition in person.

→ **Explore Who Built Bryn Mawr?**  
[brynmawr.edu/whobuilt](http://brynmawr.edu/whobuilt)

## Freeze Frame

Nava Streiter

In spring 2022, the Graduate Group in Archaeology, Classics, and History of Art will present *Freeze Frame*, an exhibition to accompany its interdisciplinary graduate symposium on the theme of "Kinesis."

The exhibition explores how art captures, demands, and facilitates motion. Mesopotamian seals, which reveal their images when rolled, sit side by side with early multiple exposure and motion study photographs, which freeze dynamic, natural processes into static frames. Hellenistic coins and 21st-century mass transit tokens acknowledge change and persistence in a long history of trade and travel. Beaded, rubber-tread, Kenyan sandals call forth the ghost of Nike, Greek goddess of victory, eternally twisting to adjust her footwear. Drawing on the breadth of Bryn Mawr's Special Collections, the exhibition challenges viewers to compare languages and technologies of motion and to draw new interpretive pathways among diverse objects and cultures.

*Freeze Frame*, curated by graduate students Mallory Fitzpatrick (Greek, Latin, and Classical Studies), Yusi Liu (Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology), and Nava Streiter (History of Art), will appear in the exhibition space adjacent to the Lusty Cup Cafe. Exhibition programming includes the keynote speech for the symposium, by Professor Eva Hoffman of Tufts University, and a symposium study room visit. A digital exhibition will also launch in 2022.



Silver Tetradrachm of Salamis Issued by Demetrius Poliorcetes. 294 BCE - 288 BCE. C.75



# Introducing Ellie Ga

**Carrie Robbins**

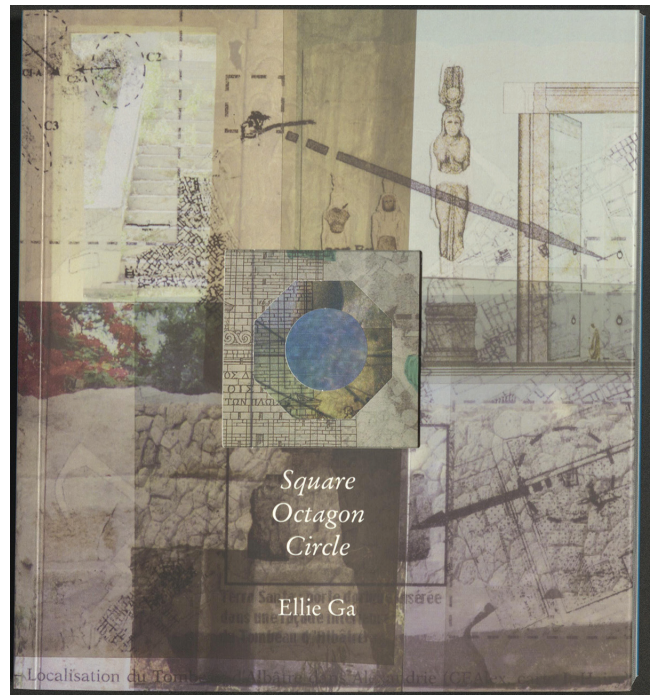
Curator of Art and Artifacts

*Introducing Ellie Ga* features recent acquisitions of works by Ellie Ga, an American artist living in Sweden. This physical display continues ongoing efforts to introduce Ga and her artistic practice to the Bryn Mawr community, in the face of challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. These efforts began through a collaboration between Special Collections and the Center for Visual Culture aimed at bringing Ga to campus for a residency in 2020. When this had to be postponed, Ga engaged with various community members in a series of Zoom-based conversations in Spring 2021 that explored her work and its interdisciplinary intersections with history, archaeology, and geology, as well as legacies of patriarchy, colonialism, and forced migration. Our Spring 2021 conversation series with Ga was recorded and is available at [brynmaur.edu/EllieGa](http://brynmaur.edu/EllieGa).

Plans for Ga's residency are renewed for the 2021-22 academic year, but remain contingent on pandemic-related protocols. As soon as it is possible, Ga will come to campus to engage with Special Collections in the production of a new work of art commissioned by the College.



Bottle #430, Zandvoort, Netherlands (Wil Kruiswijk archive) . 2017.  
C-print. 2021.6.82



Artist's book by Ellie Ga, *Square, Circle, Octagon*. New York: Siglio Press, 2018

Ga works between memoir, travelogue, and visual essay, connecting ideas and presenting them as multichannel videos or performances with live narration. Her artistic process involves extended periods of research, including conversations with people such as museum directors, scholars, or Arctic explorers. Her interests are interdisciplinary and cross-temporal. She speaks of her work as a collection of chance encounters, what is lost (and accrued) in translating between spoken and written words, and archaeological discovery. Her recent work, *Gyres 1-3* (2019), was a commission for the Whitney Biennial, where it was reviewed in *The New York Times* and *Artnews*.

*Introducing Ellie Ga* will run October 18, 2021 to June 3, 2022 in the Eva Jane Romaine Coombe '52 Special Collections Suite Gallery in Canaday Library. The curators will offer a tour of the exhibition on November 5, noon–1 pm in the Coombe Suite Gallery.

→ **More information and events listing**  
[brynmaur.edu/EllieGa](http://brynmaur.edu/EllieGa)

# Conserving The Collections

Allison Kelley

I am a graduate student in the Winterthur Art Conservation program at the University of Delaware, and I received a summer internship placement to design and implement a storage reorganization project for Special Collections. The sub-Saharan African collections are stored in a small room in Canaday Library. Over the years the shelves had grown full and collections staff were interested in assessing the storage layout and housing conditions to determine if improvements could be made. This facet of preservation work, Preventive Conservation, aims to create the best preservation environment possible for a collection. The result of this work can also lead to improved ease and efficiency of access to a collection, reducing barriers for researchers and students alike in making use of Special Collections.

There were two main goals for the African objects housed in Canaday. One: rearrange the objects as needed to allow for safer access to un-boxed and

fragile objects such as headdresses with delicate attachments. Two: examine the boxes that house multiple objects and consider improvements to the interior supports used to immobilize and cushion the objects. After weeks of taking measurements, considering layouts, and modeling the shelving units in a 3D design program, I devised a new arrangement. I adjusted shelves and brought fragile objects down so they were easier to reach.

I was joined by undergraduate Joy Kruse (2023) and recent graduate Katie Perry (2021) for final work on rehousing some of the objects, improving visibility and better immobilizing them in their boxes. It was a good chance for me to practice teaching the skills and an excellent way for the students to be introduced to different aspects of collection management and preservation.

→ **Read more from Allison**  
[tinyurl.com/ArtStorageBlog](https://tinyurl.com/ArtStorageBlog)

Allison Kelley, Friends of the Libraries intern Joy Kruse, and Katie Perry rehouse objects from the African Art collection.



# Archival Records and Provenance Research

**Amalia Cottrell**

Undergraduate Intern



Amalia investigating one of Margaret Plass's notebooks. Amalia's work in Special Collections was supported by a generous gift from Amy Goldrich '86 in honor of Helen Katz Neufeld '53 and Mace Neufeld.

This summer I worked on establishing provenance for many of the objects in Bryn Mawr's African art collection. The goal of my internship was to bridge the gaps between papers in the College Archives and objects in Art and Artifacts, seeking information in the Archives that increased our understanding of items in the collection. I worked on two collections: those of Margaret Feurer Plass and Jane Martin.

Plass, a member of the Class of 1917, traveled with her husband, Webster, collecting art from Africa, Asia, and South America. After his death in 1952, she donated most of their collection to the British Museum, but embarked on a lifetime of scholarly inquiry into African art. About 40 artifacts from her collection came to the College after her death. The papers she donated give a unique insight into her collecting habits and her scholarly work. These include correspondence, photo albums, and two large scrapbooks containing academic articles, photos of Plass with the art she collected, information on exhibitions, and various other personal mementos.

My initial tasks were to work on identifying and cataloging the papers and to create a finding aid.

Plass' archive had been at the College since her death in 1990 but it had not been completely inventoried until this point. In many cases it was difficult to link her papers to the individual works she donated to Bryn Mawr, but the finding aid has made her papers accessible to scholars focusing on her work and donations, including researchers at the British Museum.

Jane Martin (BA 1953, MA 1958) was a history professor at the University of Liberia and the University of Calabar in Nigeria. Later in life, she traveled between Liberia and the United States as the director of various education programs, including the Fulbright program in Monrovia. Martin's papers had already been fully cataloged, so I focused on finding useful information, sifting through her correspondence, diaries, photo albums, and professional work for instances of collecting, buying, or selling art. While it was not possible to uncover the origins of every one of the 150 pieces of art she donated to the College, I was able to establish provenance for many of the objects. These included work from Liberian artists H. Wantue Major and Saarenald T. S. Yaawaisan. Future collaboration between the College Archives and Art and Artifacts is expected to establish provenance for additional objects and collections.

→ **Explore the Plass and Martin papers**

[tinyurl.com/PlassPapers](http://tinyurl.com/PlassPapers)

[tinyurl.com/MartinPapers](http://tinyurl.com/MartinPapers)



Margaret Plass at home with some of her collection.  
Margaret Plass papers

# Summer School for Women Workers Digital Exhibition

Beck Morawski's year-long project to commemorate the centennial of the Summer School for Women Workers in Industry came to fruition with the launch of the website *For Roses, Too*. Here's an excerpt from the introduction:

“The Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry, during its time on campus from 1921 through 1938, hosted about a thousand women working in manual labor and the industrial sector, redefining what it means to be a Bryn Mawr student and radically changing the playing field of worker's education. Here, some of the first working class Jewish, immigrant, and Black students were allowed to both attend classes on Bryn Mawr's campus and graduate. The Summer School's evolving and vibrant history is one intrinsically tied to the history of Bryn Mawr College; even a century on, its presence has a profound resonance with the conversations we as an institution hold.

“*For Roses, Too* seeks to connect today's students to the ongoing legacies of the Summer School on the centennial of its founding, drawing attention to not only the overarching themes of the Summer School's history, but also the nuances of the students' lives on campus and the ways in which Bryn Mawr affected their lives and outlook on the world. While 1921 may seem distant, recurring themes of student activism and strikes, calls for racial equality, outcry against police brutality, and a longing for a return to Bryn Mawr's campus are concepts that current students grapple with to this day.”

And, again, from the concluding pages of the site:

“The founders of the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry set out to create the program as an experiment that had never been undertaken before. How could Bryn Mawr serve students that otherwise would never set foot on campus? How could the College's resources support efforts to educate industrial workers? What would it mean for women working in factories to experience eight weeks of residential education? In attempting to answer these questions, the School left an impact not



Summer School for Women Workers students in the Cloisters, 1930, BMC Photo Archives

only on the movement as a whole, but also on every passionate student that passed under Pembroke Arch during the program's seventeen seasons. Year after year, the School adapted to changing current events by answering the hard questions brought up by the community...

“To this day, students at Bryn Mawr still triumphantly sing the iconic refrain ‘Give us bread, but give us roses, too’ in celebration, just as the women of the Bryn Mawr Summer School had sung a century before us. It is vital that we do not forget the meaning it held for the students who sang this – in darkened dorm common rooms after long days of classes, in the greens of campus after hours of stargazing, in classrooms after sharing the horrors and joys that they experienced in their factories – that at Bryn Mawr they strove not just to live on bread and survive day to day, but to thrive, to embrace the roses on campus, too.”

→ **Read more from Beck**  
[tinyurl.com/SSWWIblog](https://tinyurl.com/SSWWIblog)

→ **Explore the exhibition**  
[tinyurl.com/ForRosesToo](https://tinyurl.com/ForRosesToo)

# Children's Books Cataloging Completed

**Marianne Hansen**

Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts



A glance into the Wood Collection

Five years after the first of 634 boxes of books arrived at the loading dock of Canaday Library, we have finished cataloging the collection Ellery Yale Wood (1952) left to the College. The volumes were available for classes from the beginning, but getting the last of them into Tripod means that students and scholars can search effectively for what they need.

The massive job of processing, describing, labelling, and shelving 13,400 books took a lot of people: 37 of our student employees, a curator, and six catalogers. Starting in 2018, a generous gift from Ellen Michelson (P'09) and additional support from the Friends of the Libraries let us hire Amy Graham and Maria Gorbunova who together cataloged 10,811 books.

The collection is still growing. This year we received three substantial donations – two groups of twentieth-century picture books and a research collection of classics and mythology for young readers. We are also buying books to add to our collection – 50 in the last year – to fill in areas where Wood did not collect extensively. We look forward to building the collection and making it available to readers for years to come!

→ **Read more**

[tinyurl.com/WoodCataloging](https://tinyurl.com/WoodCataloging)

# BMC Makerspace

**Bronwen Densmore**

Makerspace Coordinator

In 2020 LITS launched a new Makerspace, located in the Science Complex. Operating as part of the Education and Scholarly Technology group, the Makerspace supports research and exploration in fabrication, design, and critical making. The Makerspace currently houses a small woodshop, a suite of digital fabrication tools (including laser cutters, 3D printers and scanners, and a CNC router), a RISO printer, and general craft and art supplies. A second location in Carpenter Library will provide access to sewing machines.

While the initial launch of the Makerspace was scaled back due to limits on in-person activities last year, we were able to provide access with online and hybrid workshops and individual consultations. We look forward to offering full access and an exciting schedule of in-person workshops this fall.



A student uses the laser cutter and carving tools to create a fabric stamp and textiles with an original design.



The Makerspace Coordinator, Bronwen Densmore, comes to Bryn Mawr from New York, where she worked as Reference and Instructional Design Librarian at CUNY and Cooper Union before returning to her roots in design and fabrication – serving as a manager and faculty member at the School of Visual Arts’ Visible Futures Lab and as the Open Hardware Community Manager with Public Lab, a nonprofit supporting community science. Bronwen worked at the Swarthmore College Library immediately after receiving her library degree and is especially pleased to be part of the TriCo community again.

→ **Visit the Makerspace**  
[tinyurl.com/BMCMakerspace](http://tinyurl.com/BMCMakerspace)

## Old Dame Trot and Her Comical Cat

### Juliet Smith

Friends of the Libraries Undergraduate Intern

*Dame Trot* was first published in 1803 – two years before the release of *Old Mother Hubbard*, the better-known rhyme that follows the same story and structure. Despite her seniority, the Dame and her charming cat have largely faded into obscurity behind the shadow of Mother Hubbard and her dog. The pair did not disappear entirely; they remained popular enough to inspire myriad reprints, sequels, and variations throughout Hubbard’s rise to prominence. It is only in the 20th century that they were really lost.

Ellery Yale Wood collected Dame Trot books, and between her bequest and some more recent purchases we have about five dozen items published across a span of nearly two centuries – possibly the world’s largest collection of these texts. Besides chapbooks and collections of nursery rhymes or books of verse that include the poem, we also hold prose retellings of the story, outlandish sequels, paper dolls, and even a double-sided jigsaw puzzle.

This summer I have inventoried, researched, and digitized these volumes as I prepare to create an online bibliographical resource to bring Dame Trot into the spotlight. The earliest editions are mostly 8 to 12 pages with similar or closely related rhymes, at first glance not very different from one another. The



Juliet with the double-sided puzzle, London, c. 1880

number of books in our collection, though, lets us see how the story changes over time and across publishers as verses are swapped, altered, and amended through its history. Our Dame Trot website will delight not only lovers of children’s books (and cats) but also scholars who are interested in how texts and stories change and develop when many people write and rewrite them.



Dame Trot and her Comical Cat. London: G. Stevens, c. 1820

## New Tools to Explore the College's History



May Day image from the 1920s. BMC Postcard Collection

Digital collections provide ways to engage with historical records that are not possible with physical objects. You can zoom in on images to see details, search full texts, and listen to recordings while following synchronized transcriptions and captions. Digital content can also be mined for data to be used in research projects, exhibitions, or visualizations.

The TriCollege Libraries Digital Collections site has launched, offering more than 40,000 items to our community and to scholars around the world. The resource includes important collections on Bryn Mawr's history. The Photo Archives has 5200+ images documenting students, faculty, staff, and events at the College since its founding. The Scrapbook and Photo Album Collection includes volumes dating from 1889 to 1952, assembled and donated by alumnae, documenting their years at the College. Yearbooks from 1901 through 1949 and all issues of the *Bryn Mawr College News* from 1914 through 1968 are available.

You can explore oral histories, a record of the 1918 flu pandemic, College postcards and publications, and dozens of collections of letters and personal papers written by alumnae and faculty. Current events are also represented: the 2020 College Strike Collective records are available, and materials tracing the history of Perry House, as well as oral histories with alumnae/i, are underway.

→ **Read more about Digital Collections**

[tinyurl.com/DigiCollBlog](https://tinyurl.com/DigiCollBlog)

→ **Visit Digital Collections**

[tinyurl.com/BMCDigitalColls](https://tinyurl.com/BMCDigitalColls)

## Removal of M. Carey Thomas Portraits

**Carrie Robbins**

Curator of Art and Artifacts

Last fall students organized as part of the Bryn Mawr College Strike Collective issued a list of demands that included the removal of portraits of M. Carey Thomas from campus display. The painted portrait of Thomas by John Singer Sargent has hung almost continuously in the Rare Book Room since it returned from a loan in 2000. The bronze sculpted bust of Thomas by Paul Manship was most recently located on the 3rd floor landing of the main stairway in Canaday Library. Students expressed the harms that continued memorialization of Thomas on campus cause: “The racism, anti-Semitism and eugenicism, and white supremacy she perpetuated and upheld [were] inherited by us as people and as a College.”

The President's Office requested recommendations from Special Collections, and we advised a phased approach in response. The first phase involved honoring the students' demand by removing both portraits from display, while adding labels to mark their removal.

As always, our rationale included curatorial considerations for both the objects and our audiences. Over the past five years, we have attempted to interpret Thomas's portraits in ways that addressed the complexity of their subject. Each exhibition in the Rare Book Room has used a label to reinterpret the painting in the context of the show. Most of these were authored with or by students; some specifically engaged the topic of Thomas's racism. The strike demands made clear that these labels were too subtle an intervention into the symbolism of the portraits' prominent display – in the only gallery on campus and in a gilded frame as was the Sargent or on a pedestal as was the Manship.

Last fall's closure of campus to the public because of COVID-19 meant that the portraits' only audience was the on-campus community – comprised primarily of students, many of whom participated directly in or in solidarity with the strike. It became clear that the only way to demonstrate care for our student audience was a gesture as strong as removal.

Art handlers removed the portraits to secure storage over winter break. Labels describing the rationale for removal were placed at the former display sites.

We recognize and regret that the portraits' continued display caused some students to experience harm. Our initial remediation is removing the portraits from view and interrupting this continuous display. In doing so, we hope that our students feel seen and heard. We are committed to improving the inclusiveness of our spaces and our work.

We recognize and regret that the portraits' removal will disappoint some alumnae and other members of our community. We understand and share a conviction that artworks can help us lean into the complexity of history. We hope to find a path forward together toward future uses of the portraits, including continued contextualization, in our phased recommendation to the President's Office.

In the meantime, we are engaged in learning fuller histories of the portraits at the College. It would be helpful to hear from our community about your memories of these portraits on campus: were they displayed? where and when? Do you have any photographs or specific memories of this? Write us at [SpecColl@brynmawr.edu](mailto:SpecColl@brynmawr.edu). We aim to better understand their display history on campus and represent this online in the near future.

## Confronting the Legacies of Racism and Colonialism in Special Collections

Bryn Mawr College's Special Collections, like other museums and cultural institutions, is grappling with core tensions between the legacies of colonialism and racism in our collections and our equity goals for our various audiences. In stewarding a teaching collection within a liberal arts college, we are especially suited to question core values and assumptions in museum and collection practices.

For over a year, our staff has been working to articulate how we can address some of the inherent biases and Western scholarly assumptions that exist in our collections. We have created a statement – a working document – reflecting our continued learning and unlearning of our privileges and capacities for harm. It is not policy, but a guide articulating our philosophies and goals for departmental practice.

We aim to be active listeners and to produce opportunities for our students and audiences to investigate and understand the complexities of collections. Friday Finds this spring will include an ongoing series of conversations open to all members of the community to share our current thinking and learn about goals for the future. We hope you will join us.

→ **Read more about our work**  
[brynmawr.edu/confronting](http://brynmawr.edu/confronting)

Sign in Rare Book Room where the Sargent portrait hung

### REMOVED FROM DISPLAY January 2021

John Singer Sargent  
(American, 1856 – 1925)

Miss M. Carey Thomas  
1899

Oil on canvas  
Commissioned by Bryn Mawr College  
X.205

Portraits of the College's first dean and second president, M. Carey Thomas, have been displayed on campus since they were made. Committees of alumnae commissioned these artworks from the era's most prestigious American portraitists to commemorate Thomas in lasting ways.

Over time, generations of students recognized the problem with celebrating Thomas as a leader in "women's education." Thomas held racist and antisemitic views, endorsed eugenics, and denied admission to Black students. In 2020 a Strike Collective of Bryn Mawr students cited the continuous display of Thomas's portraits on campus as symbolic of the institution's historic lack of sympathy and lack of proactive efforts to address this history.

Thomas's views are antithetical to the inclusive and antiracist community that Bryn Mawr strives to be today. In recognition of this and in response to generations of student activism, the College removed portraits of Thomas from campus display. While this cannot undo the structural harm her beliefs have built into Bryn Mawr's past and present, it can demonstrate the College's commitment to making space for new voices and new monuments.



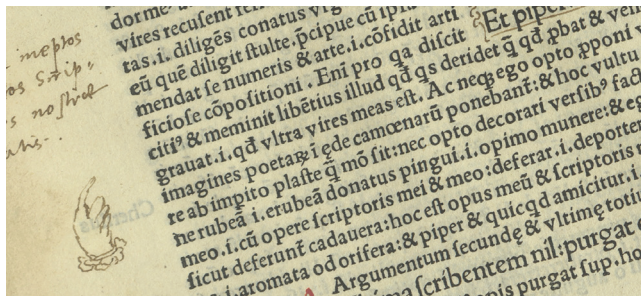


## On View

### Private Lives of Old Books: Recovering Personal Histories from Early Books of Latin

September 24–December 17, 2021

Class of 1912 Rare Book Room, Canaday Library



### Introducing Ellie Ga

October 18, 2021–June 3, 2022

Eva Jane Romaine Coombe '52 Special Collections  
Suite Gallery, Second Floor, Canaday Library

### Who Built Bryn Mawr?: 1960s Students

#### Confronting Race

Fall semester

Campus-wide exhibition

### Wonderful to Relate: Recent Acquisitions

February 4–June 3, 2022

Class of 1912 Rare Book Room, Canaday Library

### Freeze Frame: Kinesis from Ancient Mesopotamia to the Present

March 25–June 3, 2022

Gallery adjacent to the Lusty Cup Cafe, Canaday Library

## Events

### Private Lives of Old Books

“Bookhands and Handbooks”

Sept. 24, 4:30 pm. Carpenter 21

Opening lecture by Joseph Farrell, University of Pennsylvania

Curator’s tour of exhibition

Oct. 8, noon–1:00 pm. Rare Book Room, Canaday  
Kate Barnes, PhD Candidate, Bryn Mawr College

“The Arrested Hand”

Lecture Nov. 8, 4:30 pm, Carpenter 21

Objects Workshop Nov. 9, 4–6 pm. Canaday 205  
Marjorie Curry Woods, University of Texas, Austin

“Remembering the Saints: The Relationship Between Word and Image in the *Menologion* of Basil”

Nov. 12, noon–1:00 pm. Rare Book Room, Canaday  
Charles Kuper, Haverford College

### Introducing Ellie Ga

Curators’ tour of exhibition

Nov. 5, noon–1 pm. Coombe Suite, Second Floor,  
Canaday

Matt Feliz, Carrie Robbins, Marianne Hansen

## Friday Finds

Friday Finds are a series of informal lunchtime chats about historical and cultural objects held in Bryn Mawr’s Special Collections, or about ongoing exhibitions. Most events are Fridays at noon and last about an hour.

Many events throughout the year will be available simultaneously in person and online.

→ For all events, visit

[tinyurl.com/LITSevents](https://tinyurl.com/LITSevents)

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