

Student Museum Board Spring Activities

The Student Museum Board (SMB) plans several activities for spring 2015. These include assisting with the Civil Defense in the Old Dominion exhibit in March. Other events planned include the February 2 College Birthday Party. Members of the SMB mark the portraits of our founders with Birthday Balloons around campus – arranged safely near the paintings. They next head to the Settle Hall rotunda to serve birthday cake and lemonade to all takers and hand out birthday ribbons commemorating the election of the first trustees and establishment of the College at the Nathaniel Venable Plantation.

The next event, on February 26, tests students' knowledge of Hampden-Sydney history at the fourth annual Pub Quiz held in the Tiger Inn.

About thirty students participate each year in answering questions in a round-robin style contest until one is left as our 2015 winner. In keeping with the college history theme, the winner is given a copy of John Brinkley's *On This Hill* and a gift certificate to the Tiger Inn.

The SMB ends the semester with work on the Hampden-Sydney Student Fine Arts Show. The art show is especially well attended and can feature as many as one hundred works of art, all of which must be arranged and displayed. The value of student help with these exhibits is immeasurable, and the members bring an interest and enjoyment to their work that carry over to our visitors and patrons.

PERSONALIZED BRICKS

A LASTING TRIBUTE

REMEMBER! You can purchase inscribed memorial bricks to be placed in the Museum's front walk. They are an ideal way to recognize graduates, loved ones, beloved teachers, or classmates—even (as one of our students did) to propose. To request a brick order form, call the Museum at (434) 223-6134, or download one from www.hsc.edu/Museum/Personalized-Brick.



MUSEUM EVENTS, SPRING SEMESTER 2015

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| <p>January 5-30
<i>The Universe in Color:</i>
<i>The Astrophotography of Robert Gendler</i></p> <p>February 2
Student Museum Board Event
College Birthday Party</p> <p>February 15
Back Gallery Lecture
The Duchamp Effect: Assemblage, Combines & Collage
Amanda Dalla Villa Adams
Co-sponsored with the Central Virginia Arts 3 p.m.</p> <p>February 17-March 20
Exhibit
<i>Mise en scene</i>
An exhibit by Jonathan D. Metzger, Visiting professor of Fine Arts
Additional work by Allison Wegren-Metzger
Opening Reception
February 17, 4-5:30 p.m.</p> <p>February 26
Student Museum Board Event
4th Annual Pub Quiz
6:30 in Tiger Inn</p> | <p>March 7
Meeting
Atkinson Museum Program Board
Petersburg, VA</p> <p>March 8
Back Gallery Lecture
<i>The Pursuit</i>: Frederick Remington & the Buffalo Soldiers
Dr. Elizabeth O'Leary – Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
Co-sponsored with Central Virginia Arts 3 p.m.</p> <p>March 26-April 24
Exhibit
<i>Alert Today, Alive Tomorrow: Civil Defense in the Old Dominion</i></p> <p>April 30-May 10
Exhibit
<i>Student Art Show</i>
Open regular Museum Hours
Opening Reception
April 30 at 4 p.m.</p> | <p>May 3
Back Gallery Lecture
Henry "Box" Brown
Jeffrey Ruggles
Co-sponsored by Central Virginia Arts 3 p.m.</p> <p>May 21-August 4
Exhibit
<i>Central Virginia Arts Show</i>
Exhibit open regular Members' Museum hours
Opening Reception
May 21 at 6 p.m.</p> <p>June 5
Museum Board Hosts Alumni
Appreciation Party at Museum
COCKTAILS, CONVERSATION,
REFLECTION
5-6:30</p> <p>June 6
Meeting
Atkinson Museum Program Board
At Hampden-Sydney</p> |
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www.wmhs.edu/museum

Other times in appointment by phone
Game-day Saturdays, 11 am-11 pm.
Tuesday-Friday, 10 am-12 noon, 1 pm-5 pm.

HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE
HAMPDEN-SYDNEY, VA 23943

THE THOMAS ATKINSON
MUSEUM
OF HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE



THE ESTHER THOMAS ATKINSON MUSEUM OF HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE

WINTER 2015

A Dedication to Collecting

Dr. C. Wayne Tucker

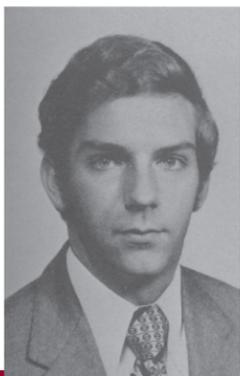
Alexander C. Graham, Jr. '72 has been collecting since he was a child. The beginning was modest enough: His first collection was of bottle caps, a promotional effort in which the company stamped the names of states on the caps, which then would be pasted onto a map at the appropriate place. In his effort to collect all of the caps, he would visit stores and ask if he could take the caps from vending machines, thus avoiding having to pay for the drinks.

Graham majored in Classics at Hampden-Sydney, where he was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa and Omicron Delta Kappa. He also was elected to membership in Eta Sigma Phi, the honorary Classics society, and served as vice-president of both the local chapter and the national organization. He was the recipient of the Wilson Memorial Greek Prize and was a Senior Fellow. He was selected for *Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities*, and a member of Sigma Nu, as well as the Student Assembly, Circle K, and Union Philanthropic Society. He played varsity baseball and tennis, and in 1971 he was awarded an English-Speaking Union Scholarship to study at Oxford University. He received his law degree from the University of Virginia School of Law.

He moved from bottle caps to coins, first looking through the change his grandfather, who ran a grocery store, brought home. He still has a collection of Indian head pennies, but "the rest of the collection was sacrificed to buy other things," he says.

At age eleven, Graham began to collect stamps. His parents passed on to him the stamp albums they had received as children, and he still collects stamps of the world, having resumed collecting them after completing law school. He limits the collection to stamps issued through 1965, and his collection numbers 250,000 to 300,000 stamps, which he keeps in his "stamp room." He sold his collection of United States stamps in 2012 and used the proceeds to buy fine art.

His interest in antique furniture led to "an appreciation and desire to decorate rooms well." His parents were interior decorators, talking regularly about furniture, and took him to open houses, house tours, and antique shops. Graham as a young lawyer first purchased English



Alexander C. Graham Jr. '72

furniture: tables, chairs, chests of drawers. While he still has some of the English pieces, his principal interests now lie in American furniture. He became fascinated with fine furniture after going to New York for "Americana Week," when Sotheby's, Christie's, and some other houses hold their fine-arts auctions.

He briefly owned an antique shop in Richmond in the 1980s, but he said, "I found it more interesting to buy than to sell."

He is largely self-educated in furniture through his library of books on the subject, and now limits his purchases to Queen Anne, Chippendale, and Hepplewhite pieces made between 1750 and 1820. He attends three or four auctions in person and bids by phone twenty or twenty-five times each year.

While some of his furniture is in storage, much of the furniture graces his own home in Richmond, as well as the McIlwaine house in Petersburg, which he restored several years ago. From the McIlwaine family came Hampden-Sydney College President Richard McIlwaine (1883-1904). The Petersburg house may have been built by Erasmus Gill in 1794 and was relocated to its present site in Old Towne Petersburg when it was threatened with demolition because of the widening of Wythe Street. The crew of Steven Spielberg's *Lincoln* painted the house when it was used as the exterior of a senator's home, and one scene was filmed in the interior.

Prior to his restoration of the McIlwaine house, Graham had restored an 1880s house in

A Tale of Two Loans

Brennan Aust '17

The Atkinson Museum has recently lent the Smithsonian copy of the Draper camera to the Longwood Center for the Visual Arts for display in its exhibit, *Old School: Historical Methods in Contemporary Practice*. The exhibit features work from Pam Fox, Shaun Irving '97, Courtney Johnson, Sally Mann, Jeraldine Rogers, and Willie Anne Wright, as well as historical pieces such as the Draper camera.

Draper used the Gregorian reflecting telescope at Hampden-Sydney in his early attempts at successful portrait photography but wrote that the results were unsatisfactory. The Draper camera—now on loan to Longwood University—was built in the winter of 1839 at Hampden-Sydney and was used to successfully photograph the moon as early as March 16, 1840. Through his photographic research, Draper became a pioneer



Sandy Graham in the McIlwaine House with *At the Ballet* by Louis Kronberg, an American Impressionist who lived in Paris and was dubbed "The American Degas"; and a John Townsend desk, made in Newport, Rhode Island, 1775-80, one of twenty-five known. It was purchased in Tampa, Florida, non-attributed in the catalogue and listed simply as an "American Desk."

the Fan District of Richmond. He subsequently had the 1766 Mosby house in Powhatan County dismantled and moved to eastern Goochland County in 1983.

In addition to furniture, Graham is assembling a collection of American paintings, 1840-1940, and continues to collect English porcelain, silver, and other decorative arts.

of astrophotography when he successfully captured the first clear view of the moon.

The Atkinson Museum lent its Hampden-Sydney Coat of Arms-Letters Patent to the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. Returned from loan in November, the Coat of Arms was featured in the Folger Library's exhibit on heraldry. The show, the largest and most comprehensive of its kind ever mounted, featured family trees, books explaining the complexities of heraldry, manuscripts illustrating coats of arms, and documents composed by professional heralds in favor of the regulation of heraldic practice. The show included the original drafts of William Shakespeare's family coat of arms among other priceless treasures.

Historical Research and the African-American Community at Hampden-Sydney

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Student Exhibit in March: Alert Today, Alive Tomorrow—Civil Defense in the Old Dominion

Exhibit begins March 26. . . PAGE 3

Honor Roll of Donors, 2013-2014

Friends who contributed to the operation of the Museum. . . PAGE 3

Historical Research and the African-American Community at Hampden-Sydney

Elizabeth Baker

At a young age, I decided I was destined to become the next Indiana Jones. My favorite activity was searching for my first important “archaeological discovery,” and growing up at Hampden-Sydney—a College with an incredibly rich history—allowed me plenty of time and space for exploration. One day, near the College observatory, I was elated to “discover” several dilapidated cabins, a chicken coop, an outhouse, abundant artifact scatters, and even a small, mostly unmarked, cemetery. For the next ten years, I regularly returned to those cabins, examining artifacts and trying to decipher details about their former inhabitants. To my disappointment, no matter how many people I asked, no one on campus seemed to know who had lived there, when, or why they left.

During my second year of graduate school at UNC Greensboro, working toward my Master’s in History and Museum Studies, I was faced with the task of choosing a thesis topic—a task that was all too easy. I set to work analyzing and piecing together census records, news articles, archived photographs, property maps, and more. The product was a general overview of slavery and black history at Hampden-Sydney, focusing on four families and their relationships with the school. After I graduated, the curator of the Atkinson Museum asked if I would continue my research, eventually to culminate in a walking tour and exhibit, and I am grateful. I have spent the past six months delving deeper into my research, becoming familiar with the College’s earliest janitors, bell ringers, butlers, cooks, and laundresses, as well as their descendants—many of whom still work for or live near the College today. Allow me to share one of my favorite examples:

Rhoda Randolph, born 1865, lived at Hampden-Sydney and worked as a laundress for

the College boys. She also worked for Dr. James R. Thornton as a live-in housekeeper, until he provided her with a small plot of land across Via Sacra, in the wooded area now home to the college observatory. She lived there in a small house with seven children—Lewis, Monroe, Mary, Peyton, Louise, Ida, and Rhodie, as well as her niece Edmonia Goldman, and her grandson Francis. Affectionately given the name Francis “the Axe Man” because he carried an axe everywhere he went, Francis lived near the observatory until he was moved to a nursing



Willie Scott



Elizabeth Baker in the back exhibit hall.

home in 1996. A well-known figure on campus, he chopped firewood for neighbors and friends in return for payment or meals.

As an adult, Edmonia Goldman lived in the Mercy Seat community near Worsham, and raised her own family, including daughter Frances. Goldman also worked at least part-time at Hampden-Sydney as a babysitter for campus families. Frances grew up to marry Willie Scott, a bell ringer and janitor for the College, and for years she ran the well-loved Log Cabin daycare program on campus. Two of her children—Willie, Jr., and Delores—also worked at H-SC, in food service.

This family has an incredible legacy and just one example of many whose members have worked at Hampden-Sydney for more than a century.

Visit blogs.hsc.edu/untoldstory or www.facebook.com/theuntoldstoryathsc for more stories, and if you have any information to contribute please contact Elizabeth Baker at ebaker@hsc.edu.



Affectionately given the name Francis “the Axe Man” because he carried an axe everywhere he went

Winter Exhibit on Astrophotography

Brennan Aust ’17 and Logan McDonald ’16 are this school year’s student employees and began their terms working on the exhibit *The Universe in Color: Robert Gendler Astrophotography*. Both gentlemen worked hanging the beautiful images of galaxies and nebulae and mounting labels and text. Brennan also voiced the new audio tour portion of the exhibit, allowing visitors to hear technical aspects as well as the astronomical information on each piece.

The College has a strong connection to the field of astrophotography. Besides having an active physics department with a recently renovated observatory, the College has a more than one-hundred-and-seventy-five-year history with astrophotography through the work of John William Draper. Long famed for his work with photography, Draper wrote that he used the College’s telescope in the late 1830s to record images of light. Unfortunately, his process for retaining the images was not perfected until after he read of the Daguerre process. Only a short number of months after Draper left Hampden-Sydney for New York and a professorship there did he successfully begin a series of astrophotographical images of the Moon.

Another connection that Hampden-Sydney has to astrophotography is through John

William Draper’s son, Henry Draper, who was born in Prince Edward County while his famous father taught the sciences here. Henry went much further than his father in the field, taking a large number of images. By 1861 he had a large fully functional new observatory on his father’s estate at Hastings on Hudson, New York. He achieved a number of “firsts,” including the imaging of the Orion Nebula. His body of work was huge and proved so useful to the field of astronomy that it was used to create an Astronomical Star Catalog. Moreover, another honor was given after his death when an award was created in his name and endowed by his widow. The Henry Draper award was first given in 1886 by the National Academy of Sciences and continues today for outstanding achievements in astronomical physics.

To view more of the contemporary works of Astrophotographer Robert Gendler, many of which were included in the exhibit at the Atkinson Museum, visit his website at <http://www.robgendlerastropics.com/>.

Student Exhibit in March: Alert Today, Alive Tomorrow—Civil Defense in the Old Dominion

Logan McDonald '16

At the height of the cold war in the 1950s and '60s, Virginia lay in the proverbial crosshairs of any potential nuclear attack. With the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area to the north, Richmond in the center, and a wide array of strategically important military bases situated throughout the state, but concentrated around the Hampton Roads region, Virginia provided a wealth of appealing targets for incoming missiles and bombers. Once government planners and average citizens alike began to recognize the true threat of nuclear war on the state, they started to raise questions about how to live with the prospect of unimaginable destruction, as well as how, perhaps, to survive it.

In my upcoming exhibit in March, which is the product of my summer honors research, I aim to explain the resulting policies of American postwar civil defense as it pertains to the state of Virginia, while also touching on how it changed over time, the nationwide debates concerning civil defense, the eventual decline in prominence of atomic defense in the state, as well as Hampden-Sydney's unexpected importance to State defense programs via Professor (and later College President) Thomas Gilmer.

Gilmer, himself a Hampden-Sydney graduate from the Class of 1923, was a physics professor who taught at the College from 1927 through 1972, except for his stint as College president from 1960 to 1963. He was also instrumental in the design of the science building that today bears his name. He first became active in state

level civil defense planning after he began taking summer courses offered by the Atomic Energy Commission at Oak Ridge Laboratories in Tennessee in 1950. In those courses, he became one of only two people in the Commonwealth of Virginia to be certified to train radiological monitoring teams, which were tasked with recording and reporting atmospheric radiation readings following an atomic attack. When a locality requested a radiological monitoring team, the volunteers would be sent to Hampden-Sydney or the University of Virginia, where they would be trained to use the specialized equipment, such as Geiger counters, ion chamber survey meters, and dosimeters which were issued to monitoring units. It is also likely that some H-SC students and faculty were also trained as monitors around that time.

Both federal and state civil defense agencies were technically allowed to commandeer any federal or state-owned facilities during or after a nuclear attack for use as evacuation points for government departments and personnel as well as for emergency hospitals and shelters. While the College would not likely be commandeered by any government agencies, the involvement of Dr. Gilmer in civil defense meant that the campus was significantly involved in civil defense, as exhibited by the marked community shelter on campus in the basements of Johns Auditorium and Morton Hall.

If any alumnus or staff member reading this newsletter was involved in civil defense on

campus with Dr. Gilmer during this time, or knows someone who was, I would appreciate hearing from you. More memories and personal accounts are always welcome and would be an excellent addition to the exhibit.

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Supporting the Museum

The Museum's operating budget comes principally from gifts from its friends, augmented by income from its small endowment.

As a result, individual gifts of annual support are extremely important to the continued health and progress of the Museum, both as a guardian of Hampden-Sydney's heritage and as a memorial to Mrs. P. T. Atkinson, who founded it.

Gifts may be mailed in the enclosed envelope or submitted online at www.hsc.edu/Museum.html and choosing **Make a Gift**. You may specify that your gift be used by the Museum. All gifts to the College are tax-deductible.



Angela J. Way,
Director-Curator,
Atkinson Museum
of Hampden-Sydney
College

The MISSION of the Esther Thomas Atkinson Museum is to promote an awareness and understanding of the history of Hampden-Sydney College as it relates to its role in the history of Virginia and the United States, while serving to support and enhance the College's mission to form good men and good citizens in an atmosphere of sound learning.