

Collection Update for September 2020

581 new items were added in September

Hosted

- Boston Public Library - Boston Pictorial Archive (225 items)*
- Boston Public Library - Medieval and Early Renaissance Manuscripts (3 items)*
- Boston Public Library - Colonial and Revolutionary America (6 items)*

Harvested

- Scottish Rite Masonic Museum (6 new collections; 345 new items)**
- Southeast Asian Digital Archive (1 new collection; 3 new items)**

* items added to existing collection ** re-harvest

166,280 Item views 847,293 Total item-level records 344,413 Total hosted items



Meet New Digital Commonwealth Board Member

Sonia Pacheco

Sonia was elected to serve on the Digital Commonwealth Board in June. We talked with Sonia about her career and what led her to Digital Commonwealth. While Sonia is new to the Board, she is no stranger to Digital Commonwealth, having served on the Conference Committee for several years. She is now Chair of the 2021 Conference Committee.

Can you tell us about your professional background and what drew you to pursuing a career as an Archivist?

I always knew I wanted to work in a field related to libraries. Through some research, I discovered that archivists shared a lot of skills with librarians but got to deal with cooler stuff! And that sold me on the profession. Like many of my professional counterparts, I started off in a precarious job (grant funded and reporting to a board that had expectations that were unattainable), and moved on to a more stable, but seemingly unrelated position. My next two professional positions at first glance appear a bit odd and unrelated to the job I have held for the last 11 years, archivist for the Ferreira-Mendes Portuguese-American Archives (UMass Dartmouth). I worked as a community development librarian and librarian archivist, both positions at Canadian public libraries. However, it was these positions that allowed me to gain skills that weren't discussed during my formal education, and that have ultimately become integral to the work that I do as an archivist. These include, but are not limited to, community engagement, outreach, donor relations, programming and public relations. These are skills I regularly argue are foundational for an archivist who is engaged and actively working with the community they are documenting.

How and when did you first become aware of DC? I learned about the Digital Commonwealth via a request about 8 years ago to present on a newspaper digitization project I manage. From there, I attended the conference on a yearly basis, and subsequently became a member of the conference planning committee.

How do you use DC in your professional life? The DC is part of my professional life as my institution is a contributor (well, we're awaiting ingestion), so scanning and describing collection items is part of my regular tasks. In addition, I regularly use the DC as a reference tool, to find primary source materials that will assist students and faculty in their research needs.

Why did you decide to become involved with DC? My interest in DC is because I see incredible value and potential in the work that it does. I believed, and that belief has only grown with my involvement, that DC is a tool for the expansion of knowledge, not only about Massachusetts history, but also Massachusetts heritage institutions and the work they are doing.

What do you hope to achieve in your tenure on the Board? I don't have set goals as a board member. My hope is that my existing skills can be utilized to assist the DC in increasing collections, member institutions, and community knowledge about the great work that we are doing.

Welcome to the Board, Sonia, and thank you for your continued service!

"Expanding Your Digital Horizons" Online Event Series

Monday October 26, 2020, 1-2pm

"Using Digital Resources for Genealogical Research" with Molly Rogers from AmericanAncestors.org

Pre-registration is required. Cost is \$10 for Digital Commonwealth members; \$20 for non-members.

[Register for "Using Digital Resources for Genealogical Research"](#)

Wednesday December 9, 2020, 10-11am

"Provenance Research: Case Studies from the van Otterloo Collection at the MFA, Boston", with Samantha Muir

Provenance has always been a key part of art historical research, inextricably linked to the art market and the history of taste. The ownership history can offer a greater understanding of an artwork's physical appearance and historical significance, but it is also crucial in determining whether an object can be ethically and legally brought into a museum's collection.

Using case studies from the 2017 promised gift of 17th century Dutch and Flemish paintings from the Eijk and Rose-Marie van Otterloo collection, Samantha Muir, former Research Associate for Provenance at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, will discuss how she goes about tracing the ownership history of an object.

This talk will examine the methodology, resources, and challenges of provenance research that arise throughout the process of revealing the previously unknown stories of an artwork's history.

Samantha Muir was the Research Associate for Provenance at the MFA, Boston, for the past three years. Before this, she was a Graduate Research Intern responsible for updating the object files of the more than 80 Millet paintings in the museum's collection and then the Exhibition Intern for the 2017 *Botticelli and the Search for the Divine* before being hired soon after as a provenance researcher.

Sam was selected to be part of the 2018 cohort of the German/American Provenance Research Exchange Program (PREP), a two-week conference for museum professionals to share their experience and deepen their knowledge in the field of provenance research. She has also participated in the AAMD's Advanced Nazi-Era Provenance Workshops held at the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in Washington D.C.

Sam earned her BA in the History of Art at the University of Toronto and attended Christie's Education in London, where she earned her MLitt in Art History and Art World Practices in 2015.

Pre-registration is required. There is no charge for this event.

[Register for "Provenance Research"](#)

Other events in the works for January 2021, **two part series** - "**Sacco-Vanzetti: The Case That Will Not Die**" and "**Sacco-Vanzetti: The Impact on Art and Literature**" with MA Appeals Court Justice, Judge Peter Agnes (ret.).

Digital Commonwealth 2021 Conference "The Politics of Collections" Online on Tuesday, April 13, 2021

- Live from LA, Keynote Speaker, Virginia Steel, University Librarian, UCLA
- John Bracken, Executive Director, DPLA
- Eben English, Digital Repository Services Manager at the Boston Public Library will present his annual update on the Digital Commonwealth collection

Digital Commonwealth Survey on Diversity, Equity, Access and Inclusion (DEAI)

If you are a member of Digital Commonwealth, you should have recently received a short survey from the Board regarding your organization's position on DEAI. The Board very much values our members' inputs on this important issue. The survey will take less than 5 minutes to complete. Thank you for your time!

Member News

Welcome New Members!

Cary Memorial Library
UMass Dartmouth

Welcome Back Returning Members!

Arlington - Robbins Library
Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University
Bancroft Memorial Library & General William F. Draper
Library
Bishop Fenwick High School
Boston Children's Hospital Archives
Boston Children's Museum
Boston College
Carver Public Library
Duxbury Free Library
Emerson College
Hatfield Historical Society

Holyoke Community College
Jewish Heritage Center
Massachusetts Archives
Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners
Medford Historical Society & Museum
Newburyport Public Library
Noble & Cooley Center for Historic Preservation (NCCHP)
Northeastern University Libraries
Northern Essex Community College
Plainville Public Library
Salem Public Library
Somerville Public Library
Thomas Crane Public Library
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Wellesley College Library
Westborough Public Library
Westfield State University

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Digital Commonwealth BLM Statement