



# BALCH COLUMN

Thomas Balch Library ■ 208 W. Market Street ■ Leesburg, Virginia 20176  
703-737-7195 ■ Fax: 703-737-7150 ■ Email: balchlib@leesburgva.gov



## *News* FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Although Thomas Balch Library operations were significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic we were able to pivot our public services to virtual platforms. This required a considerable investment of time, creativity, and energy, leading to significant new demands in fulfilling virtual reference, creation of new digital content for remote outreach, creation of "how to" videos with our new mascot Wallace the Bear, restructuring of services and development of safe methods for reopening. The successful adoption and implementation of pandemic safety procedures allowed TBL to remain open to the public throughout the pandemic and opened new vistas for outreach.

Starting in September the Library will be open its pre-pandemic hours with one minor adjustment; we will close from 12-1 for lunch on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday to permit staff time for lunch and to prepare for afternoon visitors. While most of our programs, previously scheduled as virtual, will remain virtual, we are hosting two in-person events this fall – Friends of the Thomas Balch Library annual meeting and Loudoun History Awards. Room rentals, tours, in person Sunday lectures, and the annual genealogical seminar will resume in 2022. We look forward to incorporating some of our virtual programming successes into new public service opportunities.

Thomas Balch Library Endowment Foundation funded three new benches, installed in June, for the Agnes and B. Powell Harrison Garden at the Library. These benches are a lovely addition to the garden. As one Town Commissioner said "it has my vote as the most attractive small public space in Leesburg. The benches are just right, the perfect complement to the setting." Come stop by and enjoy the garden.

Friends of the Thomas Balch Library will continue to sponsor our genealogical seminars. For 2022 we plan to host a panel with speakers talking about real life experiences with traditional and genetic research. We are also making plans for researching Irish genealogy for March of 2023 – a reprise of the ever popular Ulster Historical Foundation North American Tour.

As with all our events these will be posted to our website, on social media, and in press releases.

Since my last letter, there have been several changes in staff. Jennifer Calamos Smith, our Library Admin, resigned in April to pursue other adventures. Mary Frye returned from retirement to assist us until a new Library Admin was on board. This transition happened quickly and in June we welcomed Victoria Summers as our new Library Admin. In August we were joined by a new Library Associate, Isabella Meier, to assist us with in person reference. Please welcome these outstanding staff members when next you have the opportunity.

The library remains a destination for local residents as well as visitors from across the country and from around the globe. It is a gathering place for local historians, genealogists, and researchers. During the pandemic our efforts to provide virtual access enabled researchers to maintain their special connection with us so that once we reopened our doors, researchers began returning from across the United States. We look forward to the days when our global researchers will once again be able to rejoin us in person. For those of us who staffed the library, uncertain of researcher responses to our virtual efforts, we need not have worried – your response was overwhelming and kept us busier than ever. We thank you all for your ongoing interest in and support of the Library's mission. No words can express how deeply rewarding it is to have our efforts so profoundly reinforced and supported.

As always, we at the library look forward to welcoming you when next you are able to visit the Library.

Alexandra S. Gressitt  
Library Director



Victoria Summers  
Library Admin

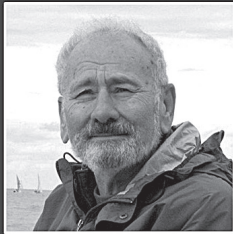


Isabella Meier  
Library Associate



Although Thomas Balch Library has resumed its pre-pandemic hours, unless otherwise noted, all programs at Thomas Balch Library will be conducted on a virtual platform through December 2021. Pre-registration for all classes is required: <https://tinyurl.com/TBLEvents>. In person Sunday Lectures, Tours, and Seminars resume Winter 2022.

## VIRTUAL



Join  
Andy Jampoler  
[www.jampoler.com](http://www.jampoler.com)

at Balch Library  
Virtual Lecture Series  
(Registration Required)

### LUNCHEON TRAVEL LECTURES

Looking for adventure? Andrew Jampoler will be presenting three virtual lectures taking you across the globe – Pre-registration is required: <https://tinyurl.com/TBLEvents>

Andrew Jampoler, who has been writing full time for more than twenty years, is an amazing storyteller who has given illustrated presentations on his books and magazine articles, and other expeditions and adventures at sea, to audiences at the Library of Congress, the National Archives, in museums and embassies, at libraries and book stores, and aboard cruise ships around the world – remember those? He is an alumnus of Columbia College and of the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University, in New York City, and of the US State Department Foreign Service Institute's School of Language Study. During more than twenty years on active duty with the US Navy, Jampoler, a naval aviator who flew Lockheed P-3 airplanes in search of submarines, also commanded a land-based maritime patrol aircraft squadron and an air station. Later he was a senior sales and marketing executive in the international aerospace industry.

### GREELY EXPEDITION

**Wednesday, 29 September 2021, 1PM**

Disinterest in Washington and the failure of two annual resupply missions to arrive condemned Army Lieutenant Adolphus Greely's 1881-1884 scientific expedition in Arctic Canada to starvation, cannibalism, and death. His plight and rescue were major news stories through the 1880's.

### VOYAGE THROUGH AN ENCHANTED LAND

**Wednesday, 20 October 2021, 1PM**

In 1851-52 Navy Lieutenants William Herndon and Lardner Gibbon explored the Amazon River basin the hard way: west to east, from the river's headwaters in Peru to its mouth on the Atlantic. Their superb official account of travels thousands of miles through the lush, fabulously strange heart of the continent became a best seller, and made Herndon into one of the age's celebrity adventurers.

### LOST IN THE ICE

**Wednesday 17 November 2021, 1PM**

Lightship Cross Rip vanished off her station near Nantucket, Massachusetts, in February 1918 during the record "freeze-up" that year, the coldest North American winter in a century. Caught in pack ice, the old, small vessel with her crew of Cape Cod watermen drifted into the broad Atlantic and was never seen again. What precisely happened to Cross Rip and why, and was her first mate a hero?

## IN PERSON

### FRIENDS OF THE THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY ANNUAL EVENT

**Sunday, 12 September 2021, 3-6PM**

This year, Friends of the Thomas Balch Library will hold its annual event on Sunday, September 12 at the residence of Steve and Julie Chapin—209 Cornwall Street Leesburg, Virginia, from 3 to 6PM. You will be able to visit Thomas Balch Library from 3 to 4PM. Light refreshments will be served. The cost is \$95 per person. Invitations to the event will be sent to members of Friends of the Thomas Balch Library the week of August 16. If you do not receive an invitation, or are not currently a member and want to attend, contact us by requesting an invitation at [balchfriends.org](http://balchfriends.org) website.

## VIRTUAL

### COUNTING CROWS

Linda Sittig

**Wednesday 22 September 2021, 1PM**



Linda Sittig's sincere belief that every woman deserves to have her story told shines through her historical novels, *Cut From Strong Cloth*, *Last Curtain Call*, and *Counting Crows*. Her most recent book, *Counting Crows*, is the third in her "Threads of Courage" series and tells the story of young

Maggie Canavan, who goes to New York City in the summer of 1918. She intends to take art lessons but becomes embroiled in the sweatshop scandals that have claimed many young immigrant women's lives. She falls in love with the city until the Flu Pandemic changes everything, and Maggie is forced to grow up overnight.

Award-winning writer Linda Harris Sittig was born in New York City, raised in northern New Jersey, and put down her adult roots in Virginia. During her teaching career with Fairfax County Schools, the Greater Washington Reading Council selected Sittig as the Outstanding Reading Teacher of the Year. The following year she was honored at the state level. A decade later, the International Reading Association awarded her The Outstanding International Elementary Reading Teacher of the Year medal. Based on the belief that family literacy leads to lifelong readers, Sittig wrote a 15-year weekly newspaper column, "Kinderbooks," reviewing the best in children's literature. The column ran in multiple Washington, DC area newspapers, including *The Loudoun Times-Mirror*. Combining her passion for history and strong women, Sittig created a blog, [www.strongwomeninhistory.com](http://www.strongwomeninhistory.com), currently being followed by over 1200 readers who hail from 64 different countries. Each month she highlights the stories of women who should have become famous.

## VIRTUAL

### THE POWELL FAMILY PAPERS

Alison Herring

Wednesday, 27 October 2021, 1PM



Alison Herring is an independent historian engaged in researching and working towards the publication of the Powell Family Papers held at William & Mary. Herring learned of the Powell Family Papers while volunteering in an online transcription project at the university's Swem Library. The

collection includes a large volume of documents that belonged to Selina Lloyd Powell, her husband Charles L. Powell, and their six children. In her research, Herring also uncovered the story of Ariana Bingham and her four children, all enslaved by the Powells. The two families lived near Upperville and in Leesburg before the Civil War, and the collection provides rich details of life at that time. Their paths diverged in 1851 when the Powells moved west to Henry, IL and Ariana and her children were sold to the Dulany family at Welbourne Farm. The Powells later returned to Virginia and opened a boarding school for girls in Winchester on the eve of the Civil War. Closing the school in 1862, they fled the area, living separately for the next three years and supporting themselves by teaching young women around the state. Their separation produced a large volume of letters documenting their experiences, the people they encountered, and the events they witnessed. Herring found their stories compelling and tracked down the old houses where they lived and taught, reuniting their letters with those who live and work at those sites today.

Alison Herring was a Senior Manager in the Audit Practice of KPMG LLP auditing public companies in a variety of industries. She earned her bachelor's degree at the University of Arkansas where she currently serves on the Walton College Accounting Advisory Board. She earned her master's degree at William & Mary where she currently serves on the Mason Accounting Programs Board.

## IN PERSON

### LOUDOUN HISTORY AWARDS

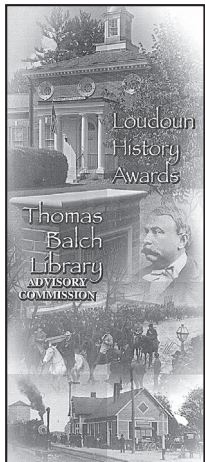
Sunday, 7 November 2021, 2PM

Thomas Balch Library

Thomas Balch Library Advisory

Commissioners will present the twenty-

seventh annual Loudoun History Awards. This event honors individuals who have made significant contributions to preserving Loudoun's past through collection of county documents and memorabilia, preservation of historic landmarks, visual arts, writing, and long-time commitment to local history organizations. For a brochure or information on nominating individuals, contact the Library Director at 703/737-7195.

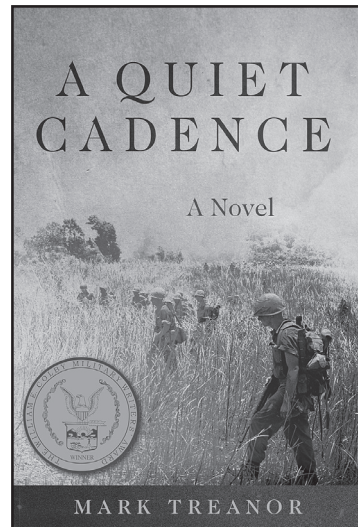


## VIRTUAL

### A QUIET CADENCE

Mark Treanor

Wednesday, 15 December 2021, 1PM



Mark Treanor's first novel, *A Quiet Cadence*, the story of a young Marine in combat and dealing with its aftermath over the years since his war, was published by the Naval Institute Press in 2020. The book won the William E. Colby Award as the best solo work of fiction or nonfiction of 2020 making a major contribution to military history, intelligence operations or international affairs, as well as the American Library Association's W. Y. Boyd award for the best military fiction published in 2020.

A graduate of the US Naval Academy, Treanor served as an infantry and artillery officer in the US Marine Corps where he led a rifle platoon in Vietnam, an artillery battery in the 2d Marine Division, was aide de-camp to the Commanding General of the 2d MARDIV, and was an instructor in leadership, weapons and tactics at The Basic School. He is also a graduate of the University of Maryland School of Law, where he was a member of the Law Review and Order of the Coif. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a senior fellow of the American Leadership Forum. He is former Chairman of the Advisory Committee to the Export-Import Bank of the United States, Vice-Chairman of the Board of Visitors of the US Naval Academy, Chairman of the National Defense University Foundation, and a former member of the Boards of the National Defense University, the University of Maryland School of Law, the US Chamber of Commerce Institute for Legal Reform, the University of North Carolina Center for Banking and Finance, and the Financial Services Roundtable. He has participated in Department of Defense - sponsored fact-finding missions to Iraq, the Horn of Africa, Yemen, the Caucasus and other locations in Africa and Europe.

## IN PERSON

### FRIENDS OF THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY

#### ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, 9 January 2022, 2PM

Friends of the Thomas Balch Library will hold its 26th Annual Meeting and Election of Officers on Sunday, January 9, 2022 at Thomas Balch Library beginning at 2 PM. This year's program will be "Oral History Series: Interview with Wynne Saffer" presented by Patty Renner-Rogers, Sarah Huntington, and Rich Gillespie. The snow/ice make-up date will be Sunday, January 23, 2022.



# Exhibits 2021-2022

## MARGARET MERCER ROOM — 2021 —

### SEPTEMBER

Loudoun County Clerk of the Circuit Court,  
Historic Records Department

### OCTOBER

Wynne Saffer  
Personal Collections

### NOVEMBER

Thomas Balch Library  
Selections from Collections in the Rust Archives

### DECEMBER

Virginia Piedmont Heritage Area Association

## — 2022 —

### JANUARY

Virginia Piedmont Heritage Area Association

### FEBRUARY

Black History Committee

### MARCH

Loudoun County Public Schools Student Artwork

### APRIL

Loudoun Heritage Farm Museum

### MAY

Thomas Balch Library – History of Thomas Balch Library

### JUNE

Charles Johnston  
Granny's Cooking: Meals at 21 West Loudoun St., 1950s-1970

### JULY-AUGUST

John Creamer  
Loudoun County Civil War Artifacts

### SEPTEMBER

Thomas Balch Library – Elaine Thompson Collection

### OCTOBER

Morven Park

### NOVEMBER

Loudoun County Public Schools in conjunction with the  
Douglass High School Commemorative Committee  
History of Douglass High School

### DECEMBER

Donna Bohanon  
The 1883 Mass Meeting Delegation

## LOWER LEVEL MEETING ROOM — 2021 —

### JULY-SEPTEMBER

Loudoun Sketch Club

### OCTOBER-DECEMBER

Jim Hanna - Photography

## — 2022 —

### JANUARY-MARCH

Forrest Holbert presented by  
Friends of Leesburg Public Arts

### APRIL-JUNE TBD

### JULY-SEPTEMBER TBD

### OCTOBER-DECEMBER

Friends of Leesburg Public Arts



# Other Activities AT THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY

**Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission** sponsors the annual Loudoun History Awards. It meets at the library the second Wednesday of each month at 7PM. The public is always welcome. Visit their webpage at: <https://tinyurl.com/e9vac4pf>

**Thomas Balch Library Endowment Foundation** a 501c3 established in 2015 to receive, maintain, and administer assets in perpetuity to support programs and outreach services of the Thomas Balch Library. Visit their webpage at: <https://tinyurl.com/xu55dx6w>

**Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc.,** a 501c3 organized to provide support for Thomas Balch Library, meets at the library every other month, sponsors an annual fundraiser, and publishes a quarterly newsletter *The Chronicle*. For more information, visit [www.balchfriends.org](http://www.balchfriends.org) or call 540/579-2825.

**Black History Committee of Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc.,** meets at the library the first Saturday of every month at 10AM. The public is always welcome. For more information, visit [www.balchfriends.org](http://www.balchfriends.org) or call 540/579-2825.

**Loudoun County Civil War Round Table** meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30PM except January and February. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in Loudoun County's history during the American Civil War. Guests are welcome to attend two meetings without charge. Annual family dues are \$25. For further information visit: <http://lccwrt.wordpress.com>

**The Virginia Forum** – The Virginia Forum will hold their 2022 annual conference in-person at the Virginia War Memorial on April 7-9, 2022! The Virginia Forum, an interdisciplinary conference, offers an opportunity for scholars, teachers, writers, museum curators, historic site interpreters, archivists, librarians, and all those interested in Virginia history and culture to share their knowledge, research, and experiences. Additional information, including previous conference programs, is available online at [www.virginiaforum.org](http://www.virginiaforum.org).

## On the Way to Normal

### STARTING 7 SEPTEMBER 2021

Thomas Balch Library Hours will be:  
Monday & Friday 10-5 (Closed 12-1 for lunch);  
Tuesday & Thursday 10-8 (closed 12-1 for lunch);  
Wednesday 2-8; Saturday 11-4; Sunday 1-5

Classes and lectures through  
December 2021 remain virtual.

To register for these events:  
<https://tinyurl.com/TBLEvents>

# THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY

## 2021-22 Classes

### RESEARCHING HISTORY AND GENEALOGY AT THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY

Register in advance for classes: <https://tinyurl.com/TBLEvents>

#### DIGITAL HISTORY (Virtual)

**Thursday, 9 September 2021, 10AM**

What new digital tools are available to help access and understand historic documents and data? **Stephanie Seal Walters, PhD**, former Senior Library Associate at Thomas Balch Library, will introduce the digital side of historical research and explore different digital humanities' methodologies that are accessible and friendly to all users. Dr. Walters is a special projects manager at SchoolStatus and an independent scholar.

#### PRESERVATION FOR HOME ARCHIVES (Virtual)

**Thursday, 7 October 2021, 10AM**

**Gabrielle Sanchez**, Contract Archivist and former Library Reference Associate at Thomas Balch Library, will introduce participants to the basics of preservation and discuss the best ways to house and protect personal archives. Topics will include proper ways to handle letters, books, photographs, and other media; common conservation needs; threats to paper and electronic media; and the dangers of non-archival storage products.

#### IDENTIFICATION AND CARE OF PHOTOGRAPHS (Virtual)

**Thursday, 4 November 2021, 10AM**

**Laura E. Christiansen**, Curator of Manuscripts and Archives, will guide participants through a practical approach to the identification and preservation of photographs from the daguerreotype to the inkjet print. The workshop will include an overview of the history and technology of photographic materials, identification and dating techniques, and best practices to care for and preserve your photograph collections.

#### RESEARCHING USING DEEDS

(Virtual)

**Thursday, 2 December 2021, 10AM**

**Wynne Saffer**, author of *Loudoun County, Virginia 1860 Land Tax Map*, will use a case study to demonstrate how to establish chain of title using deed indexes and other types of land ownership changes such as wills, marriages, old advertisements, and chancery cases.



**On the Way to Normal!**

#### AFRICAN AMERICAN GENEALOGY (Virtual)

**Thursday, 3 February 2022, 10AM**

In this class **Steve Hammond** and **Lori Kimball** will use case studies and examples from their research. Kimball, a member of the Black History Committee of Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, co-researcher of the Enslaved Community of President James Monroe, and researcher of the enslaved community at Oatlands, will discuss use of online resources, resources available at Thomas Balch Library, Loudoun County Courthouse, and repositories throughout the country. Hammond, a 7th generation member of the Syphax family of Washington, DC: a line moved by force to New Orleans and then by choice to Denver, will share his efforts to make the field more relatable and relevant to the public at large, particularly as interest in and access to DNA/ancestry/genealogy data becomes more available.

#### CENSUS RECORDS

**Thursday, 3 March 2022, 10AM**

In anticipation of the April 2022 release of the 1950 U.S. Federal Census, **Norah Schneider**, Library Genealogy Associate at Thomas Balch Library, discusses the use of census records in genealogical and historical research. This class will examine important features on US federal censuses from 1790 to 1940, look at the role of state censuses in research, and highlight special population schedules and non-population schedules.

#### RESEARCHING COURT RECORDS

**Thursday, 7 April 2022, 10AM**

**Jeanette Irby**, Loudoun County Circuit Court Judge and former Leesburg Town Attorney will discuss how to use court records and other resources for data that are frequently overlooked in genealogical and historical research. Irby will demonstrate how to mine court records for clues that can be used to collect information for genealogical research. Examples of these records include real estate records, chancery suits, estates, and indexes. Irby has researched land records dating from the 1700s and participated in genealogical seminars sponsored by the Warrenton Court House Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution of which she is past Regent. Irby currently serves as secretary of District VI of the Virginia DAR Chapters. She holds a BS

from Central Michigan University and a JD from Thomas Cooley Law School in Lansing, MI.

#### RESEARCHING YOUR HOUSE

**Thursday, 5 May 2022, 10AM**

In this class, Architectural Historian, **Maral Kalbian**, walks you through methods and sources for researching the history and architecture of your house, with special focus on Loudoun County and Virginia. Kalbian is a historic preservation specialist who has practiced in the Shenandoah Valley and Piedmont areas of Virginia for 34 years. She researches, evaluates, and documents historic architecture. She serves as a contractual architectural historian to several Virginia local governments including Clarke, and Frederick counties, and the City of Charlottesville. Her publications include *Clarke County, Virginia* (2011), *Frederick County: History Through Architecture* (1999), as well as other publications and professional reports.

#### MARYLAND PROPERTY RECORDS

**Thursday, 2 June 2022, 10AM**

Property research can be a powerful tool for exploring your family tree. Library Associate **Travis Shaw** will give a step-by-step introduction to a series of online tools that allow the user to access property records in the state of Maryland. Using these resources you can research deeds, plats, and other records from the 17th century to today from the comfort of the Thomas Balch Library or your own home. Shaw is a public history professional with nearly two decades of experience in historic preservation, archaeology, and museum education. He joined the staff at the Thomas Balch Library in 2015, and also serves as the Director of Education at the Virginia Piedmont Heritage Area Association.

#### RESEARCHING BRICK WALLS

**Thursday, 4 August 2022, 10AM**

Searched and searched for that one relative, but you've hit a brick wall? In this class, **Norah Schneider**, Library Genealogy Associate at Thomas Balch Library, discusses helpful tips, methodologies, and resources to work through brick wall research and other research conundrums.



# THE BALCH COLUMN

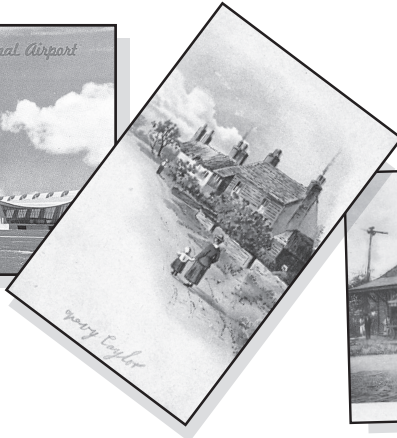
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## FALL 2021 LECTURES AND EVENTS

# *News about Collections and Exhibits*

## THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY VISUAL COLLECTIONS NOW SEARCHABLE ONLINE!

The screenshot shows the website header with the logo and navigation menu: HOME, KEYWORD SEARCH, ADVANCED SEARCH, RANDOM IMAGES, ARCHIVES, PHOTOS, LIBRARIES, OBJECTS. Below the menu is a grid of 24 thumbnail images, each with a unique ID (e.g., vc\_0049\_0380, vc\_0005\_0010, vc\_0098\_0091, etc.). A 'View More Images' link is at the bottom left of the grid. The footer contains the address: 208 West Market Street | Leesburg, VA 20176 | 703-737-7195.

In July 2021 Thomas Balch Library launched a new Visual Collections Catalog. Researchers may browse images and search across collections anywhere and anytime. The new online portal is: <https://thomasbalchlibrary.pastperfectonline.com/photo> and includes thousands of indexed images illustrating local history and dating from late the 1800s to the present. Staff will continue to transition content to the new catalog so check back often.

### THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY TO PARTICIPATE IN 9/11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM'S EDUCATION EXHIBITION.

Thomas Balch Library will participate in "September 11, 2001: The Day That Changed the World," a digital educational exhibition presenting the history of 9/11, its origins, and its ongoing implications through personal stories of those who witnessed and survived the attacks. The exhibition includes archival photographs and images of artifacts from the 9/11 Memorial & Museum's permanent collection. It explores consequences of terrorism on individual lives and communities at the local, national, and international levels, and encourages critical thinking about the legacies of 9/11. Developed and curated by the 9/11 Memorial & Museum, this exhibit is made possible in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities: Democracy Demands Wisdom. The digital exhibit will be on view at the Library throughout September 2021.