

WELCOME TO EMILY VOSS

The library welcomed Emily Voss, a new librarian, to the staff on August 1. Emily will be working in the Research Services Department as the library's outreach and academic engagement librarian. Emily joins us as a recent graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with dual master's degrees in Library and Information Studies and in Language, Literature, and Translation. She also has BAs in English Literature and Italian Studies from UWM. She has worked as a marketing and communications specialist at the UWM School of Freshwater Sciences.

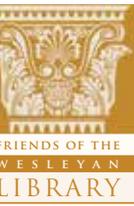
At Wesleyan, she will be our first outreach and academic engagement librarian, a new position that resulted from work done last year to reorganize parts of the library in line with long-term planning. The position is designed to work collaboratively with library staff and the broader Wesleyan community to further strengthen relationships between the library and other departments and programs on campus, and particularly to build library-related, learner-centered programming with students and faculty.

Emily will also be working closely with the Friends of the Wesleyan Library on programming that supports outreach to not only the campus but also to the broader Middletown community. This will provide opportunities to work with local organizations where natural collaborations would be enhanced by Wesleyan's presence.

— KENDALL HOBBS, RESEARCH LIBRARIAN AND COORDINATOR OF RESEARCH SERVICES —

The Friends are grateful for your generous donations, including a recent project donation by Stephen Darnell and numerous book donations.

If you would like to contribute to the work of the Friends through membership or specific donations towards our digitization, preservation and archival projects, research prize, or events, please email libfriends@wesleyan.edu or visit www.wesleyan.edu/libr/friends.



Funding for *Check It Out* is provided by the Friends of the Wesleyan Library.

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WORLD MUSIC ARCHIVES RECEIVES RECORDING PRESERVATION GRANT

The World Music Archives has received a grant of over \$48,000 from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) for the purposes of digitizing and preserving a significant collection of American musical history.

Since around 2004 the Archives has been the repository of 30 years of recorded folk-music concerts from the Hudson Valley region, deposited by Phil Ciganer, the owner of the Towne Crier Café in Pawling, N.Y. (now relocated to Beacon, N.Y.). Most of the concerts were recorded by Ciganer in the Café, and these feature a long list of celebrities: Pete Seeger and Arlo Guthrie, contemporary singer-songwriters such as Richard Thompson and Robin and Linda Williams, and world musicians such as Alhaji Bai Konte. But Ciganer's activities also included organizing and recording several folk festivals in the area.

The Great Hudson River Revival festival was an outgrowth of the Clearwater Foundation started by Pete and Toshi Seeger in the 1960s, with folk-music concerts raising environmental awareness in the Hudson River Valley. In 1978, the concerts found a permanent home at Croton Point Park in the town of Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y., and an annual festival was organized. Phil Ciganer supervised the recording of stage performances for the first couple of years of the Great Hudson festival, and beginning in 1981, he organized an additional festival in the region, the Bear Mountain Festival of World Music and Dance, which lasted two years before folding. Recordings of stage performances from both of these festivals came to the World Music Archives, along with most of the recorded Towne Crier performances, when Phil deposited them in hopes of preserving them and making them available for research and education.

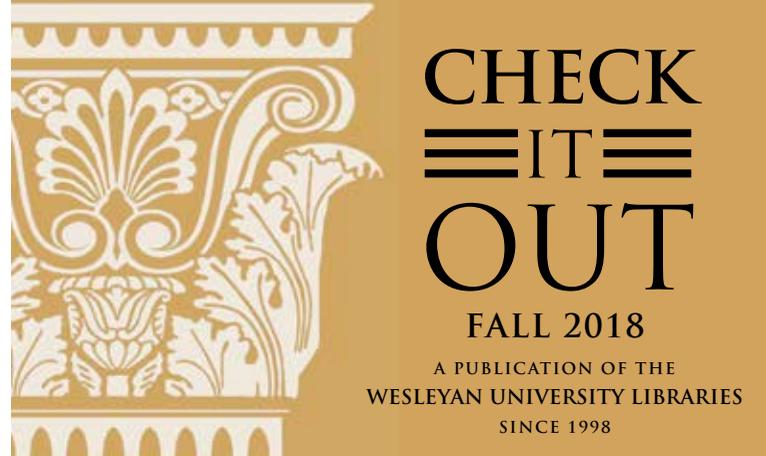
In 2017 the Archives submitted an application for a pilot round of digitization grants, as part of CLIR's Recordings at Risk project, targeting a small subset of the Great Hudson River Revival festival recordings. Our application was rejected, but we were encouraged to apply in a later round with a larger collection. In this new application, submitted in February 2018, we included all the Great Hudson and Bear Mountain festival recordings, comprising over 240 hours of performances on both cassettes and reel-to-reel tapes, and were rewarded with the grant in May. Our partnering applicant, the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) will do all the digitization work, while Wesleyan will store all the digital audio files on its servers. Listening access will always be provided in-house for visitors to the World Music Archives. While online access to the recordings in the future will depend on securing performers' permissions and so cannot be guaranteed, we will endeavor to pursue these permissions and make available whatever we can.

These festival performances are a wonderful representation of not only a quintessentially American musical culture but also an environmental movement. To quote Anthony Seeger, "The Great Hudson River Revival was an important moment in the ecology movement to clean up the Hudson and it enlisted many musicians who probably performed specific repertory for it that ... may not have been recorded elsewhere. ... One of the great strengths of these archival collections is that they include not only the sounds of the music but also the voices and ideas of the performers as they interact with their audiences."

— ALEC MCLANE, MUSIC LIBRARIAN AND DIRECTOR OF THE WORLD MUSIC ARCHIVES —



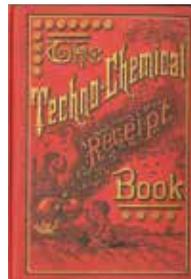
▲ Pete Seeger, 1979



"SEVEN COLLECTIONS IN SEARCH OF A THESIS" EXHIBITION

On view in the Special Collections & Archives exhibit cases from April 2018 until October break, "Seven Collections in Search of a Thesis" highlights little-known book collections with significant research value. Each of the featured collections demonstrates the old adage, "the whole is more than the sum of its parts." By looking at these collections as coherent wholes, rather than just groups of individual books, new research paths and new ways of understanding the past emerge. Each collection also takes on new meaning when analyzed through a modern lens.

The show includes collections of interest to students in a variety of disciplines. For American studies and English majors, the Baskin Collection of Victorian Bindings and the D.H. Lawrence Collection support the study of literary publishing and readership in the 19th and 20th centuries. The Baskin Collection includes a significant number of American antebellum literary annuals containing works by both very famous authors and people who are virtually unknown today. The Lawrence Collection provides many editions of a work that has one of the most fascinating and complex publication histories of modern times, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Theater majors will find a wealth of sources for studying the history of performance and celebrity in the collection of Harold Moulton, an American actor (and book collector) who performed with Eva Le Gallienne's Civic Repertory Theatre Company (1926–1936). Both the Angling Collection (yes, books about fishing) and the Beales



Collection are full of intriguing topics to captivate social historians. Featured in the exhibit are Beales pamphlets related to women, from the very scarce *One Thousand Ways of Popping the Question* (London, 1878) to treatments of issues that were as relevant in the 19th century as they are today, including human trafficking, police brutality, refugees, and fair housing. The Jarvis Nichols Husted Medical Library includes about 1,500 volumes bequeathed by a member of the Class of 1845. Among its many strengths are numerous books on epidemiology and military medicine. The Williams Memorial Reference Library is a chemist's dream. Collected by Boston secondary school

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FROM THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN

As I look back on my first months as the new Caleb T. Winchester University Librarian, I stand in awe of both the possibilities before us and the illustrious history which preceded us. I'm reminded of this union of possibility and history each day as I walk up the steps of Olin Library and watch the progress of the window restoration project. These majestic windows, original to the 1928 building, have looked upon generations of Wesleyan scholars. Once refurbished they will continue to protect both our stunning historical collections and the present and future of innovative scholarship.

"Your clear brain, your large heart, your fertile imagination"—these words were used by Wesleyan President William Shanklin at the 1919 commencement to describe Caleb T. Winchester. They seem to me to be the exact characteristics necessary to support students and faculty at a world-class institution like Wesleyan in the 21st century and beyond. I hope you will join me in my optimism and excitement as we position the libraries and collections to support Wesleyan scholars now and in the future.

I look forward to learning more about and working with the entire Wesleyan community. My door is always open.

— ANDREW WHITE, CALEB T. WINCHESTER UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN —

UNIVERSITY ARCHIVIST, LEITH JOHNSON, RETIRES



Leith Johnson, University Archivist since 2012, retired on June 29, 2018. As archivist, Leith was responsible for all aspects of the Wesleyan archives, manuscripts, and local history collections. He also served in other positions at Wesleyan throughout the years. From 2007 to 2009, he was the project archivist for the William Manchester Papers in Special Collections & Archives, and from 1990 to 2007, he was the associate curator (later co-curator) of Wesleyan's Cinema Archives. Library colleagues, faculty, and staff praised his deep knowledge of American and Wesleyan history, his professionalism, his teaching and presentation skills, and his sense of humor. Testimonials included admiration for Leith's unfailing helpfulness and flexibility, as well as his calm presence in all kinds of circumstances.

To honor his 25 years of service, donations were made to WESU, where Leith is a dj, and to the Friends of the Wesleyan Library Adopt a Book program, to restore a book from his field of interest. The book that was chosen was *Acts and Laws of the State of Connecticut, in America* (New London: T. Green, 1784). This volume has a rich local provenance, having belonged to Matthew Russell (1794), a member of one of Middletown's prominent families, and Isaac Webb (1830), a Middletown schoolmaster, who ran a school for boys attended by future President Rutherford B. Hayes. Webb, best known at Wesleyan for Webb Hall, the dormitory for women in the latter part of the first period of coeducation (1872–1912), gave the book to Wesleyan's Philorhetorician Society, one of our earliest student organizations.

Leith will be greatly missed by all, but we congratulate him and wish him all the best for an enjoyable retirement.

— JENNIFER HADLEY '84, MA '86 AND SUZY TARABA '77, MALS '10 —

(continued from cover)

chemistry teacher and chemistry textbook author, Rufus Phillips Williams (1851–1911), the Williams Library includes rare alchemical texts, 19th-century chemistry textbooks for all ages, and a wealth of other books supporting research into the history of chemistry.

Each of the collections on display offers a world of possibilities for research and would be an excellent foundation for a first-rate senior thesis.

— SUZY TARABA '77, MALS '10, DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES —



IMAGE COURTESY OF OLIVIA DRAKE MALS '08



▲ "Before" photos of Olin windows

IMAGES COURTESY OF OLIVIA DRAKE MALS '08 AND JENNIFER HADLEY '84, MA '86

OLIN LIBRARY GETS A NEW OUTLOOK

Olin Library received a “face lift” this summer courtesy of a major project to remove, refurbish, and put back in place the windows located in the original (ca. 1928) building. Although the windows have held up well for being 90 years old, improvements in glass options, the ability to increase energy efficiency, and the need to address mechanical issues to tighten up the “building envelope” makes the project welcome, despite the occasional strange noises associated with the task.

The project began right after commencement in May and is expected to be completed by late October, weather permitting. The windows, once removed, are being sent to Femenella & Associates, a company in New Jersey that specializes in restoring these types of impressive (and irreplaceable) windows to their past glory. In the meantime, should you happen to come by the library, you’ll see temporary windows in place so you’ll still be able to enjoy the rest of the library’s impressive architecture.

— DIANE KLARE, ASSOCIATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN FOR RESEARCH AND ACCESS SERVICES —

HISTORY OF LIFE

It is always mind-bending to imagine even the most idle of men toiling for thousands of hours to amass millions of trinkets in dusty cabinets into which few would see. In the Joe Webb Peoples Museum of Natural History, we manage hundreds of thousands of specimens collected since the early 1800s. In the decades since the dissolution of the former Wesleyan Museum in the Judd Hall of Natural Sciences, the specimens fell into disregard and many lost their original accession data. The most tragic part of this history is the loss of many irreplaceable treasures from the heyday of natural history museums that were, in retrospect, almost wantonly strewn across the campus.



▲ Andy Tan '21 and Yu Kai Tan '20 restoring the skull of Shelley the Glyptodon, gift of Orange Judd in 1871.

IMAGE COURTESY OF VIDEOGRAPHERS PATRICK BOHAN AND DENNIS HOHNE

Suffering from an excess of ambition, we sought to not only recover these treasures, but to reconstruct the narratives surrounding the evolution of our museum. Combing through heavily flourished scripts from the former museum in the Special Collections & Archives was a surreal experience. It was transportive and made the effort to assemble massive collections in the 19th century contextually comprehensible. From the *Annual Curators Report*, we learned that curators were fanatically writing neatly penned correspondence to fellow collectors and institutions to invite material exchanges, seeking the next great prize to “complete” our collections. Their aim was to collect all known species in all of the natural world. As we immersed ourselves in the proceedings of Wesleyan’s Cuvierian Society meeting minutes, it dawned upon us as to why that was a worthwhile endeavor. Members were never tired of reading published descriptions of new groups of animals at the meetings; the entirety of the natural science was based upon the observation, description, and classification of all species—taxonomy. We began to empathize with the noble effort and began seeing the natural world through the eyes of a 19th-century natural historian.

Working with sheafs of handwritten notes is never short of surprises. Day after day, anecdotes from the accession books kept piling up. A memorable instance was when we discovered that two unlabeled dolphin skulls in our bone collection were donated by Dr. Barratt, a local Middletown doctor and former Cuvierian Society president. We were amazed to learn from his account that “dolphins were sighted alive for several days in the Connecticut River.” We look forward to the next exciting moment of discovery in the archives.

—ANDY TAN '21 AND YU KAI TAN '20 —

FRIENDS OF THE WESLEYAN LIBRARY

To celebrate Constitution Day on September 17, 2018, Assistant Professor of Government Justin Craig Peck will give a talk entitled “Progress, Preservation, and the Constitution After Trump.” He will focus on the ways in which the Constitution aids and constrains reform movements in American politics. The aim will be to examine how, to what extent, and in what ways we should be concerned with constitutional “preservation.” Originally from Georgia, Peck received his PhD in government from the University of Virginia in 2014. Prior to graduate school he worked for two years in the Senate office of Christopher J. Dodd. Peck’s research explores the tensions that exist between the modern presidency and the rule of law, as well as Congress’s role in the promotion and enactment of civil rights policy.

The Friends of the Wesleyan Library are pleased to be collaborating with Russell Library on this event and thank their staff for hosting it. We look forward to this opportunity for the members of the Wesleyan and Middletown communities to connect and exchange ideas.

The annual book sale will take place on Saturday, September 29, in Olin lobby during Family Weekend. It is always a wonderful all-ages community celebration of books and reading.

If you would like to join the Friends, donate books, make a gift towards special library projects or events, or volunteer, please email libfriends@wesleyan.edu. Your support helps make many projects possible at the library, and we would like to accomplish even more.

— JENNIFER HADLEY, LIBRARY ASSISTANT, FRIENDS OF THE WESLEYAN LIBRARY —



▲ Visiting Assistant Professor of African American Studies Jesse Nasta '07, top left, and the students in his service-learning class, Black Middletown Lives.

IMAGE COURTESY OF CYNTHIA ROCKWELL

BLACK MIDDLETOWN LIVES: BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH COMMUNITY HISTORY

One of New England’s most historically significant African American communities, dating back two centuries, stood on what is now Wesleyan’s campus. In spring 2018, Visiting Assistant Professor of African American Studies Jesse Nasta '07 designed and taught Black Middletown Lives: The Future of Middletown’s African American Past, an African American Studies and service-learning course devoted to sharing the history of this remarkable community. Poring over rare books and manuscripts in Wesleyan’s Special Collections & Archives, Middletown records at the Middlesex County Historical Society and City Hall, objects in the Wesleyan University Archaeology and Anthropology Collections, and the material remains of the community itself, the 14 students in the course each researched, wrote, and publicly presented a project on an aspect of Middletown’s black history. Topics ranged from Middletown’s involvement in the 18th-century trans-Atlantic slave trade to African American Civil War veterans.

Middletown’s 19th-century African American neighborhood, known

today as the Beman Triangle, centered on the four-acre triangle of land across from the Freeman Athletic Center, bounded by Cross Street, Vine Street, and Knowles Avenue. This community began taking shape in the late 1820s, when African Americans recently free from Connecticut slavery first bought property there. They soon built an African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church, one of the first handful of independent Black Methodist churches in the nation. Located at the present site of the Exley Science Center from 1829 until the early 1920s, Middletown’s AME Zion Church served as a center of the Underground Railroad and hosted such famed abolitionists as Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison. The congregation’s first pastor, the Reverend Jehiel C. Beman (1789–1858), and his wife Nancy, sons, and daughters-in-law, were themselves national leaders in the antislavery movement.

Jehiel’s son, Leverett Beman, bought the four-acre triangle of land in 1846 from his sister-in-law, to prevent her from losing it to white creditors. He soon divided the property into 11 house lots, which he sold to other African Americans. For the next two

decades, until shortly after the Civil War, the Beman Triangle remained an entirely African American, property-owning community; black property owners were the majority of the neighborhood’s residents until the turn of the 20th century. Today, five of the pre-Civil War African American homes on the Beman Triangle survive and are owned by Wesleyan: 9 Vine Street, 11 Vine Street, 21 Vine Street, 118 Knowles Avenue, and 170 Cross Street.

In Wesleyan’s Special Collections & Archives, students found original 19th-century Middletown newspapers and early Connecticut law books especially informative. Each student publicly presented their research at the Center for African American Studies, part of African American Studies’ 50th anniversary celebration, and as a WEseminar during Reunion & Commencement. Students also began work on a website devoted to the Beman Triangle, which will be added to when Nasta teaches Black Middletown Lives again in spring 2019. Students wrote about their experience in the class:

“Learning about the black community in Middletown has deepened my connection with the city, and now I am sad to be leaving after graduation.”

“This information is invaluable to being a Middletown resident, as well as a Wesleyan student... It was great to share what we learned with my friends on campus.”

“I feel so grateful to have gotten to bolster my knowledge of Middletown in my final semester at Wesleyan.”

Nasta looks forward to continuing and strengthening community partnerships with the Cross Street AME Zion Church in Middletown (which will celebrate its bicentennial in four years), the Middlesex County Historical Society, and the Godfrey Memorial Library, among others.

— JESSE NASTA, VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES —