

Connecticut College

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Newsletter

Friends of the Connecticut College Library

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Winter 2021

### Winter 2021 Newsletter

Benjamin Panciera

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# 2021 FRIENDS of the CONNECTICUT COLLEGE LIBRARY Winter Newsletter

CHARLES E. SHAIN LIBRARY • GREER MUSIC LIBRARY • LINDA LEAR CENTER FOR SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES

## IMPORTANT ARCHIVE COMES TO CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

Since early 2016, faculty and librarians at Connecticut College have been working with the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation (EPTN) to find ways to safeguard the tribal nation's historical records and make them available to both tribal members and the wider research community. At that time, the documents were being held at a secure storage facility, rendering them inaccessible to the community while incurring substantial costs. Initially, the conversation centered around bringing the collection home to the Eastern Pequot reservation in North Stonington and what sort of processing needs the collection might have, whether any of it could or should be digitized, and how students, faculty, and librarians at the College could help.

Over time, both parties came to realize that the best solution for the collection might be to house it at the Charles E. Shain Library. The library could provide the optimal environmental conditions and security that this unique collection requires. The two parties could work together to organize the collection, possibly involving students in a valuable experiential learning program as they helped make the collection usable for tribal members and the research community.

In September of this year, the EPTN received word that the collection would be released from the secure storage facility and plans were made for its transfer to Connecticut College. In addition to the permanent historical archive, there were also temporary business records that had also been in storage. This part of the collection contained material like receipts and personnel records that would generally not be open for research, but there remained the possibility that some items

of genuine historical value might still be contained there. For this reason, members of the tribal nation will still need to comb through the temporary records to identify documents they might be legally obligated to keep but that would be closed to researchers, documents to be destroyed, and documents to be transferred to the

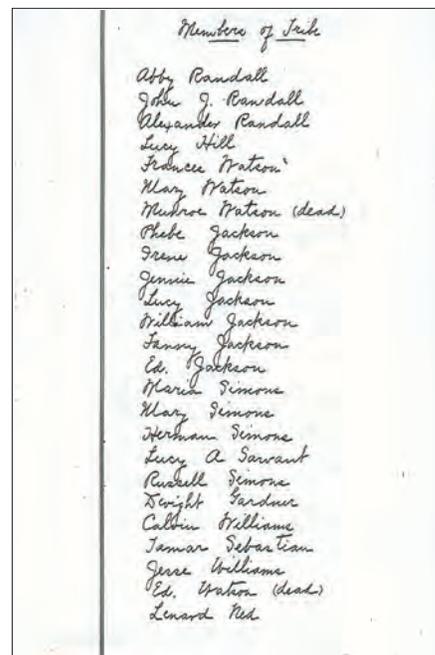


ABOVE: Record cartons from the permanent historical waiting to be shelved, RIGHT: Page from a roll of tribal members from 1898.

permanent historical archive. These temporary records would have to be stored while tribal members did the painstaking work of sorting through each carton and deciding on the disposition of each document and so the decision was made to house those at Connecticut College as well.

In late September, Shain Library braced for a delivery of over 100 cartons of documents, evenly divided between permanent historical materials and temporary records. The EPTN papers are by far the largest single archival collection at Connecticut College and with shelf

space already almost completely occupied, existing collections had to be rearranged in order to accommodate the new material. The collection arrived on four shipping pallets, which had to be unpacked and transported six cartons at a time to the Linda Lear Center for Special Collections and Archives to be sorted into



temporary records and permanent historical archives. With the help of student assistants, the cartons were shelved into the recently cleared storage space in several secure locations in the library.

The 49 cartons of the permanent archival collection contain a wealth of information that will be valuable to a wide range of researchers. First and foremost is the voluminous petition and supporting materials advocating for the Eastern Pequots as a federally recognized tribal

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THE PALMER LIBRARY CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

The Friends of the Connecticut College  
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<http://www.conncoll.edu/information-services/friends-of-the-library/>

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This and other issues of the Friends of the Library Newsletter may be viewed online at <http://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/fol/>  
This newsletter was designed by Susan Lindberg.

December 2021



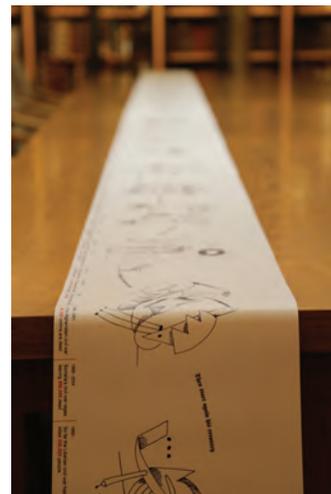
CONNECTICUT  
COLLEGE

## NEW ACQUISITIONS

### ERRANTRY

When we first met book artist Werner Pfeiffer a decade ago, he showed us a powerful piece he had recently completed: a 29-foot-long scroll entitled *Errantry*. Like all of Pfeiffer's works, it was inventive in its format, broadening the boundaries of what one might consider to be a book while also making a profound statement about art, culture, and politics. *Errantry* uses a poem by J.R.R. Tolkien and whimsical sketches by Pfeiffer to lampoon militarism and lament the carnage of the 20th century. Across the bottom of the scroll are the dates of every military conflict and genocide of the 1900s together with casualty figures. When fully unrolled, Pfeiffer's book fills a room.

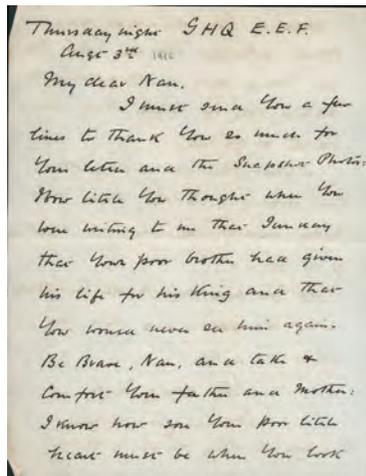
At the time we did not have the funds to purchase this book and for the past ten years no copy has been available. Although Pfeiffer still had a number of scrolls in his workshop, each one was to be housed in a polished spent brass howitzer shell, which are difficult to find. When such a shell became available earlier this year, he was able to complete another one of his scrolls and offer it to us. We were pleased to add it to our growing collection of Pfeiffer's works.



*At 29 feet, the scroll is longer than the table in the Palmer Room*

### CAMPBELL FAMILY CORRESPONDENCE

Alicia Anne Campbell was the wife of a successful and politically connected industrialist in Belfast, Northern Ireland in the late 19th and early 20th century. She had three children: Ann, Lawford, a lieutenant in the Royal Irish Rifles fighting in France, and John Dermot, who was serving in the Royal Artillery in the Middle East. Most of the correspondence is between Alicia and her children or between Ann and her brothers as well as a number of her male admirers deployed to various areas of conflict in France and the Middle East. There are also five letters from Alicia's brother-in-law Sir Walter Campbell, a high-ranking British officer, describing his experiences in India and the Middle East. In all there are over 100 letters in the collection.



*A condolence letter from Sir Walter Campbell to his niece Ann on the death of her brother Lawford, killed at the Battle of the Somme*

the round up and execution of the participants in the Easter Rising, though they appear to have been personally acquainted, and even friendly, with one of the leaders.

The Campbell Family Correspondence will provide an important set of first-person accounts of a series of world historical events and be a critical resource for students, faculty, and outside researchers studying World War I, the British role in the making of the modern Middle East, and the drive for independence in Ireland.

Many of the letters discuss the current situation of the war, which took a heavy toll on the correspondents. Lawford and one of Alicia's suitors were killed in France. Of particular interest are the letters discussing the situation in the Middle East, where Walter Campbell in particular is wary of British involvement in local politics. The political situation in Ireland is frequently discussed as well. The Campbells were stout Unionists and utterly hostile to the Irish Republican cause. In their letters they approvingly note

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## CURRENT EXHIBITS

### SHAIN LIBRARY EXHIBIT AREA

until February 4, 2022

*Continuity and Constant Change: Student Life at Connecticut College in Turbulent Times*



How have Connecticut College students responded to turbulent times? In this exhibition, students of FYS 1006: “Everyone’s A Curator” explore specific moments of transition at Connecticut College, includ-

ing quarantining, co-education, and changing dress codes. Using materials from the College Archives, they consider how individual students and student organizations experienced the everyday freedoms and the pressures of college life in these challenging moments of the college’s history. From diaries, letters, and scrapbooks to handbooks and yearbooks, this exhibition foregrounds students’ perspectives to focus on how turbulent times affected real students recognizing our own historical moment as a time of profound change.

### CHARLES CHU ASIAN ART READING ROOM

until January 31, 2022

*What Does Chinese Art Tell Us?*

Students from FYS 1011: “Chinese Art Comes to America” spent several weeks selecting items from the Chu-Griffis Collection and conducting research on the artists and paintings to put together this exhibition. Featuring landscape, plant, and animal paintings, the exhibit uses art from Connecticut College’s collection with particular emphasis on Chinese artists working in America. Highlights include two recently acquired works: a landscape painted by Charles Chu on his return to China in 1979 and recently donated to the College by Vivian Segall ’73 and *In the Wind* by Chinese-born and New York-based painter Wang Mansheng, purchased this year with funds from the Chu-Griffis Asian Art fund.



### LINDA LEAR CENTER EXHIBITION AREA

until February 18, 2022

*Winter Fun at Connecticut College*

From snowshoeing in the Arboretum to cross-country skiing to snowball fights to snow sculptures of every possible description, Connecticut College embraces the winter season.



## UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Two exhibitions are planned for the Shain Library Exhibition Area next semester. From February to April we will be displaying works by some of the most beloved children’s illustrators of the 20th century from the Gildersleeve Collection of Children’s Literature and the Linda Lear-Beatrix Potter Collection. Featured illustrators may include Tasha Tudor, Arthur Rackham, Jill Barklem, Michael Hague, and Beatrix Potter. From April through June, we will be looking back on the history of the Honor Code at Connecticut College. The Honor Code has been central to the College’s identity almost from its very beginning and this exhibition will explore its development over time.



Yibing Huang, Associate Professor of Chinese and Curator of the Chu-Griffis Asian Art Collection, will present an exhibition in the Chu Room in early February running through spring 2022 featuring contemporary American artist and College alumna Marian “Bing” Bingham ’91 and her unique journey of studying and creating Chinese ink paintings spanning decades, continents, and cultures from California to Hong Kong to Manila and back to Connecticut. The exhibition will also present Bingham’s three important teachers who have inspired her undertaking at different times in her life, including her father, Woodbridge Bingham (1901-1986), a pioneering sinologist and Professor of East Asian History at the University of California at Berkeley and founder of their Institute of East Asian Studies, and two equally distinguished Chinese painters who carried their own stories of being diasporic artists and contributing to cultural communications between East and West: I-Hsiung Ju (1923-2012) and Charles Chu (1918-2008).



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## ARCHIVES

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nation. There are also oral histories, vital records, genealogical and government documents, newspaper clippings, and other primary source documents, most of which had been photocopied from government archives. Although the archive appears to be well organized, it will almost certainly require new boxes and folders at a minimum and the writing of a guide to the collection before it can be accessed. This work can only begin once significant progress has been made with the disposition of the temporary records.

Another necessity that must be addressed before the collection is opened for research is the creation of a deposit agreement. Normally, when an archival collection is donated ownership is handed over to the institution that receives it. With the EPTN

archive we wanted to take a different approach, not least because there has been a long and ugly history of institutions acquiring the archives and artifacts of indigenous communities and cutting off the communities' access to their own history and culture. To this end, Connecticut College and the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation are currently formulating a deposit agreement, in which the tribal nation retains ownership of the archive but grants the College stewardship of it and the ability to make it available for researchers.

This is a monumental undertaking and we hope that we may begin to make the archive available to all within the next few years to the benefit of our two communities and researchers everywhere.

## FRIENDS OF THE CONNECTICUT COLLEGE LIBRARY MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Friends of the Connecticut College Library runs from January 1 to December 31, but it is never too late to join or renew your membership. The dues from the Friends are used to support the acquisition and preservation of materials, lectures, exhibitions, receptions, mailings, and scholarships.

If you wish to join, download a form at <http://www.conncoll.edu/information-services/friends-of-the-library/> or contact Benjamin Panciera at [bpancier@conncoll.edu](mailto:bpancier@conncoll.edu) or by calling 860-439-2654.

Membership has the following levels, named for significant research collections held by the Connecticut College Library: Rachel Carson Collection (\$2500), Eugene O'Neill Collection (\$1000), Beatrix Potter Collection (\$500), Chu-Griffis Collection (\$250), Campus History Collection (\$100), Gildersleeve Book Collection (\$50), and William Meredith Collection (\$25). All members receive the newsletter and invitations to lectures and other events. Those who contribute more than \$50 will also receive borrowing privileges at both the Charles E. Shain and the Greer Music Libraries