

# Finding Aids to Personal Papers and Special Collections in the VMFA Archives



## Special Collection 04 (SC-04) Records of the Council of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1953-2007

13 cubic feet

Processed by  
Mary Catherine Dunn and Yvonne Gold, Council Members,  
September 2005-January 2006  
and Erica Borey, Records Manager,  
August 2014

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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### **ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

#### **Provenance**

The collection is composed of archival materials donated by the Council of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. The bulk of the material was located in the Council office, while other material was gathered from past Council Presidents. The majority of the collection was accessioned into the VMFA Archives' collection in September 2005 and August 2014. Subsequent small accretions of select committee files and past Presidents' papers have been integrated into the collection.

#### **Abstract**

The collection documents the rich history of the Council of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, the museum's oldest and longest-running support group. Founded in 1955 by a group of interested women, the Council has grown greatly over the years in membership, events, projects and support given to the museum. The collection spans the entire six decade history of the Council through minutes, officer's reports, committee reports, subject/event files, and some past Presidents' files. A large portion of the documentation is devoted to the Council Sales Shop, begun in 1962, and turned over to the museum in 2010.

### **Access Restrictions**

This collection is open for research. Specific materials within Series 7 “Financial Records” are restricted. Access to restricted materials may be granted only with the written permission of the VMFA Director or Archivist. For permission to publish materials from the collection, please contact the VMFA Archives.

### **Processing Note**

The collection was originally processed between September 2005 and January 2006. During processing, original newspaper clippings were photocopied, with identifiers transferred, and all non-archival financial materials were destroyed. Issues of *The Councillor* and yearly membership handbook-directories were transferred to the Library’s collection.

In 2014 the collection received a large donation of material from past Presidents. These files were integrated into the collection, which necessitated some reorganization of the existing records, as follows: Series 3 “Officers’ Reports” was eliminated and integrated with Series 6, formerly “Presidents’ Files” and now renamed “Presidents’ Files and Officers’ Reports”. A new series was added, Series 7 “Financial Records”.

### **Historical Note**

The concept of a Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Council began in May 1955 with a group of 49 interested women. The Council grew rapidly in the number of members as well as the number and scope of projects undertaken. Through the years, the Council has taken an active role in the growth of the Museum. The Council has supported the Museum with volunteer projects and with monetary contributions from Council fundraising projects. As of 2014, the Council has given over \$6,500,000 in direct support. Members of the Council have conducted tours of the Museum, provided hostesses for Museum events, manned information and ticket desks, sponsored lecture series, planned galas, given fashion shows, run the Council Shop, worked in the Library, provided flowers in public spaces, and have been involved in the workings of the Museum in numerous other ways. Since its early beginnings, the number of committees has grown and changed to meet current demands. The Council has served as a liaison to the community as well as providing many community services. The Council continues to be a vital part of the Museum through its volunteer and fundraising efforts.

Since 1987, one of The Council’s most popular and successful events has been Fine Arts and Flowers. These festivals of art and flowers feature floral designs interpreting artworks in the museum’s collection. Fine Arts and Flowers events include not only the exhibitions, but also a gala, lectures, demonstrations and luncheons. Over the years, these events have brought thousands of statewide visitors into the museum and raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to support VMFA.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The collection’s inclusive dates are 1953-2007, with the bulk of the material dating from the 1960s to the 1990s. The collection is comprised of correspondence, minutes, reports, invitations, programs, financial statements, photographs, clippings, notes and other ephemeral material.

## Arrangement

The collection is organized into seven series, and items are arranged chronologically within each series. Items with no date are placed at the end of a series:

[Series 1: Minutes, 1955-2006](#)

[Series 2: Annual Reports, 1959-2006](#)

[Series 3: Committee Reports and Subject Files, 1955-2005](#)

[Series 4: Special Events, 1953-2007](#)

[Series 5: Council Shop, 1962-2007](#)

[Series 6: Presidents' Files and Officers' Reports, 1956-2005](#)

[Series 7: Financial Records, 1955-2006](#)

## Controlled Access Points

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts – Council

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts – History

Art, American – Virginia – History – 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Richmond (Va.) – History

Volunteer workers in museums – United States

Voluntarism – United States – Societies, etc.

## Related Materials

See further information in the VMFA Library:

### Council Publications:

- The Councillor (V. 1, No. 4:1978-present)
- The Council Handbook-Directory (1959-present)

### Exhibition Files:

- [Fine Arts and Flowers, 1987](#)
- [Fine Arts and Flowers, 1989](#)
- [Fine Arts and Flowers, 1991](#)
- [Fine Arts and Flowers, 1993](#)
- [Fine Arts and Flowers, 1995](#)
- [Fine Arts and Flowers, 1997](#)
- [Fine Arts and Flowers, 2000](#)
- [Fine Arts and Flowers, 2003](#)
- [The Council: Serving VMFA Since 1955, 2005](#)
- [Fine Arts and Flowers, 2007](#)
- [Fine Arts and Flowers, 2010](#)
- [Fine Arts and Flowers, 2012](#)

### Subject Files:

- VMFA Council: Council Members' Obituaries
- VMFA Council: Day of Style 1998

- VMFA Council: Fine Arts and Flowers
- VMFA Council: History to 1949
- VMFA Council: History 1980-Present
- VMFA Council: History Manuscript by Jane Reid
- VMFA Council: "History 1995-2005"
- VMFA Council: Pageant of the Arts 1962
- VMFA Council: Sales Shop

See related archival records in the following institutions:

**Library of Virginia:**

- [Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Director's Correspondence, 1936-1976 \(Coll. No. 33863 and 44067\)](#)
- [Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Exhibition Files, 1936-1992 \(Coll No. 31633, 32958, 33041, 33160, 34679, 36342, 36957 and 37636\)](#)

**SERIES DESCRIPTIONS / FOLDER LISTS**

**Series 1: Minutes, 1955-2006**

*Boxes 1-2 (34 Folders)*

This series is composed of minutes of board meetings and general Council meetings.

<b><i>Box</i></b>	<b><i>Title</i></b>
1	Charter Meeting, May 1955-May 1957 May 1957-May 1961 May 1961-May 1963 May 1963-May 1965 May 1965-May 1967 Sep. 1965-May 1967 May 1967-May 1968 Sep. 1968-May 1970 Sep. 1970-May 1971 Sep. 1971-May 1973 Sep. 1973-Dec. 1974 Jan. 1975-May 1976 Sep. 1976-May 1977 Jan. 1978-Jan. 1979 May 1979-June 1981 May 1981-May 1982 Sep. 1982-May 1983 May 1983-May 1984
2	Sep. 1984-May 1985 May 1985-May 1986 Sep. 1986-May 1987

<b><i>Box</i></b>	<b><i>Title</i></b>
2	May 1987-May 1989
	Sep. 1989-May 1990
	Sep. 1990-May 1991
	Sep. 1991-May 1992
	Sep. 1992-May 1993
	Sep. 1993-May 1994
	Sep. 1994-May 1995
	May 1995-May 1997
	May 1997-May 1999
	May 1999-May 2001
	May 2001-May 2003
	May 2003-May 2005
	Nov. 2005-Jan. 2006

**Series 2: Annual Reports, 1959-2006**

*Box 3 (14 Folders)*

This series is composed of annual reports of officers and committee chairmen, except for the Finance Committee (Series 3) and the Shop Committees (Series 6).

<b><i>Box</i></b>	<b><i>Title</i></b>
3	1959-1965
	1965-1969
	1969-1974
	1975-1979
	1979-1980
	1980-1984
	1984-1988
	1988-1990
	1990-1993
	1993-1994
	1995-1997
	1997-1999
	1999-2005
	2005-2006

**Series 3: Committee Reports and Subject Files, 1955-2005**

*Boxes 3-4 (61 Folders)*

This series is composed of committee reports from the initial organization of the Council to the present day. Some committees were begun early in the formation of the Council and still continue working today, while others are no longer in existence. Other folders include information on various Council-related subjects.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Title</b>
3	40 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gift to Museum, Sevres Tea Set, 1994
	50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Cheek Theater Dedication, 2004
	Art Cart, 1964
	Art Sales I.C.A., 1968-1983
	Articles of Association—Original and Revisions, 1955-1966
	Board of Trustees, Orientation and Retreats, 1995-2005
	Board of Trustees, Search for New Director, 2000, 2005
	Council Resolution, 2005
	Council Strategic Business Plan, 2001-2005
	Council Strategic Business Plan, Drafts, 2001-2005
	“The Councillor” Committee, 1977-1990
	Decorations Committee, 1961-2005
	Development Committee, 1986-2005
	Downtown Gallery, F & M Center, 1974
	Fellowship Program, 1974-2006
	Fragonard Theft, 1984
	Gallery Hostesses Committee, 1961-1990
	Gifts, 1960-1989
	Heath Lee, “Museums on the Move: How do Volunteers fit into Museum Expansion?”, 2004
	Hirschler Endowment Flower Committee, 1992-2004
	Historical Photos (Copies from Photo Archives), 1950s-1960s
	History of the Council by Laila Pearsall, 1955-1974
	History of the Council by Jane Davenport Reid, 1955-1980
	History of the Council, 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary, 2005
4	Hospitality Committee, 1994-2002
	Information Desk, 1986-2005
	Library, 1973-2005
	Luncheon Committee Meetings, 1963-2000
	Luncheon Reservations Committee, 1961-2004
	Membership Application Forms, 1990s-2001
	Membership Committee, 1955-1988
	Membership Committee, 1989-1994
	Membership Committee, 1995-1998
	Membership Committee, 1999-2005
	Membership (Museum), 1958-2005
	National Cultural Center Act, 1958-1959
	NEFTA Program, 1968
	Newspaper Articles, 1955-2000
	Nominating Committee, 1983-2004
	Provisional Membership and Orientation, 1983-1989
	Provisional Membership and Orientation, 1990-2005
	Publicity, 1958-1988

<b>Box</b>	<b>Title</b>
4	Raffle Committee, 1994 Sally Mann Controversy, 2000 Speakers' Bureau, 1985-1987 Speeches, 1993-2003 Strategic Planning, 2001-2003 Tour Guides, 1968-1984 Travel Committee, 1982-2005 VCAM (Volunteer Committees of Art Museums of Canada and the United States), 1958-1973 VCAM, 1976-1996 VCAM, 1996-2003 Video Series, 1970-1983 Virginia Celebrates Cookbook, 1989-1998 Virginia Celebrates Cookbook, Marketing, 1989-1998 Volunteer Committee, 1974-1985 Volunteer Management and Survey Report, 1999 Volunteer Placement, 1996-2004 Volunteer Reporting, 1974-2003 Volunteer Services Handbook, 1998 Volunteer Study Committee, 1992-1997 Volunteers, 1983-2004

**Series 4: Special Events, 1953-2007**

*Boxes 5-8 (80 Folders)*

This series documents special activities for the museum as well as Council fundraising events, including galas, balls, and exhibition openings.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Title</b>
5	25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ball, 1980 25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ball, Photos, 1980 Art of South Italy, 1982 Charter Members' Luncheons, 1980, 1990 Children's Christmas Party, 1955-1966 Christmas Parties, 1956-1962 Christmas Workshop, Ornaments for Museum Tree, April-May 1985 Day of Style, Women of Style and Substance, 1998 Day of Style, Women of Style and Substance, Press, 1998 Day of Style, Women of Style and Substance, Photos, 1998 Day with the Folks, 1974 Event Invitations, 1950s-2002 Exhibition Openings, Treasures from Kuwait, 1991 Exhibition Openings, Splendors of the Taj, Committee and Press, 1990 Exhibition Openings, Splendors of the Taj, Correspondence and Program, 1990 Exhibition Openings, Splendors of the Taj, Photos, 1990

<b>Box</b>	<b>Title</b>
5	Faberge Ball, 1996
	Faberge Ball, Press, 1996
	Fall Luncheon Lecture Series, 1973-2004
	Fashion Gala, Thalhimers, 1953
	Fashion Gala, Festival of Arts and Flowers, 1956
	Fashion Gala, Miller and Rhoads, 1959
	Fashion Gala, Parsons, 1967
	Fine Arts and Flowers, 1987
	Fine Arts and Flowers, 1989
	Fine Arts and Flowers, Photos, 1989
	Fine Arts and Flowers, Photos, 1989
	Fine Arts and Flowers, 1993
	Fine Arts and Flowers, 1995
	Fine Arts and Flowers, 1995
	Fine Arts and Flowers, 1997
	Fine Arts and Flowers, 1997
	6
Fine Arts and Flowers, 2000	
Fine Arts and Flowers, 2000	
Fine Arts and Flowers, 2000	
Fine Arts and Flowers, 2003	
Fine Arts and Flowers, 2003	
Fine Arts and Flowers, 2003	
Fine Arts and Flowers, 2003	
Fine Arts and Flowers, 2007	
Fine Arts and Flowers, 2007	
Heirloom Discovery Day, 1976	
Heirloom Discovery Day, 1978	
Heirloom Discovery Day, 1983	
Heirloom Discovery Day, 1988	
Heirloom Discovery Day Press, 1988	
Heirloom Discovery Day, Photos, 1988	
7	Heirloom Discovery Day, 1994
	Heirloom Discovery Day Correspondence, 1994
	Holiday Open House, 1984
	Holiday Open House, 1985
	Holiday Open House, 1986-1989
	Holiday Open House, 1990-1992
	Holiday Open House, 1993-1998
	Legislative Wives Day, 1983-1990
	Little Dinners, 1977-1987
	Mardi Gras Luncheon, Photos
Members' Holiday Party, 2003-2004	



<b>Box</b>	<b>Title</b>
7	Night on the Nile Ball, Financial Reports, 1999 Night on the Nile Ball, Menu, Decorations, etc., 1999 Night on the Nile Ball, Patrons and Corporate Sponsors, 1999 Night on the Nile Ball, Preparation, 1999 Night on the Nile Ball, Publications and Publicity, 1999 Painting in the South, Jazz and Jambalaya, 1982-1983 Patrons' Gala, 1968 Patrons' Gala, 1970 Patrons' Gala, 1971 Patrons' Gala, 1972 Spring Luncheon Lecture Series, 1975-2004 Spring Parties, Guest Lists, 1956-1957 Viennese Ball, 1959 Viennese Ball, 1960 Viennese "Birthday" Ball, 1961 Viennese Ball, 1962
8	Viennese Ball, 1963 Viennese Ball, 1964 Viennese Ball, 1965 Viennese Ball, 1966 Viennese Ball, 1967 Virginia Artists Show, 1957-1967 Virginia Artists Show, 1969, 1971 Virginia Women: A Cultural Heritage, 1984 West Wing Opening, 1983-1985 Winter Luncheon Lecture Series: Aspects of Art, 1969-1985 Winter Luncheon Lecture Series, 1988-1999 Winter Luncheon Lecture Series, 2000-2005 Young Peoples Programs Sponsored by Dance and Music Societies, 1967-1971

**Series 5: Council Shop, 1962-2007**

*Boxes 8-9 (35 Folders)*

This series documents the activities of the Council Shop, the major volunteer effort of the Council, and includes historical information, sales reports, and procedural documents.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Title</b>
8	Annual Evaluations, 1968-1985 Annual Reports, 1963-1989 Annual Reports, 2005-2007 Beginnings, Floor Plans, 1960s-1987 Catalogues, 1977-1985 Consultation Committee, 1969-1985

<b>Box</b>	<b>Title</b>
8	Consultation Committee, 1985-1993 Consultation Committee, 1993-1996 Consultation Committee, 1998-2001 Correspondence and Notes, 1960s Correspondence the Notes, 1973-1994 Expansions, 1968-1984 History of the Shop by Jane Davenport Reid, 1980-1990 Inventory and Purchasing, 1963-1983 Photographs, 1960s-1980s Photographs, 1980s-1990s
9	Reference Material, 1970s-1990s Reproductions, 1976-1982 Shop Advisory Committee, 1973 Shop Contracts with the Museum, 1963-2000 Shop Evaluation Committee, 1973 Shop Financials, 1963-1970 Shop Financials, 1971-1972 Shop Financials, 1973-1974 Shop Financials, 1975 Shop Financials, 1976 Shop Financials, 1977-1979 Shop Financials, 1980-1983 Shop Financials, 1990-1995 Shop Interim Reports, 1994-2001 Shop Management Committee, 2003 Shop Management Committee, 2003-2004 Shop Management Committee, 2004-2005 Shop Management Committee, 2005-2006 Shop Study Committee, 1962-1973 Training Manual, 1982 Volunteers, 1972-1994

**Series 6: Presidents' Files and Officers' Reports, 1956-2005**

*Box 10 (34 Folders)*

This series is comprised of correspondence and other documents from various past Council Presidents, as well as reports from other officers. The variety of subjects highlights the different interests and focuses of the organization's leading officers.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Title</b>
10	President's Letters to Membership, 1956-1972 President's Letters to Membership, 1972-1985 Laila Pearsall, President, 1961-1963

<b>Box</b>	<b>Title</b>
10	Sue Crowell, President, 1963-1965
	Sue Crowell, President, 1963-1965
	Sue Crowell, President, 1963-1965
	G. Mallory Freeman, President, 1965-1967
	Martha Davenport, President, 1967-1969
	Maria Viener, President, 1969-1971
	Mimi Rose, President, 1971-1973
	Anne Miller, President, 1973-1975
	Jane Murrell, President, 1975-1977
	Kitten Clarke, President, 1981-1983
	Elsie Donahoe, President, 1983-1985
	Beth Buckle, President, 1985-1987
	Mrs. Dewey B. Morris, President, 1989-1991
	Joan Crosby, President, 1991-1993
	Margaret "Peg" Freeman, President, 1993-1995
	Elizabeth Dyer "B.J." Durrill, President, 1995-1997
	Mary White, President, 1997-1999
	Cheryl Jarvis, President, 1999-2001
	Sally Bagley, President, 2001-2003
	Betsy Stevenson, President, 2003-2005
	Assistant Treasurer, 1996-2005
	Council Chairman, 2000-2003
	Corresponding Secretary, 1995-2004
	Docent Liaison, 1987-2005
	First Vice President, 1978-2004
	Gifts Chairman, 1995-2001
	Historian, 1994-2000
	Parliamentarian, 1979-2001
	Recording Secretary, 1985-2003
	Second Vice President, 1968-2002
	Volunteer Chairman, 1994-2005

**Series 7: Financial Records, 1955-2006**

*Boxes 11-13 (38 folders)*

This series is composed of audits, Finance Committee reports, Treasurer's Reports and other records related to the Council's finances.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Title</b>
11	Treasurer's Reports, 1958-1989
	Treasurer's Reports, 1991-1994
	Treasurer's Reports, 1998-2005
	Contribution Fund, 1955-1969
	Contribution Fund, 1970-1974

<b><i>Box</i></b>	<b><i>Title</i></b>
11	Contribution Fund, 1974-1976 Contribution Fund, 1976-1985 Finance Committee, 1973-1982 Finance Committee, 1983 Finance Committee, 1984-1987 Finance Committee, 1987-1989 Financial Reports, 1983 RESTRICTED: Auditor Reports, 1985-1988 RESTRICTED: Auditor Reports, 1991-1994 RESTRICTED: Auditor Reports, 1996-2000 RESTRICTED: Auditor Reports, 2001-2005 RESTRICTED: Bank Account Reports, 1994-2000 RESTRICTED: Budget, 1993-2000 RESTRICTED: Budget Committee, 1986-2006 RESTRICTED: Correspondence with CPAs, 1985-1993 RESTRICTED: Council Fund Allocations, 1993-1998 RESTRICTED: Finance Committee, 1990-1992 RESTRICTED: Finance Committee, 1993-1995 RESTRICTED: Finance Committee, 1995-1997 RESTRICTED: Finance Committee, 1999-2000 RESTRICTED: Finance Committee, 2002-2006 RESTRICTED: Insurance, 2002-2004 RESTRICTED: Ledger Book, 1985-1996
12	RESTRICTED: Audit, FY 1996 RESTRICTED: Audit, FY 1997 RESTRICTED: Audit, FY 1998 RESTRICTED: Audit, FY 1999 RESTRICTED: Audit, FY 2000 RESTRICTED: Audit, FY 2001
13	RESTRICTED: Audit, FY 2002 RESTRICTED: Audit, FY 2003 RESTRICTED: Audit, FY 2004 RESTRICTED: Audit, FY 2005