ARCHIVES

Or, what an adventure, yet where do we go from here?
HANCOCK FAMILY ESTATE ARCHIVES

• **The Allan Hancock College Library is the location of the Hancock Family Estate Archives (HFEA).**
• **This includes photos, correspondence, and other materials relating to the life of G. Allan Hancock)**
WHO WAS G. ALLAN HANCOCK?

- **Funny story:** The Friends of the AHC Library are sponsoring an exciting lecture series (going on now!) about our eponymous Captain Hancock.

- **Come hear the third and final lecture on Friday, October 26, at 6 pm. (Come early at 4:30)**
WHO WAS HE?

• **George Allan Hancock (1875-1965)** was an adventurer, sailor, farmer, philanthropist, naturalist, railroad enthusiast, banker, pilot, flight school champion and founder of the Hancock College of Aeronautics (now site of AHC), civic enthusiast, oilman, musician (played the cello) and much more.
WHO WAS HE?

He spent much of his early years around Los Angeles before turning his sights north, to Santa Maria, CA.
WHO WAS HANCOCK?

And of course, a very natty dresser!
Upon the passing of the Captain’s wife, Marian Hancock, materials were distributed variously to different organizations that G. Allan and/or Marian had been involved with. This included Hancock’s namesake college, Allan Hancock College.
Happily, the library received some (limited) materials from the captain’s estate, which were stored as part of the Hancock Family Estate Archives.

Note the bust of G. Allan Hancock (on the left)
HOLDINGS

- **The collection is small but mighty... as it were.**
- **The majority of the items are held in a small office off of the Library Dean’s Office**
- **It includes:**
STORAGE

- Approximately 60 large, flat archival boxes
- Approximately 28 wider rectangular archival boxes
- Other holding types (including photo books, cases, etc.)
- Mainly photos, correspondence, books, newspaper clippings, and other ephemera
SO FAR

• THE PREVIOUS LIBRARIANS (AND INTREPID AND BRAVE VOLUNTEERS) WENT THROUGH A LARGE AMOUNT OF THE PHOTOS AND OTHER ITEMS AND BEGAN TO CLEAN THE ITEMS, MOVE THEM TO NON-ACID BOXES AND ENVELOPES, PREPARE THEM FOR DATA ENTRY, AND ENTER METADATA ON EACH ITEM.

• IT WAS LOW-TECH BUT A GOOD START
Two previous librarians (since retired) began to itemize and assess the donation and ideas for preservation as well as identified needs and support equipment and materials.

Boxes of items were separated into 1.) cleaned and entered into the access database, 2.) cleaned and ready to be entered into the access database, and 3.) Not yet cleaned or entered into the database.
One major issue that arose was that materials were previously stored in numerous locations, including a storage container that, sadly, experienced significant water damage.

Not only did that lead to the loss of some materials, but also led to damage to other salvageable materials (and that smell... that musty, “Pirates of the Caribbean”-esque smell...)
As mentioned, the items initially donated were not necessarily in prime condition. The unfortunate circumstances mentioned before also contributed to larger questions of long-term preservation plans.

It was determined that to start the process of properly cataloging the archival collections, information describing each item (metadata) would be created by hand and then entered into a database. The software was selected.
EARLY STAGES

- The data was added to a large Microsoft Access file.
- SideNote: Access is not a very user-friendly program (rather clunky)
• **Our brave leaders on this project included former librarians, librarians-turned-deans, and amazing and beloved retired-librarian-philanthropists-turned-volunteers**

• **They had to decide what data to add to tag each unique item in the collection**

• **Many hours and hard work went into starting this**
METADATA

- Metadata categories included
- Year of object creation
- Accession number (automatic numbering)
- Brief Description
- Author
- Title
- Is this part of another identified sub-collection?
- Subject/category of photo
- Cross-listed events or other individuals
The big issue looming large over this archive (and any archive) is the issue of preservation versus the ineluctable flow of time and the weathering of physical materials.

Happily, the library requested and received scanning equipment via request in the Library Department’s 2014 Program Review.
• Some of the very first scans we did of items in this archive include early 1920s telegrams sent by Captain Hancock’s son, Bertram, as well as scanned images of the Captain’s varied pursuits and professional activities.
GOODIES...
RECEIVED AT

NEW YORK NY 9

MISS MARIAN MULLIN

218 NORTH HOBART ST LOS ANGELES CALIF

YOUR LETTERS A JAY AND FROM ALL I CAN GATHER I AM LUCKY TO BE SO HONOURED

PLEASE DO NOT DO TOO MUCH ALTHOUGH ITS FUN TO BE BUSY YOU AND BUD MUST

NOT TOUCH CROSS PACKAGE UNTIL TWENTY FIFTH LOVE TO YOU ALL

BERTRAN.
TWO TELEPHONES!
BIG-TIME OPERATOR...
The equipment needed to digitize archive materials (scanning station) include a high-quality scanner, laptop computer, and cart. Specific equipment requested are:

- **Epson Expression 11000XL Photo Scanner** ($3290)
- **MacBook Pro 13 inch with retina display** ($2430)
- **Safco Steel Adjustable Projector Cart** ($310)

Total cost is $6030.
BUT, BUT, THE SCANNER?

• … BUT THE SCANNER DIDN’T ARRIVE
• IT WAS, WE DISCOVERED SOME TIME LATER, DELIVERED TO ANOTHER DEPARTMENT
• IN 2017, WE TRACKED IT DOWN AND WERE ABLE TO SECURE IT IN THE ARCHIVES, WITH AN AGREEMENT TO SHARE IT AS NEEDED
When I took over as the “caretaker” of the HFEA in 2017, the question became, “How do I continue to prepare, preserve, and share this information with others, in the most efficient and user-friendly way?”

Locating the scanner was a major step in the right direction.

Many challenges remain including:
Limiters include not having time as a dedicated archivist/archives librarian.

2. Not currently having volunteers.

3. Access is not the most desirable data-entry point.

4. Scanning large amount of information in a timely fashion.

5. Finding the best software (ideally, cloud-based) to enter metadata and then finding the best way to store and then publicly host this collection online.
What would you do? Data Hosting

• One option I am exploring is using the application Airtable to host the data
• Airtable is a low-cost, cloud-based web hosting service
• This is an option currently being used at our library by the librarian overseeing the digitization of a special Performing Arts collection recently donated to the library
• There is feasibly space on the library website to then host this data
A HOST OF HOSTING QUESTIONS

- Is anyone here familiar with Airtable (or similar services) and recommend this and/or want to share his/her experiences with a similar process? (We were recently approved to purchase this)
- What opportunities do you foresee?
- What challenges do you foresee?
Once we have all (or more) of the data added to a host program/site, how should we set it up to be free and publicly accessible?

I am looking at ArchivesSpace (previously known as archivist’s toolkit) – does anyone have experience using that and want to share that experience?
We have one scanner (Epson Expression 11000XL Photo Scanner)

We are looking to request CZUR ET16 Plus CZUR Book & Document Scanner with Smart OCR for Mac and Windows: $429 --> This is an upright scanner, good for very delicate items.

Do you use multiple scanners and what models do you recommend?

Do you utilize volunteers or do you only have librarians or library techs/paraprofessional staff assist in digitization? Do you utilize student workers to assist with scanning and/or data entry?
• **Some items may be too far gone and/or are considered hazardous (i.e., flammable nitrate films). Does your library or college take care of this or do you typically contact the city, etc.? How do you prefer to store and address these items when you encounter them?**
Something no doubt many of us have in common is the question of how best to fund these important and historically-significant projects.

Do you typically rely on grants? Does your library/college provide special funds for your archives and was this always the case or did you need to appeal via program review or some other process?

Do you rely on outside funding, and if so, how does that work?
COLLABORATION

• How much has collaboration assisted you in your efforts to build, preserve, and maintain your archives?

• Have your collaborative experiences been mainly positive or do you have cautionary tales you’d like to share?
TIPS

• **Do you have any tips or anecdotes you’d be willing to share?**

• **We are extremely excited about where we can go with organizing, preserving and digitizing the archive, and your suggestions are greatly appreciated!**

• **Please feel free to email me with any ideas, thoughts, tips at Susannah.Kopecky@HancockCollege.edu or call me at (805) 922-6966 ext 3453.**

• **Thank you!**