



Danville Museum of
Fine Arts & History

Danville Museum Omitted Histories Video Project

Project Title:

“One House, Many Histories: DMFAH Representation of Omitted Narratives”

January – December 2020: The DMFAH launched an extensive collections research to reconstruct the Danville Museum Visitor Service Introduction Video. The goal was to include omitted histories and narratives of the Danville Museum Site and its context to the community narratives of the Dan River Region.

Project Description

During the 2020 COVID19 pandemic year the Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History undertook the re-construction of the Danville Museum Visitor Intro-video to include omitted histories and untold narratives in partnership with the Virginia Humanities and our community coalition organizations: History United, Smokestack, Averett University, Duke University TRHT group, Friends of the Old West End, The Danville Historical Society, and the Center for Community Engagement, and Career Competitiveness (CCECC).

The Danville Museum thanks the Virginia Humanities for their generous support of \$10,000 to help fund the video project and to assist the DMFAH by providing us with the services of National Historians Grace Hale (UVA) and Fitz Brundage (UNC), as well as local Historian Sonja Ingram (Preservation Virginia) which allowed the museum to produce the reformatted video and specifically facilitate the research that preceded production.

The Danville Museum of Fine Arts & History (DMFAH) is a House Museum that holds two very separate histories under one roof. One history belongs to the original owners, the William T. Sutherlin Family, and their relationship to confederate history, Jefferson Davis, and the end of the Civil War. The other history is that of the civil rights movement and the difficult situation of segregation during the time before the Sutherlin Mansion became a museum, when it was a “whites only” public library. These two histories both need to be told because they are connected, and this project aims to create the platform for equitable disclosure of this narrative in order to facilitate new conversations and discoveries.

These Omitted Histories and the research produced during production will be revisited by the museum through programming every year during Black History Month (February 1- March 1).

Black History Month is celebrated every February as homage to the achievements of African Americans who have shaped American history. The idea for a way to celebrate African American achievements started in 1915 by historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African American figures of his day. The Harvard-trained historian and others in his group wanted a way of promoting achievements of African Americans. That group is now known as the Association for the Study of African American Life History. The second week in **February** in 1926 was chosen to celebrate “**Negro History Week.**” The week was symbolic in that it was the same week of the birthdays of former President Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave and prominent abolitionist movement activist. In the late 1960s, the week evolved into an entire month, thanks in large part to the civil rights movement. Black History Month took on a special meaning in 2020 — the 100-year anniversary of the Nineteenth Amendment, which granted women the right to vote, and the 150th anniversary of the Fifteenth Amendment, which granted black men the right to vote.

(BLACK HISTORY MONTH/How February Was Designated Black History Month/ By Laura Harris • Published February 1, 2020 • Updated on February 10, 2020 at 12:31 pm
<https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/black-history-month/how-february-was-designated-black-history-month/2301310/>)

A better understanding of the humanities: The Omitted History Project, although a short introduction video only, reflects an open equitable invitation for the public – all public – to participate in exploring the many histories of the Museum and the Dan River Region. It is the entryway to a far larger archive of cultural histories that reflect all the

people living in the Dan River Region. Accompanying the video on our DMFAH website, is a Time-line document describing the various important events of the Museum and the Dan River Region. The *Omitted History Video* connects these events in the accompanying *Timeline* with the collection and shows how the museum collections are deeply woven into the regions diverse and vibrant cultural narratives. We believe the Danville Museum of Fine Arts & History is a space and a place where visitors and residents want to talk about inclusive museum programming for all communities in Danville. DMFAH's Omitted History Visitor Service Video aimed to look at the complex task of addressing the civil rights narratives through a revision and reconstruction of this video by including all of the Sutherlin Mansion histories in an equitable way.

DMFAH Omitted History Participants

- 1. Dr. Grace Hale (Consultant/ writer/panelist):** University of Virginia faculty member and historian, Grace Elizabeth Hale is a 2018 class of Andrew Carnegie Fellow. She is among 31 distinguished scholars and writers selected by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, a philanthropic foundation that funds their research projects support a sabbatical focus on studies in the social sciences and humanities. Her first book, 'Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South,' is the now-classic account of how white Southerners created Confederate organizations and memorials, Lost Cause histories, facilities marked 'white' and 'colored,' and the practice named 'spectacle lynchings' to build and legitimate their segregated 'New' South." Dr. Hale explores family ties and race relations. Dr. Hale is the Commonwealth Professor of American Studies and History (University of Virginia).
- 2. Dr. W. Fitzhugh Brundage (Consultant/writer-edits):** W. Fitzhugh Brundage (William B. Umstead), is Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He received a Guggenheim Fellowship for his present work on torture in American history. Brundage has written extensively on racial inequality and violence, from segregation to lynching. W. Fitzhugh Brundage's general research interests are American history since the Civil War, with a particular focus on the American South. He has written on lynching, utopian socialism in the New South, White and Black historical memory in the South since the Civil War, and the history of torture in the United States from the time of European contact to the twenty-first century. Some of Dr. Brundage's notable publications are: *Civilizing Torture: An American Tradition* (Belknap Press, 2018); *The Southern Past: A Clash*

of Race and Memory (Harvard University Press, 2008); Editor, *Where These Memories Grow: History, Memory, and Regional Identity in the American South* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000)

3. Sonja Ingram (Local historian/Preservation Virginia): Sonja Ingram is an archaeologist and a historic preservation specialist with a master's degree from the University of Maryland. As Preservation Virginia's Manager of Preservation Field Services, she helps individuals and organizations protect historic sites across the state. She also manages the Preservation Virginia's Tobacco Barns Program. Before joining Preservation Virginia, she directed archaeological field work for 10 years in the Mid-Atlantic and Southern United States, and Puerto Rico and was the Assistant Director for the Archaeological Conservancy's Eastern Region Office. Ingram is also a historic preservation planner for Frederick City, Maryland and a land preservation planner for Loudoun County, Virginia and for Frederick County, Maryland. She lives in the Old West End in Danville, Virginia where she is head of Preservation Virginia's Danville office. Ingram is a current board member of the Southside African American Cemetery Preservation Association and of Literacy InterActives, Inc. and previous president of the Danville Historical Society.

4. Mr. Gary Grant (Local historian/panelist/writer): Gary Grant worked with Gale Allen to curate the *Bright Leaf & Tobacco Barns exhibit* at the DMFAH in 2014. The two historians have worked together since 2006 on an ongoing project to oversee the tobacco collection, which is the majority of the artifacts and historic memorabilia once housed in the National Tobacco-Textile Museum that opened to the public in 1975 and closed about 1990. This Danville tobacco heritage exhibition was on display through May 25, 2014 at the Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History. Danville native historians Clara Fountain and Gary Grant also turned their love of local history and photography into a book — "Danville Revisited" — which holds hundreds of images of life in Danville dating back to the 1800s, all taken by local photographers. (IN-KIND CONSULTANT WHO HELPED LOCATE SPECIFIC VIDEO FILES AND ORIGINAL SOURCE MATERIAL).^[1]_{SEP}

5. Dr. Lisa Goff (Director of Institute for Public History): Lisa Goff joined the American Studies faculty in the fall of 2012 and has a joint appointment with **the English Department**, she teaches classes in cultural landscapes, public history, theories and methods of American Studies, the history of journalism, and gender and social media. She is also the director of the Institute for Public History, and places students in paid internships at museums, archives, and historic sites in central Virginia. Dr. Lisa Goff is the Director of the Institute for Public History and an Assistant Professor of English as well as American Studies at the University of Virginia.

6. History United: History United (HU) uses local history to encourage investment in the future of the Dan River Region and to build a strong collaborative network of organizations and individuals committed to positive change. History United, originally conceived of by the Danville Regional Foundation, now claims Virginia Humanities as its institutional home for the last three years. History United cultivates proactive partnerships and collaborative programming, and networks to support a rich historical narrative. They provide cultural facilitation for greater investment in the future of the Danville, Pittsylvania and Caswell County regions. The DMFAH has collaborated with History United, historian Emma Edmunds, director Chad Martin and assistant manager Karice Luck Brimmer, to realize the current permanent Civil Rights Exhibition at the Danville Museum.

7. The Center for Community Engagement & Career Competitiveness (CCECC) connects students, faculty, and staff from Averett University, Danville Community College, and Piedmont Community College to community partners in the Dan River Region to foster a mutually beneficial relationship. The CCECC also houses Career Development for Averett University students. The group, which started in January 2016, wants to be a voice for the students to help with positive changes through out Danville. Additionally, they want to provide them with leadership opportunities in the community. Mr. Billy Wooten (Director of Center for Community Engagement & Career Competitiveness/CCECC) 204 Woodland Drive, Danville, VA 24541-2620

8. Josh Lucio (Videographer, Company Lucia Video's): Lucia Video is a highly recommended local full-service Video Production Company dedicated to producing exceptional content for various client needs. Lucia Video provides additional services in order to ensure that each video produced is smart, engaging, and archives its purpose. <https://www.luciavideo.com>

9. DMFAH Fiscal Officer: Board President, Jeff Gignac

10. Participating Museum Fellows and Interns: January – December 2021

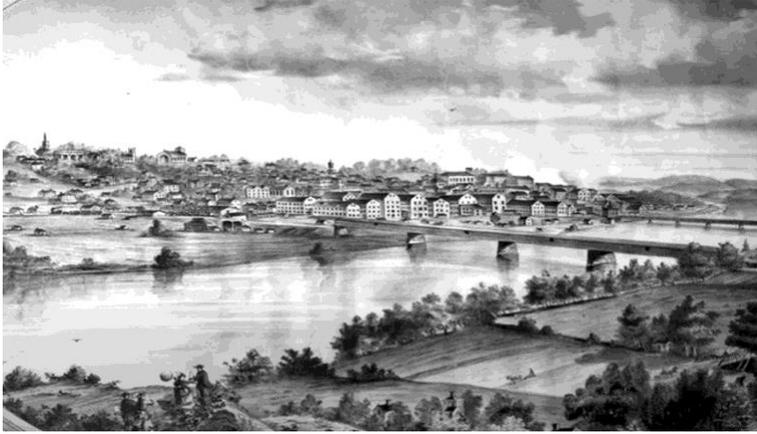
1. Kate McDannold (UNC-G) – Education Unit ‘Think Like A Historian’
2. Nara Holdaway (UVA) – Omitted History Essay
3. Asher Caplan (UVA) – Omitted History Timeline
4. Daniel Shogan (JMU) – Omitted History Edits and Film Inventory
5. Annie Chappell (Emory) – Omitted History Video script editing /collections
6. Tomi-Lauren McGinnis (Randolph College) – Omitted History Video Edits/Community List Serves

Museum Interns: Aidan Thomas, Adessa Breakley, Tripp Hayes, John Sheridan, Dillan Oxendine



**Virginia
Humanities**







FROM PUTNAM, A PRISONER OF WAR IN VIRGINIA

Morning Toilet in the Union Officers' Prison, by Henry Van der Weyde



