

## *An Introduction to the History of Sweet Briar College*



**S**weet Briar's history museum begins with a gallery informally called the "Pink Gallery," or sometimes the "Alumnae Gallery," in which are displayed artifacts and mementos that offer a glimpse into the College's 114-year history and illustrate the twin poles of student experience: academics and community. The checklist below follows the numbers found above each glass display case. Information for each is arranged beginning with the top shelf and each shelf description moves from the back of each case and left to right. Unless the donor is known in clear detail, no provenance information is provided. Likewise, no dates or accession numbers are provided unless that information is clearly known.

Displays here have been inspired by the motto written on a "freshman apron" shown in case three:

*"Perhaps hereafter it will delight you to remember this..."*

## Case 11 (left)

### Top Shelf

Needlepoint of the Sweet Briar seal made by Carla De Creny Levin Freed '61

Gift of the Alumnae Association, 1971

The College crest was designed by John M. McBryde, Jr., in 1905. He was a professor of English here 1906-1909 and was the son of one of the College's first trustees, John M. McBryde, Sr. At the time that he was recruited for the Sweet Briar board, McBryde senior was president of Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College and Polytechnic Institute—today's Virginia Tech. He and his son had recently designed VPI's crest and seal. When the Sweet Briar trustees asked McBryde senior to design its crest and seal, he deferred to his son the English professor.\* McBryde's scheme features elements of Lord Jeffery Amherst's crest, to acknowledge the school's connection to Amherst County; elements of the Fletcher family crest for Elijah Fletcher, founder Indiana Fletcher Williams's schoolteacher father; Tudor roses appropriate to heraldry and suggestive of the Sweet Briar rose from which the property took its name; and the College motto, "Rosam quae meruit ferat" ("She who earns the rose shall bear it").

Hammered copper bookends with the Sweet Briar seal, ca. 1926

Gift of Lynn Prior Harrington, Class of 1958, and Kay Harrington, 2000

A printing block of the Sweet Briar seal, accession number SBM.2013.003

Gift of Terry G. Seaks in memory of Jane Lewis Seaks, Class of 1970, 2013

Red leather photo frame with Sweet Briar seal embossed on the front, ca. 1930s,

accession number SBM2012.008.7

Gift of Anne Parry Ellice Adam, Class of 1962, in memory of her mother Margaret Ross Ellice, Class of 1934, 2012

Glassware by the Michel-Meier Decorating Company, North Rochester, Pennsylvania, ca. 1935-1940  
Beginning in 1930s the Alumnae Association sold glassware bearing the College seal to raise money for the Association and the College. The sorts of pieces shown here—vase, drinks tumbler, and dessert/parfait cup—were advertised in the alumnae magazine 1935-1940.

### Middle Shelf

#### on risers, left to right

1916 ring (amethyst stone), inscribed AGC, accession number SB8.905

1917 ring (blue stone), inscribed HBC, accession number SB8.906

1919 ring (black stone), accession number SB8.907

1913 ring (no stone), inscribed MP; belonged to Mary Pinkerton [Kerr], author of "The Sweet Briar Song"

1913 ring (no stone), inscribed CMG, accession number SB8.904

The first College rings had no stones and featured relief images on the sides of each class symbol: oak tree (1910), lion (1911), swan (1912), and peacock (1913). The Class of 1916 introduced semi-precious colored stones representing each class—green, black, purple, and blue. These colors and symbols are shared on a four-year cycle with successive classes.

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\* See "Dr. John M. McBryde Visits Sweet Briar," *Alumnae News*, vol. VIII no. 2 (December 1938), pp. 15-16.

**first row front, left to right**

1920 ring, accession number SB8.908

1921 ring, inscribed LRR, accession number SB8.909

1922 ring, inscribed JF, accession number SB8.910

1923 ring, inscribed HMM, accession number SB8.911; Gift of Helen McMahon '23

1924 ring, inscribed YEP, accession number SB8.912

**second row back, left to right**

1926 ring, inscribed LEP, accession number SB8.914

1928 ring, inscribed GS, accession number SB8.915

1929 ring, accession number SB8.913

1930 ring, accession number SB8.918

1930 ring, inscribed GMW, accession number SB8.917

**first angled row, back to front**

1932 ring, inscribed MH, accession number SB8.919

1933 ring, inscribed HRR [?], accession number SB8.920

1935 ring (in box), Leticia Rider

1938 ring, Harriet H. Rogers, honorary member of the Class of 1938, long-time head of the College's riding program for whom the present-day riding center is named

**second angled row, back to front**

1942 ring, Barbara Ripley [Furniss]

1945 ring, Anne MacFarlane [Clark]; Gift of Anne Clark, 2007

1948 ring, Margaret Sheffield [Martin]

1949 ring, Preston Hodges [Hill]

Charm, accession number SB8.950

Locket, ca. 1920s, accession number SB8.949

Gift of Katharyn (Kay) Norris Kelley, Class of 1926

Watch fob belonging to Eugenia Griffin [Burnett], Class of 1910, ca. 1910s, accession number SB8.937

Sweet Briar Institute pin, ca. 1910-1915, accession number SB8.936

**Bottom Shelf**

Sweet Briar College Refectory china by the Syracuse China Company, Syracuse, New York, 1964-1971

Sweet Briar College Refectory silver-plate flatware engraved "SBC" by the R. Wallace Manufacturing Company, Wallingford, Connecticut, ca. 1930s

Sweet Briar College Refectory table napkin embroidered "SBC"

## Case 11 (right)

### Top Shelf

Oil painting of Sweet Briar House by Dorothy Carnine Scott, ca. 1930s, accession number SB8.1071

Born in North Dakota in 1903, the artist spent a nomadic childhood in the West. Her father was a Presbyterian minister. She graduated from Colorado College in 1924 and earned an MA from the University of Chicago as well as a BS in library science from Syracuse University. She did not begin painting until she and her family settled at Sweet Briar. She studied here with artist Elizabeth Hunt Barrett, a College neighbor. The artist's husband, Ewing C. Scott, was a professor of chemistry at Sweet Briar 1927-1944.

Watercolor painting of Sweet Briar House by Eloise Hirst [Couper], Academy, ca. 1908

Gift of Dr. John Lee Couper, son of the artist, 1996

Sweet Briar House has been home to the College's presidents since 1906. The residence has been on the Virginia Landmarks Register since the 1970s and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The original house was built in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century by Joseph Crews. Originally known as Locust Ridge, the structure was a two-story, six-room farmhouse of red brick. In 1830 Elijah Fletcher bought the house and 1,000 acres from Penn family relatives of his wife, Maria Antoinette Crawford, an Amherst County native. Called "Sweetbrier" for the abundance of wild roses on the property, it became the summer home for the Fletchers and their four children, Indiana, Elizabeth, Sidney, and Lucien. In 1841 the family made it their permanent residence and in 1851-1852 the original T-shaped farmhouse was enlarged with the addition of the tower wings, showing the daughters' attraction to Italianate architecture they had seen during a grand tour of Europe. For the first years of the College it also housed faculty apartments, a post office, and an infirmary. The first floor also served as the administration building for the College until 1926.

Ceramic pitcher decorated with a view of Sweet Briar House, ca. 1955-1965, accession number SB4.810

Made by Amherst resident Peter Williams, who worked at the College in the 1950s and 1960s. He is credited in some alumnae magazines and booklets about College programs such as Junior Year in France as the publications' art designer and illustrator.

### Middle Shelf

Engraved view of Sweet Briar House by Samuel Donovan "Don" Swann (1889-1954), ca. 1930s-1954

A Baltimore artist who had studied in Europe, Swann specialized in limited edition prints depicting historic buildings. He produced a number of Sweet Briar scenes in addition to this view. The Sweet Briar Alumnae Association sold them to raise funds for the College.

Vintage postcard titled "Amongst the Box Bushes, Sweet Briar College," ca. 1910-1920s

Vintage postcard of Sweet Briar House, ca. 1930s-1940s

Cardboard model of Sweet Briar House, 1955, accession number SB8.1050

This was as a table centerpiece for a Sweet Briar Day reception in Indiana. It was constructed by Janet Jaqua Boaz, Class of 1933, and her husband, Burling Boaz (1891-1968), an Indiana artist who designed stained glass and ornamental ironwork and taught at the Herron School of Art.

### **Bottom Shelf**

Plate by Royal Cauldon for Jones McDuffie and Straton, Boston, Massachusetts, with a view of Sweet Briar House, ca. 1930-1950, accession number SB4.828

Gift of Jean Van Horne Baber, Class of 1933

Decorative plate by Fotoware, Preston-Hopkinson, Lynchburg, Virginia, with a view of Sweet Briar House, ca. 1950s-1960s, accession number SB4.795

Plate by Wedgwood for Jones McDuffie and Straton, Boston, Massachusetts, with a view of Sweet Briar House, ca. 1946-1959, accession number SB4.831

Jones McDuffie and Straton specialized in the import and distribution of fine and decorative china. By 1910 it was the largest such firm in the United States. The company was well-known for its commemorative china depicting scenes at American colleges and universities. It ceased production of these in the mid to late 1950s. In recent decades the College has contracted with other makers of fine china to create reproductions of these plates.

### **Case 1**

#### **Top Shelf**

Vintage photograph of the Sub-Special Basketball Team, accession number SB8.1046

In its early years Sweet Briar accepted “sub-freshmen” or “specials” to a college preparatory curriculum. Known as the “Academy,” this ceased operation in the 1910s. This photo first appeared in the 1910 Briar Patch yearbook. The students on the team were: Dorothy Bancroft, Isabel Cornwall [Miller], Kathleen Cowgill, Elizabeth Craven [Westcott], Margaret Duvall [Handy], Addie Erwin, Ellen Hayes, C. Lucelia McClain [Vanpatten], Ida Ross [Leblanc], Mary C. Tabb [George], Emmy Thomas [Thomasson].

Vintage photographs of unidentified Sweet Briar athletes, ca. 1910s-1920s, accession numbers SB8.893 and SB8.897

Decorative horse doll with the monogram “SB” on its rump, ca. 1948-1952

Gift of Patricia Beach Thompson, Class of 1952, 2002

Equestrian sports have been a part of the Sweet Briar campus since the school’s beginning. Indeed, into the middle 20<sup>th</sup> century the school kept a fox-hunting pack.

#### **Middle Shelf**

Vintage photograph of students disembarking at the Monroe, Virginia, train station, 1952

Train ticket and envelope with route map, Norfolk and Western Railroad, Cincinnati, Ohio, to Sweetbriar [sic], 1931

Receipt for the Pullman Company, Washington, DC, to Sweetbriar [sic], ca. 1930s

Train ticket, Southern Railway System, Sweet Briar to Lynchburg, 1958

Gift of John Hyde in honor of his daughter Rose Hyde Fales, Class of 1938

Model of a truck with paper dolls, made by members of the Class of 1924 for their 5<sup>th</sup> reunion, 1929  
The note tied to the truck reads in part, “To Bozie...In loving remembrance of all our shimmie trips to the city of Amherst.” Another tag on the truck identifies the numerous one-time occupants, though only two dolls remain.

Vintage postcard of the Sweet Briar train station, 1906  
The train station was moved to campus in the 1970s is now located near the Guion Science Building.

### **Bottom Shelf**

Vintage photograph of the May Day Court, ca. 1910s  
Sweet Briar students celebrated May Day with a spring festival featuring a “May Queen” and her court well into the 1960s.

Scrapbook and dance card belonging to Ruth Marston [Palmer], Academy, ca. 1908

Suede-covered scrapbook with Sweet Briar seal in pink leather belonging to Frances Neville Newberry, Class of 1933, ca. 1929-1931

## **Case 2**

### **Top Shelf**

1910 diploma awarded to Frances Murrell [Rickards]  
The degree is signed by President Mary K. Benedict and President of the Board Alfred Magill Randolph. Episcopal bishop of the Diocese of Southern Virginia, Randolph was one of the four original trustees of Sweet Briar named in Indiana Fletcher Williams’s will. Five students graduated in the class of 1910. The design of the diploma copies that of the University of Vermont, the *alma mater* of Indiana Fletcher Williams’ father, Elijah Fletcher.

Mortarboard belonging to Marion Benedict Rollins, professor of religion 1928-1963, accession number SB8.888

*The First Year Book of Sweet Briar Institute*, 1906-1907

This catalog explains the College’s requirements for admission and the curriculum offered.  
Courtesy of the Office of the Dean of the Faculty

### **Middle Shelf**

Phi Beta Kappa key, accession number SB8.961  
This stylized watch key—the globally recognized symbol of America’s oldest honors society, established to recognize outstanding academic achievement at the highest levels of undergraduate study—was awarded to Mary K. Benedict when she was a student at Vassar College. It was given by President Benedict to Nan Powell Hodges, Class of 1910, when Hodges was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa by the Theta of Virginia Chapter (Sweet Briar College) at its first induction ceremony, 5 March 1950.  
Gift of Nan Powell Hodges, Class of 1910

Phi Beta Kappa key, accession number SB8.960  
This key belonging to President Meta Glass was awarded to her at Randolph-Macon Woman’s College.  
Gift of the Theta of Virginia Chapter (Sweet Briar College), Phi Beta Kappa

Phi Beta Kappa key

This key belonging to Dr. Connie Guion, professor of chemistry 1908-1913, was awarded to her at Wellesley College.

Gift of the Theta of Virginia Chapter (Sweet Briar College), Phi Beta Kappa

Vintage photograph of President Mary K. Benedict

Benedict's ambitious vision for the school and rigorous academic standards are widely credited as the key to Sweet Briar's strong start. She served as president 1906-1916. Frustrated by the continuing challenges of recruiting qualified students and raising funds, she left to study medicine at Johns Hopkins. She returned to campus on several occasions over the years, notably to mark the school's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and kept in touch with her former students.

Class of 1910 ring belonging to President Mary K. Benedict, an honorary member of the Class of 1910  
Bequeathed by President Benedict to Eugenia Griffin Burnett, Class of 1910. Burnett served on the College's board of directors 1921-1951.

Gift of Eugenia Griffin Burnett, Class of 1910

Small red leather scrapbook belonging to Frances Murrell [Rickards], Class of 1910, ca. 1906

Vintage photograph of three unidentified members of the Class of 1910

The women pictured here—"The Big Five"—are presumed to be the five members of the Class of 1910, the College's first graduates.

Necklace in the form of a daisy, gold and seed pearls, accession number SB8.921

This was one of five such necklaces given to the first graduates of Sweet Briar College by President Mary K. Benedict.

Gift of Eugenia Griffin Burnett, Class of 1910

Tau Phi club charm belonging to Mary Craighill [Kinyoun], Class of 1925

Tau Phi club pin, affixed to a 1922 May Day ticket

Gift of Jane Becker Clippinger, Class of 1925

Tau Phi club pin belonging to Gertrude Dally [Massie], Class of 1922

A College club started in the 1920s by Professor Elizabeth Czarnomska, Tau Phi recognizes academic achievement among upperclass students. It is still in existence.

Sigma Xi pin belonging to Elizabeth Franke [Balls], Class of 1913

This national science honor society was "founded in 1886 to honor excellence in scientific investigation and encourage a sense of companionship and cooperation among researchers in all fields of science and engineering."<sup>\*</sup>

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<sup>\*</sup>See [www.sigmaxi.org](http://www.sigmaxi.org).

## **Bottom Shelf**

Examination for French I, 1916

Bill for tuition and fees for Jessie Louise Coburn [Laukhuff], Class of 1933

This bill for the semester ending February 1930 is stamped “paid” on 17 September 1929, a month before the stock market collapse that ushered in the Great Depression.

Vintage photograph of three Sweet Briar students sailing for study abroad at St. Andrews, 1932

Sweet Briar has a long history of sending students abroad for study. Its oldest programs are those in conjunction with St. Andrew’s University, Edinburgh, Scotland, and Junior Year in France, which Sweet Briar has administered since 1948.

## **Case 3**

### **Top Shelf**

“Freshman Apron” belonging to Anne Lane Newell [Whatley], Class of 1928, 1924

This bears the owner’s name tag at the top and the poignant inscription, “Perhaps hereafter it will delight you to remember this.” This appears to be a sentimental paraphrase of a famous line from Book One of Virgil’s *Aeneid*, “Forsan et haec olim meminisse iuabit.” (“Perhaps it will even please us to remember these things someday.”) Through the 1930s first year students were expected to wear aprons for the first few weeks of the fall semester as part of their “initiation” into the life of the College and its community. For example, the student handbook for 1921-1922 states: “Freshmen shall wear a uniform apron between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. on all days except holidays...from the beginning of classes to Founder’s Day.” Signed and decorated by friends much like a yearbook, the aprons became cherished mementos.

Hand-made advertisement for “Aprons Washed and Ironed,” ca. 1910s-1920s

The notation in the lower left corner—“Benefit of the Drive”—refers to the College’s endowment fundraising efforts, in which students enthusiastically, and inventively, participated.

Vintage photograph of seven freshmen students wearing aprons, 1921, accession number SB8.897

### **Middle Shelf**

Felt banner with the initials SBI [Sweet Briar Institute], ca. 1914, accession number SB8.877

The banner was made by the Lynchburg Manufacturing Company. “Sweet Briar Institute” is the name under which the school was chartered and is still the College’s legal name.

Wizard club ring, 1910s [Academy], inscribed GM, accession number SB8.958

Rippler club ring belonging to Professor Connie M. Guion, 1913, accession number SB8.935

Dr. Guion, was the first chemistry teacher at Sweet Briar. Today’s Guion Science Building is named for her. She was a moving force behind early theatrics at the College and was the mentor of the school’s first student club—Paint and Patches, devoted to drama. Paint and Patches had two sub-groups, the Ripplers and the Merry Jesters, which put on plays throughout the school year.

Merry Jester club ring belonging to Leila Dew [Preston], Class of 1915, accession number SB8.925

*The Briar Patch* yearbook, 1910

This was the first year this annual was published.

Decorative baby doll, 1925, accession number SB9.850

Though much faded, the doll still bears its original pink and green color scheme and the letter “SB.”

### **Bottom Shelf**

Reproduction of a cover for the College’s student-run literary magazine, *The Brambler*. This “freshman issue” for October 1926 shows a cartoon baby “flapper” wearing the tell-tale beads.

Selection of “Freshman Beads” made of glass, wood, and Bakelite, ca. 1910s-1940s  
accession numbers SB3.873, SB3.869, SB3.863, SB3.859

Like “Freshman Aprons,” green-colored beads were worn for decades by first year students to distinguish them from upperclass women. The student handbook for 1935-1936, for example, states: “Freshmen are requested to wear the aprons and beads sold to them by the manager of the Briar Patch [the student yearbook] until Freshmen-Sophomore Day.”

## **Case 4**

### **Top**

Wool blazer, 1957

The building depicted on the insignia is the Refectory, now called the Anne Gary Pannell Center, on the Quad. The centrally located Refectory was the center of campus life—dining hall, venue for dances and banquets, location of Step Singing, and the back drop for Commencement exercises and all manner of club photos.

### **Middle Shelf**

Quiz for Music 228, 1962

Sweet Briar College Student Handbook belonging to Barbara Falge [Openshaw], Class of 1957, 1955-1956  
Gift of Nannette McBurney Crowdus, Class of 1957

1970 ring, Loring Harris [Amass]

Instructions for new initiates to the tap club Paint and Patches, undated, possibly ca. 1950s

### **on the riser**

Chung Mung club charm belonging to Cynthia Ann Whitley [Auman], Class of 1978, accession number SB8.929

Chung Mung is a student tap club devoted to fostering school spirit. Its members used to dress as ghosts and its symbol is still a ghost.

Paint and Patches club charm belonging to Susan Bassett [Finnegan], Class of 1954,  
accession number SB8.941

Paint and Patches is the College’s oldest student tap club and is devoted to theater.

### **Bottom Shelf**

Felt banner, ca. 1920s-1950s

“Bettina Boxwood” doll, ca. 1940s, accession number SB8.857

This homemade character was the mascot of a mid-century student magazine, *The Brambler*, and posed for countless humorous cover shots.

Decorative dachshund doll, ca. 1948-1952

Gift of Patricia Beach Thompson, Class of 1952, 2002

Beer stein, inscribed “1961” on the front and “Sam” on the back, ca. 1957-1961

## **Case 5**

### **On mannequin**

May Day dress worn by Frances Gilbert [Browne] '56 when she served as May Day Queen in the spring of 1956. She can be seen wearing this dress in the 1956 *Briar Patch* yearbook. Miss Gilbert was a member of the student government's judiciary board, earned dean's list honors, and was elected to the academic club Tau Phi as well as the national honor society Phi Beta Kappa.

### **Framed**

Program for May Day, 1910

May Day incorporated musical and theatrical performances as well as social events such as gala dances, performances by nationally-known bands, and an annual horse show. This spring celebration was a regular feature of campus life from the earliest days of the College. For example, the 1910 entertainment included a concert by the College's Glee Club and Orchestra, Sterndale Bennett's cantata “The May Queen,” and “A Legend of Bregenz, A Ballad for Females Voices and Piano,” music by Wilfred Ellington Bendall and lyrics from a poem by Adelaide Anne Proctor. “A Legend of Bregenz” relates a tale of a young woman who saves her community from destruction through her personal bravery and determination.

Photograph of May Court Members, 1929

The students pictured are Elizabeth Lankford [Miles], Eugenia Howard [Jones], Virginia Hodgson [Sutcliff], and Esther Tyler [Campbell]. Lankford, Howard and Hodgson were all from Norfolk, Virginia. Tyler was from Huntington, West Virginia. All were members of the Class of 1929; Hodgson was class secretary.

Newspaper Clipping, “May Day Discontinued,” *Amherst New Era-Progress*, 22 May 1969

In 1969 the student body voted to supplant May Day with other springtime social activities. The horse show remains and programs such as spring formals and “spring fling” weekends have evolved.

## **Case 6**

### **Top**

Selection of early postcards of the Sweet Briar College campus, ca. 1910s-1920s.

### **Middle Shelf**

Baluster model for the Façade of Benedict Hall, painted wood, ca. 1985

Decorative spoons by the Watson Company, Attleboro, Massachusetts, SBM.2015.023.001-003  
The bowls of these souvenir spoons feature a view of the Sweet Briar College campus ca. 1915-1922. The spoon handle is decorated with a motif from the Virginia flag and products associated with the state—an oyster, a peanut, and a tobacco plant.  
Gift of Cynthia and Michael Fein, 2015

Decorative plate with a view of the first campus buildings, ca. 1910s, accession number SB4.890  
This hand-painted porcelain plate was distributed to customers by the C. H. Almond Dry Goods Company, Lynchburg, Virginia.

Vintage photograph of Academic (now called Benedict Hall), the Bell Tower, and the cupola of the Refectory (now called the Anne Gary Pannell Center), ca. 1906-1912

### **Bottom Shelf**

Brass escutcheon from an unidentified campus door, early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century  
Clay brick from Benedict Hall (formerly called Academic), clay, ca. 1906  
Clay and plaster pilaster capital from mansion at Mt. St. Angelo, Sweet Briar's sister plantation and now home to the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, ca. 1905  
These varied building components are evidence that the campus is an ever-changing place that requires regular maintenance and up-grades. The baluster model, for example, was made by staff in the physical plant department to replace rotted wooden components along the façade roofline of Benedict Hall. The brick was collected by early museum staff when Benedict Hall was renovated in the late 1970s and is presumably original to the building. If so, it was made on campus by the College's first builders, using clay dug on site. The pilaster cap from Mt. St. Angelo documents the ambitious efforts of early College board member John McBryde to transform that old-fashioned mansion, originally the home of Elizabeth Fletcher Mosby, the sister of College founder Indian Fletcher Williams, into a suitable home for the Sweet Briar president. The house burned and was torn down in 1979.

## **Case 7**

### **Top**

Program for the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Sweet Briar horse show, 1932  
The College has been known for its riding program for more than a century and well into the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century the campus welcomed local fox hunting clubs. For example, a highlight of the autumn was the Thanksgiving Day fox hunt, which started from the Quad in front of the Refectory (now called the Pannell Center). The spring horse show was originally part of May Day festivities.

### **Middle Shelf**

Brown felt fox hunting derby belonging to Harriet H. Rogers  
Hand carved riding crop belonging to Harriet H. Rogers  
Brown leather hacking boots belonging to Harriet H. Rogers  
Harriet Howell Rogers was the long-time head of the Sweet Briar riding program, for whom the present-day riding center is named. She served as head of physical education 1924-1963.

### **Bottom Shelf**

Fox-hunting whip belonging to Harriet H. Rogers  
Embellished hunting horn belonging to Harriet H. Rogers

The horn was made for her by J. M. B. Lewis. A Lynchburg architect, Lewis also served as Master of Hounds for the Oak Ridge Hunt in Nelson County. Cochran Library exhibited a number of his decorated horns in the 1930s. Still today, at shows sponsored by the Sweet Briar College's riding program, an annual trophy in Mr. Lewis's name is awarded for the champion of the adult hunter division.\*

## Case 9

### Top

Senior Robe

Beginning in the late 1980s or early 1990s, Sweet Briar seniors have decorated their academic robes with a wide variety of tokens, buttons, tags, and embellishments. Earlier generations of students might simply have sewn a pocket or name label inside. These gaudy, personalized robes are not those worn at serious events, such as graduation ceremonies, but are used instead for happy, informal occasions such as Step Singing. They are passed along to younger friends in the rising senior class. This robe bears the following names:

Amber Bennett '91

Leticia Romo '92

Jill Meadows '97

Catherine Zahrn '98

Heather McLeod '99

Thea Okonaka '00

Meredith Taylor '01

Tia Trout '02

Jennifer Stanley '03

Dayna Gunn '04

Sarah Hart '06

Hollie Jennings '07

### Bottom

Paint chips from the Hitching Post, ca. late 1980s

Gift of Julia Beauvais Brooks, Class of 1990

A focal point of freshman and sophomore class rivalry, the Hitching Post is located in the Quad. Initially, freshman and sophomores fought with paint over a fire hydrant, but this eventually posed a safety hazard so the administration provided a hitching post. Vigorously defended by freshmen, it bears generations of paint layers attesting to pitched battles. Such good natured competition is as old as the College and early alumnae have often recalled the informal birth of now well-established traditions such as Step Singing. For example, Ruth Schabacker, a young student of the Sweet Briar Academy, fondly recalled in 1953: "... How on that lovely spring evening, after dinner, Miss Benedict gathered us together on the Refectory steps and urged us to adopt the age-old college custom of group singing, telling us how Sweet Briar, too, should have her traditions to pass on. Indeed we do cherish those inspirations and memories..."\*\*

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\* See A. H. Higginson and J. I. Chamberlain, *The Hunts of the United States and Canada: Their Masters, Hounds and Histories*, Boston, 1908, p. 132. See *The Sweet Briar College Alumnae Bulletin*, May 1939, p. 18.

\*\* *Sweet Briar Alumnae News*, March 1953, p. 15.

“SWTBGRL” Virginia automobile license plate  
Gift of Zeda Homoki Titus, Class of 1994

Paint and Patches club hat, ca. 2005-2010

Founded ca. 1908-1913 with the patronage of Professor Connie Guion, Paint and Patches was the first student club on campus and is still thriving. Its colors are purple and green. Decorated hats such as this and the other in this case are worn by current students on special occasions to signal their membership in a tap club.

## Case 10

### Top

Meridith de Avila Khan

*The Quad: Students, Alumnae, Faculty and Staff March to Sweet Briar House, 3 April 2015*

Gift of the artist, 2015

At the time this image was taken the artist was of the College’s official photographer in the media and marketing office. In the spring of 2015 the Sweet Briar College community—students, faculty, staff, alumnae, neighbors and friends—endured an upheaval of astounding proportions following the school’s then-leaders’ announcement on 3 March of their decision to close the 114-year-old institution. In the hours, days, weeks, and months that followed members of that whole community—whether working together or striking out on their own, making brash public pronouncements or planning quietly behind the scenes—engineered a historic reversal of that decision and laid out a path for recovery and renewal.

### Bottom

Letters

Selection of letters returned to the College by alumnae and student families. The printed letters were mailed as a supplement to President Jones’s 3 March 2015 email message announcing plans to close the College. In a quiet but effective groundswell of resistance, alumnae and families refused delivery of the letter or sent it back to President Jones with commentary.

Courtesy of Cochran Library Archives

Pens, accession numbers SBM.2015.022.001-.003

Three pens used on 23 June 2015 by Amherst County Commonwealth’s Attorney Ellen Bowyer, William Hurd of Troutman Sanders LLP, and Michael Shepherd of White and Case LLP to sign the settlement resolving the litigation in three lawsuits brought against the former leadership of the College to enjoin their announced decision to close the College in August 2015. Ms. Bowyer represented the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Mr. Hurd represented Saving Sweet Briar Inc. Mr. Shepherd represented the College’s faculty.

Gift of Sarah Clement, Class of 1975

Hat, accession number SBM.2016.001.001

This embellished cap was worn by student involved in the spring’s protest actions. Suggestive of a tap club hat, it incorporates both symbols (a daisy for Daisy Williams) and defiant slogans. Note that it is the same hat worn by the student seen holding up a corner of the banner in the photograph at the top of this case.

Gift of Mariah Miller, Class of 2016

Ribbon and bracelet, accession numbers SBM.2016.002 and SBM.2016.003

To boost morale a number of strategies were deployed. The pink rubber bracelet was distributed to College staff by alumnae. The pink and green ribbon was worn by a faculty member as an arm band at graduation on 16 May 2015. The ribbons were distributed to professors by faculty leaders as they lined up for the procession.

Anonymous gifts of a Sweet Briar College staff member and a Sweet Briar College faculty member

## Suggested Reading

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- 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary issue, *Sweet Briar College Alumnae Magazine*, March 2001.