

2021 REPORT OF THE ARCHIVIST

The Archives are a vital part of our Diocesan life. Historical documents such as maps, hand-written parish histories, and convention journals combine to provide researchers with key information. All items and files within the Archives are handled with care and are systematically cataloged for reference. From new archival additions to constant research, the year proved to be a busy one for the Archives.

The property of All Saints Episcopal Church, Brookland, PA, was a topic of archival interest. Brookland's cemetery records were scanned to provide pertinent information for Diocesan researchers. Another property of interest was Christ Episcopal Church, York Springs, PA. Several file folders containing deeds, maps, and historical data were provided for investigation. Documents from Trinity Episcopal Church, Renovo, PA, were also researched during a property evaluation.

The Archives received items that were cataloged and securely stored in the archive room. Water damaged parish registers were received from St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Manheim, PA for safekeeping. The registers were examined, documented and stored for future use. Several boxes of artifacts, photographs, and documents were received from our closed churches in Mount Carmel and Shamokin, PA. These items were also cared for and stored in the archive room.

The Diocesan files of The Episcopal Church Women (ECW) comprise a sizable portion of archive room space. Documentation in the form of meeting minutes, program bulletins, photographs, and books are just a part of the ECW collection. The original ECW Book of Remembrance card catalog was added to the collection this year. The card catalog was received in excellent condition and will provide a rich source of information for years to come.

Diocesan archive documents for St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Columbia, PA, were researched for their laying of the cornerstone anniversary celebration. The Archives were also consulted for several baptismal records along with other document requests from genealogists. In celebration and recognition of Black History Month, a document was created that highlighted the rich and complex story of our Diocesan African American parishes. Articles pertaining to this history were shared on the Diocesan website.

In closing, a unique item of historical significance came to our attention through an email inquiry from a gentleman in Montana. The gentleman reached out to the Diocese to ask about a church bell that was discovered in his grandfather's Harrisburg, PA storage shed. The church bell inscription included Bishop Darlington's name which led the inquiry to our office. We discovered that the bell was taken during the demolition of St. Gerald's Episcopal Church, Herr Street, Harrisburg, PA. Evidently, the gentleman's grandfather worked on the demolition, took the bell from the site, and stored the bell in his shed. After many years, the gentleman discovered the bell and carried it off to his home in Montana. The Diocese would be grateful to have the bell returned but no such agreement to return the bell has taken place.

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Throughout the year, Bishop Scanlan and the Diocesan Staff have provided time and energy to the operations of the Archives. A group effort is required to maintain the Archives as a well-organized collection. A huge thank you to all who provided time, materials, and ideas the Diocesan Archives.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah A. Robelen, Diocesan Archivist