

## **Collections Committee Report**

I have begun the weeding project, with the able assistance of Tom Hayward. The Special Collections will not be weeded, unless there are cases of multiple copies or books in poor condition. Special Collections are: the Morning Room books; the Farrand Collection, formerly called the Bookplate Collection; and Special Books, formerly called Rare Books. Weeding the general collection is necessary because the shelves are full and there is very little room for any new books. There is no room for new archival materials either, since the “office” shelves and cabinets are stuffed with periodicals. We need to make space.

The practical reality gives way to the philosophical: the general idea of the Garland Farm library is to replicate and update Beatrix Farrand’s library. Therefore, with our limited shelf space in mind, we are guided in weeding by the premise that each book should be both directly connected to and appropriate for research on Beatrix Farrand’s life, work, and influence.

To move from weeding to acquisitions, in August we received some papers of Marion I. Spaulding, from her nephew. Marion Spaulding worked on the Reef Point herbarium from 1949-1954. The papers we received include book notes for a Reef Point garden guide; plant lists; two plans of the grounds; some photographs of Spaulding at Reef Point; and manuscripts of two lectures she gave about Reef Point. While the collection is small, it is still rather wonderful, providing not only a contemporary view of Reef Point but also, perhaps more importantly, context for our herbarium collection and exhibits.

I have cataloged the Spaulding Papers in PastPerfect. The cataloging project as a whole is going well. So far I’ve cataloged about 200 books, including the Special Collections. The cataloging does involve reclassification, from the unique McGuire/Shedd system used by Marti Harmon to the Library of Congress system used by most academic and many research libraries. This will mean that the books will be re-shelved as they are cataloged, but with care the library needn’t look messy in the process. Both systems will be in place for a while, but I’m confident that we will still be able to find any needed items.

I propose that BFS purchase the online version of PastPerfect next spring. Even though less than 20% of the library’s materials will be cataloged by then, the online catalog would still be of great use to anyone interested in the Society’s library holdings. Not only will the outside world be able to see what BFS owns (starting with the Special Collections and some archival materials), the online catalog will also be available within the farmhouse as well, on anyone’s smart phone or laptop. That capability means there wouldn’t have to be a BFS computer made available just for the library catalog. Furthermore, in the future, when BFS gets to the point of having digital images of its archival materials, photographs, and even garden ornaments and house furnishings, those images can be cataloged along with books and documents.

For an example of an online catalog via PastPerfect, see the website of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society. (<http://mdihistory.org>) Choose “Collections” from the upper menu and then “Catalog,” or “Catalog” from the lower menu. (<http://mdihistory.pastperfectonline.com>)

The cost of mounting the online catalog would be @\$1150: @\$700 for the web-access software and another required module, plus \$450 for PastPerfect to host a database on their server of up to 10,000 records. The \$450 hosting fee would be an annual charge thereafter. I honestly believe that it would be a worthwhile expense, justifiable if BFS wants to have its library and archives available to students, researchers, and scholars everywhere.

Respectfully submitted,  
Wendy Knickerbocker, Chair  
10 October 2015