

# *The* Filson

A publication of The Filson Historical Society, a privately-supported historical society dedicated to preserving the history of Kentucky and the Ohio Valley Region.



Recent  
Acquisitions  
3

Reopening  
Update  
5

Browsing in  
our Archives  
6

2020 Impact  
Report  
8

Kentucky  
Women  
10

Digital  
Exhibits  
12

Photo  
Biennial  
15

Staff  
Profile  
16

Filson Sporting  
Clay Classic  
17

The  
Filsonians  
18

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Thank you for being faithful participants in our remarkable Filson programs. Depending on the subject matter and the lecturer, we have run programs enjoyed by 150 to 1,000 Zoom participants. In the last twelve months, we covered topics as diverse as Lincoln's pivotal thirteen-day train ride from Springfield to Washington for his inauguration; the McDonald chain's opening of franchising opportunities to black Americans; Frederick Douglass, the American prophet of freedom; Theodore Roosevelt, J.P. Morgan and the transformation of American capitalism; the advent of the Reagan presidency; Eleanor Roosevelt; and poetry read by a Kentucky poet laureate, Frank X Walker. We also have presented programs by authors and researchers who may not hold university professorships but have a deep understanding of Kentucky's rich history. For example: Gwynne Potts, *George Rogers Clark and William Croghan*; David Ratterman, *Henry Clay*; and Karl Raitz, *Making Bourbon*.

What happens behind the scenes when we present a program on Zoom? Julie Scoskie James and Scott Scarboro vet all suggested speakers by watching past presentations and scanning books. They then calendar the speakers, working with them or their agents to make the experience go smoothly. A few days before the lecture, Julie and Scott meet with the presenter to work through the Zoom format and our requirements (use of a power source and ethernet cable, etc). Then forty-five minutes before the lecture begins, the Filson team assembles via Zoom with the lecturer. This includes the staff members you never see, but who so flawlessly admit participants and open the chat room. We make sure the introduction and question/answer format are ready to go. And then, fifteen minutes before the lecture, we go into silent mode as you enter the waiting room. This enables us to wolf down dinner and mentally prepare to give you the best viewing experience possible. And, of course, when the event is over, we breathe sighs of relief! I hope you enjoy our programming as much as we do.

All best,



Richard H.C. Clay

President/CEO, The Filson Historical Society

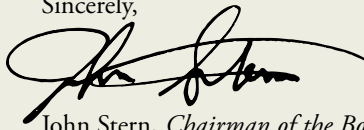
## FROM THE CHAIR

With this my first letter to the many groups which make up the Filson family, let me first and foremost thank all of you who make the Filson the outstanding organization which it is. All of you—staff, board, members, financial and collections contributors, speakers, researchers and others—are vital to the Filson's health and success in making it the premier historical society in the Ohio Valley as well as one of the top nationally.

Special thanks go to the 2021 officers—President Dick Clay, Vice-Chairperson Jane Goldstein, Secretary Patrick Northam and Treasurer Beth Wiseman. Also Board Committee Chairs Ted Steinbock (Collections), Lindy Street and Sandy Wilson (Development Co-Chairs), Beth Wiseman (Finance), Jane Goldstein (Governance & Nominating), Ann Wells (Investment) and Wes Cobb (Ad-Hoc Information Technology). Also new directors Chris Brown, Angela Edwards, Jim Haynes, Lynn Moore, Ashley Noland, Ann Wells & Sandy Wilson. Also retiring directors Mac Brown, Marshall Farrer, Laman Gray, Bob Kulp, Anne Brewer Ogden & Marianne Welch.

Finally, when Henry Ormsby asked that I join the board in 2007, little could I anticipate my involvement today. He, as well as succeeding chairs Sandy Wilson, Mac Brown & past chair Carl Thomas, leave humongous shoes to fill. However, with your continued input and support, the Filson will continue to fill a meaningful role in collecting, preserving and telling the significant stories of Kentucky and Ohio Valley history and culture, and in the process, help our local, regional and national leaders learn from history so that the mistakes of the past are not repeated. That can be our greatest contribution in these challenging and fast changing times!

Sincerely,



John Stern, *Chairman of the Board*

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## The Filson

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## OUR MISSION:

To collect, preserve, and  
tell the significant stories  
of Kentucky and Ohio  
Valley history and culture.

**COVER:** Aubespain at work at a drafting table around 1967. Aubespain was the first Black news artist employed by the Courier-Journal. Filson Photograph Collection [20PC11]

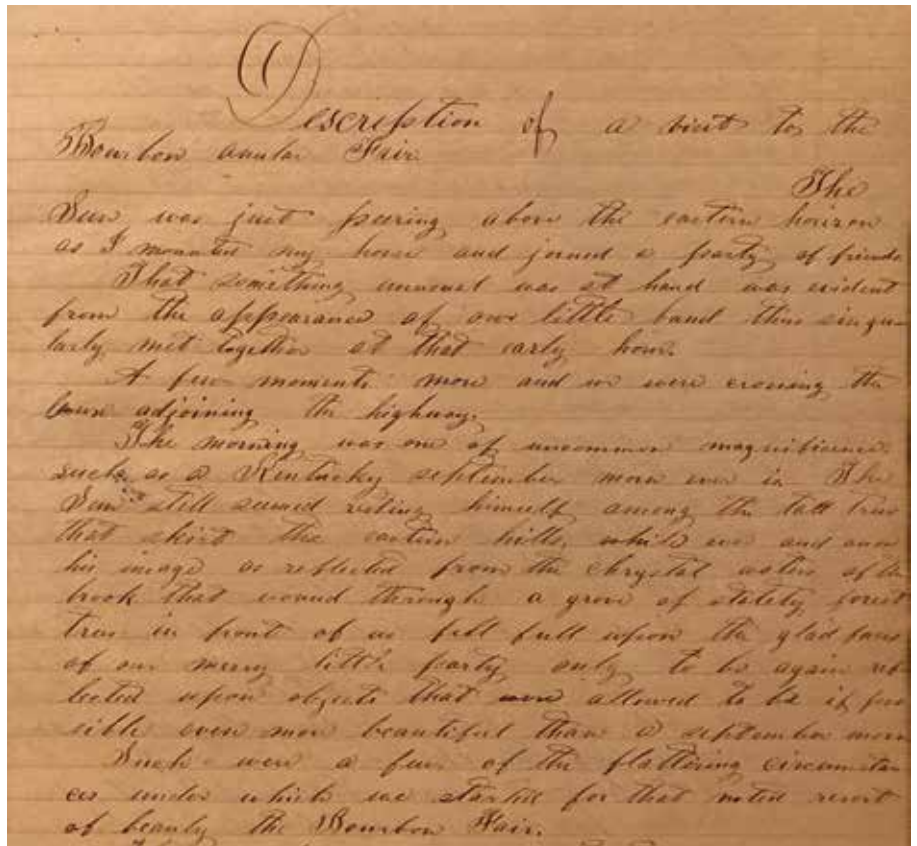
# Recent Acquisitions

The staff of the Collections Department meets every two weeks to discuss potential acquisitions as a group, and want to thank our community for sharing its history. We are pleased to share a few examples of recent acquisitions that have come in over the winter!



## Patty Thum Photograph and Prints

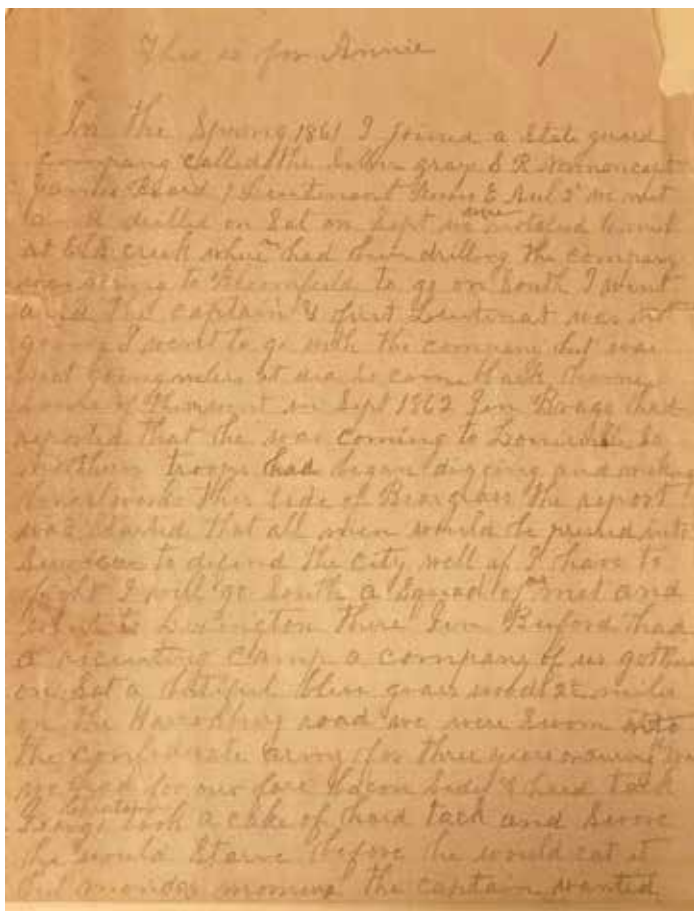
Patty Thum (1853-1926) known for her paintings of flowers, landscapes, and portraits, was one of Louisville's earliest professional woman artists. This early photograph of Thum graduating from Vassar (1874) and several examples of her commercial prints will build upon our holdings documenting women artists from the 19th to early 20th century. (Historical Acquisition Fund)



## Alexander McKee Essay Book, ca. 1849-1852

First page of an essay by John Alexander "Aleck" McKee of Harrison County, Kentucky, describing his visit to the ca. 1849 Bourbon County (Ky.) Fair. It is the first essay in a volume of essays written ca. 1849 to 1852 on a variety of topics while McKee was in school at Farmers' College in Cincinnati. (Gift of Gill Holland)





### James McKinley Civil War Memoir, 1915

First page of a memoir written in 1915 by James T. McKinley of Wilsonville, Spencer County, Kentucky, recalling his service as a cavalryman in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. (Gift of Juanita Riester Miller through her nephew Jerry Miller)

R. T. CUMMINS & CO. WHARF BOAT, CATLETTSBURG, KY.		
Shipped, IN GOOD ORDER AND WELL CONDITIONED, BY R. T. CUMMINS & CO.		
On board the good Steamboat <i>Red Buck</i> the articles, described below, which are to be delivered, without delay, in like good order and condition, (the unavoidable dangers of the River and Fire only excepted,) at the Port of <i>Louisia</i> unto <i>J.W. Payne</i> or assigns, he is they paying freight for said Goods at the rate of		
In Testimony Whereof, The Owner, Master or Clerk of said Boat hath affixed to this Bill of Lading, of this time and date, one of which being accomplished, the others to stand void. Dated at CATLETTSBURG, KY., this <i>25</i> day of <i>Sept</i> 186 <i>5</i>		
MARKS.	ARTICLES.	WEIGHTS.
<i>J.W.L.</i>	1 Box Rice	38
<i>Louisia</i>	1 " Sugar	50
<i>1cy</i>	1 " Dry Goods	540
	1 Case Shoes	100
	2 Bags Lard	100
<i>Chgo</i>	1 Box Drugs	160
<i>Wid Wagon 160</i>		
<i>May Com 50</i>		
<i>\$ 210</i>		
	<i>G.H. Balluff</i>	

### R. T. Cummins & Co. Wharf Boat Ledger, September 1865 to June 1866

Page from the shipping ledger of R. T. Cummins & Co. Wharf Boat of Catlettsburg, Kentucky, September 25, 1865. (Historical Acquisitions Fund)



### Joseph Krementz Photograph Collection

Building upon our strong collection of late 19th-early 20th century Ohio Valley photographers, we are excited about the recent addition of the Joseph Krementz Photograph Collection. Krementz (1840–1928) operated photographic studios both in Louisville, and New Albany, Indiana. In addition to portrait photography, Krementz was a talented landscape painter and



belonged to the prestigious Wonderland Way Art Club in his later years. This collection includes landscape photographs, a study collection of photographs that Krementz collected, and several early examples of glass carte-de-visite frames. (Donated by Stephen Anshutz)

# The Filson Historical Society Reopening Update

In March 2020, news of the novel coronavirus was hitting the United States. Over the course of a few weeks, Americans went from blissful ignorance to great fear as the scope of the pandemic began to take shape. The staff of the Filson Historical Society pivoted on a dime, taking all services online and closing to the public in order to keep our staff and members safe.

Over the course of the last year, Filson staff have worked to be transparent regarding opening to the public. In May 2020, the leadership team created a plan to safely reopen the Filson in accordance with Kentucky's Healthy at Work initiative. Staff began coming into the building at no more than 50% capacity on any given day in July 2020. Wearing masks and sanitizing surfaces became something we did every day without thinking. We were hopeful that we would be able to reopen to the public in September 2020 for research appointments and fully open in January 2021.

However, in the fall, it became clear that research appointments and reopening in January would not happen. A second surge of coronavirus cases gripped the nation, Kentucky included. In the Winter issue, we announced that the Filson would reopen to the public in April. However, as cases continued to increase, the leadership team, with the support of the Board of Directors, pushed the public opening date back to September 1, 2021.

While several vaccines for Covid-19 are available, over 50% of the Filson's staff will not qualify to receive a vaccine until Phases 2 and 3 of vaccine distribution in Kentucky and Indiana. At the current rate of vaccination, it could be summer before we reach those phases.

In the meantime, Filson staff will continue to work in the building at no more than 60% capacity on any given day, in accordance with Kentucky's "Healthy at Work" guidelines.

Collections staff will continue to provide remote research services and work with patrons to meet their research needs. For more information about utilizing the Filson's collections remotely, please contact the Filson via phone at (502) 635-5083 or via email at [research@filsonhistorical.org](mailto:research@filsonhistorical.org). The Filson's voicemail is checked Monday through Friday and all voice-mails and emails will be returned in a timely manner.

To be added to a list of individuals interested in future research appointments, please email [research@filsonhistorical.org](mailto:research@filsonhistorical.org) with your name and contact information. This list is being maintained by Jennie Cole, Director of Collections Access. Online collections catalogues and resources are available on the Filson's website, [filsonhistorical.org/collections](http://filsonhistorical.org/collections).

All programming will continue to be held virtually until further notice. Currently, virtual programs are free for both members and the public. For a list of upcoming virtual events, please visit [filsonhistorical.org/events](http://filsonhistorical.org/events).

Questions about the Filson's reopening plan should be directed to Emma Bryan via phone at (502) 635-5083 or by email at [emmabryan@filsonhistorical.org](mailto:emmabryan@filsonhistorical.org).

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the staff of the Filson Historical Society, we would like to thank you for your continued support during these unprecedented times.

# Mervin Aubespín

Activist, Artist, Author

BY ELIZABETH STANDRIDGE | MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS INTERN

1968 was a pivotal year marked by tumult and social unrest. The war in Vietnam escalated dramatically, as anti-war sentiment and opposition to the draft in the United States grew. The Civil Rights movement reached a boiling point in April 1968, when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, prompting outrage and riots across the nation.

Mervin Aubespín was no stranger to the movements galvanizing around him. As a student at the Tuskegee Institute, Aubespín had assisted in the Montgomery bus boycott and protested with Dr. King in the 1965 Selma to Montgomery march. After moving to Louisville following his graduation, Aubespín continued to protest for civil rights for Black Americans.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to his social activism, he was also involved in the arts scene. According to Aubespín, during his compulsory period of service in the military from 1963–1965 he used his free time to hone his skills as an artist.<sup>2</sup> Following his honorable discharge and return to Louisville, he was a member of the Louisville Art Workshop, exhibiting his work alongside other artists such as G. Caliman Coxe and Robert Douglas.<sup>3</sup>

By May 1968, he was working at the *Courier-Journal* as the newspaper's first Black news artist. In the month following the assassination of Dr. King, Black Louisvillians protested the reinstatement of a local police officer who was accused of brutalizing a Black man while making an arrest. Aubespín, as one of the few Black employees at the newspaper, accompanied a white reporter to the cover the protests unfolding in the West

End. When the situation became dangerous, Aubespín sent his colleague home and assumed the role of news reporter, calling stories into the newsroom and reporting in the area for the next few days.<sup>4</sup>

As he recalled in a later interview, following the riots he was called into a meeting with the management of the *Courier-Journal* and told that he was more valuable to the newspaper as a journalist. Aubespín's headfirst jump into the role of journalist marked the unofficial beginning of a storied career in journalism.

While continuing to work as a news artist for a period, Aubespín also began reporting for the *Courier-Journal*. In one of his first byline credits in May 1969, he and colleague Bill Peterson reported on the Black Student Union's occupation of the President's office at the University of Louisville.<sup>5</sup> In September of the same year, one of Aubespín's first big solo stories, "The Black Traveler in Kentucky," appeared in the *Courier-Journal* & *Times* magazine.

In 1971, he entered the Minority Journalism Program at Columbia University to further hone his skills as a journalist. Aubespín became a staff writer at the *Courier-Journal* the following year, covering "a variety of local beats, including civil rights and public transportation."<sup>6</sup>

As one of the first Black staff writers for the newspaper, Aubespín had entered a very white field. In his own words, at the *Courier-Journal* he was like a "fly in milk."<sup>7</sup> While his job was reporting the news, Aubespín's lifelong mission became opening the door for other people of color to enter the news industry, and to ensure these professionals



Aubespín (center) gives Nelson Mandela (left) a miniature replica of Louisville artist, Ed Hamilton's *Spirit of Freedom* in a 1997 visit to South Africa. Djibril Diallo (right), director of the United Nations Development Program Division of Public Affairs, looks on. Filson Photograph Collection [20PC11]

gained due promotions to management positions, rather than remain in entry level roles. In 1985, Aubespín was appointed Director of Minority Recruitment and Special Assistant to the Executive Editor.<sup>8</sup>

While pursuing these goals at the *Courier-Journal*, Aubespín also joined in the efforts of several like-minded professional organizations such as the National Association of Black Journalists, Louisville Association of Black Communicators, and mentorship programs including the Rainbow Institute and Multi-Cultural Journalism Workshop.<sup>9</sup>

Aubespín served as the President of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) from 1983-1985, during which time membership was greatly expanded and the first national office was established in Louisville. According to the commemorative booklet, "Committed to the Cause: A Salute to NABJ's Presidents," Aubespín's somewhat controversial strategy as president was to forge alliances between the NABJ and leadership of the mainstream media. In his own words "I wanted to get white media leadership to involve itself in NABJ so it could establish some relationships and we could all be less confrontational. For the first time white editors and news directors and white media leadership – with their financial resources – came together with NABJ and its mission."<sup>10</sup>





Aubespín at work at a drafting table around 1967. Aubespín was the first Black news artist employed by the *Courier-Journal*. Filson Photograph Collection [20PC11]



Aubespín (front left) with members of the Louisville Association of Black Communicators, undated. Aubespín was a founding member of the organization and served in several leadership roles. Filson Photograph Collection [20PC11]

During his tenure as president, Aubespín also organized a group of Black journalists who traveled to West Africa to cover the expansion of the Sahara Desert, and later returned to report on the United Nation's aid efforts in the region. At the time, Black reporters were rarely tasked with international stories. The opportunity allowed Black journalists to gain practical experience with international reporting, and for Black writers to shape the narrative that Americans received of Africa.

Following these trips Aubespín remained involved with the United Nations, serving as

a consultant on media to the United Nations Development Program's Office of Public Affairs and a member of the United Nations Task Force on Aids in Africa. Throughout his career, he continued to travel around the world on journalistic trips to countries including Mali, Mozambique, Guatemala, and South Africa where he met Nelson Mandela.<sup>11</sup>

After a long and distinguished career at the *Courier-Journal*, Aubespín officially retired from his role as an associate editor in 2002, but his work was far from over. He continued to work as a freelance consultant, while adding a new entry to his long list of job titles: author.

Mervin Aubespín, Kenneth Clay, and the late Dr. J. Blaine Hudson, together co-authored *Two Centuries of Black Louisville: A Photographic History*, which was published in 2011. The book tells the story of the Black community in Louisville from 1778 to the 2011, using photographs gathered from archives around the city and submitted by Black citizens.

Among his many awards and honors, Aubespín is a member of the Kentucky Journalism Hall of Fame, the National Association of Black Journalists Hall of Fame, and the 1990 recipient of the Ida B. Wells for exemplary leadership in providing minorities employment opportunities in journalism.<sup>12</sup>

In 2020, Aubespín donated a collection of his personal papers and photographs to the Filson Historical Society, where they are currently being processed and cataloged. He currently resides in California.

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- 1 "Consider This," undated, Mervin Aubespín Papers [Mss. A A892], Digital Collection, Filson Historical Society (FHS)
  - 2 Military Service material, 1955-1967, Mervin Aubespín Papers [Mss. A A892], FHS
  - 3 Louisville Art Workshop Exhibition programs and clippings, c. 1960-1975, Mervin Aubespín Papers [Mss. A A892], FHS
  - 4 "Consider This," undated.
  - 5 Aubespín, Mervin and Bill Peterson, "Blacks Occupy President's Office at U of L, Leave with Goals Unmet," *Courier-Journal*. 1 May 1969.
  - 6 "Committed to the Cause: A Salute to NABJ's Presidents," 2000, Mervin Aubespín Papers [Mss. A A892], FHS
  - 7 "Consider This," undated.
  - 8 Correspondence with Paul Janensch, Len Pardue and assistance to the executive editor for minority recruiting job description, 1984, Mervin Aubespín Papers [Mss. A A892], FHS
  - 9 Aubespín's Biography and Curriculum Vitae, 1991-2000, Mervin Aubespín Papers [Mss. A A892], FHS
  - 10 "Committed to the Cause: A Salute to NABJ's Presidents," 2000.
  - 11 Aubespín's Biography and Curriculum Vitae, 1991-2000, Mervin Aubespín Papers [Mss. A A892], FHS
  - 12 Ida B. Wells Award programs and the Masthead magazine, 1990, Mervin Aubespín Papers [Mss. A A892], FHS.



# 2020

## IMPACT REPORT



"My grandmother gave each of her grandchildren a Lifetime Filson Membership in 1962. I was 12 years old, so I didn't understand what a gift she had given us all. I haven't lived in the area since college, but I started using the resources of the Filson in the last 15 years. Their publications have interesting and well researched articles and their digital collection continues to expand.

Their speaker program is outstanding. The Filson stepped up to meet the challenge of the pandemic by having the speakers present live online. I finally have been able to attend and if I miss one, I can view it on their YouTube channel!

While I am a lifetime member and the online talks have been free, I have chosen to donate yearly to the Filson as I believe they have excellent programs and I wish to see them continue to be able to make their resources accessible to so many more people."

- Barbara B.,  
Member since 1962

8,748

### PROGRAM ATTENDEES

This includes youth 21 and under who participated in the 2020 Virtual Cultural Pass along with those who attended programs.

### Most liked Instagram photo of 2020

143 ❤️ likes

Follow us on Instagram @filsonhistorical

Color lithograph of the Southern Exposition buildings, 1883. Filson Historical Society Print Collection, [PR400.0026]



In December 2020, Filson Curator of Collections, Jim Holmberg and Jerry and Linda Robertson of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation placed a wreath on the statue of York to honor him and his service to the Lewis and Clark Expedition as part of the Wreaths Across America campaign. York's statue is located on the Belvedere overlooking the Ohio River in Louisville, Kentucky at 160 N. 5th Street. It was sculpted by artist Ed Hamilton and dedicated in the fall of 2003. Ed Hamilton was named 2020 Louisvillian of the Year in October.

2020 Social Media Stats



1,560 FOLLOWERS



351 FOLLOWERS



5,199 FOLLOWERS



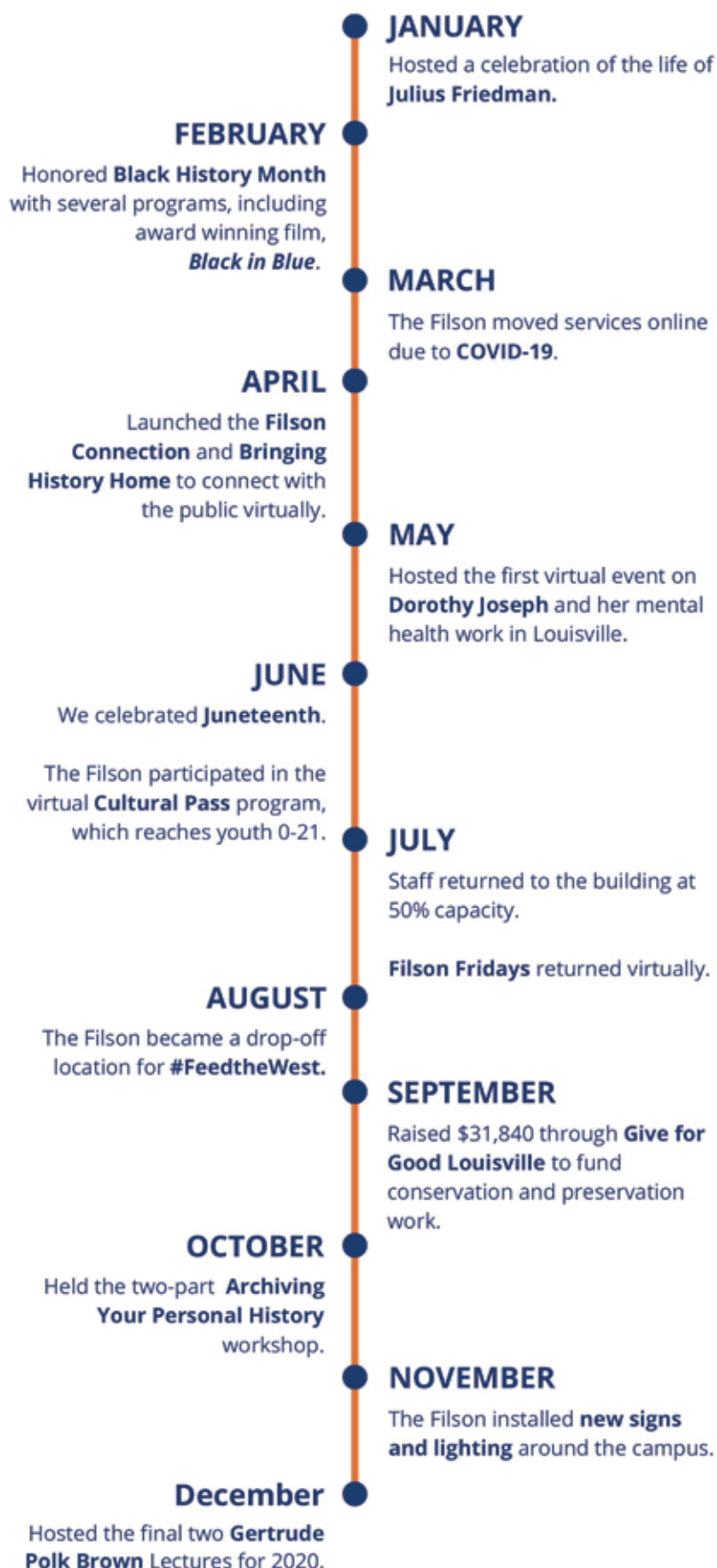
40,764 VIEWS



# 2020

IN REVIEW

Despite the pandemic, the Filson was able to host 40 programs in addition to other services. Here are some of the highlights.



## By the Numbers



# The Filson Welcomes Kentucky Women

BY ABBY GLOGOWER | CURATOR OF JEWISH COLLECTIONS

This Filson is delighted to share an exciting new collections acquisition that explores Kentucky history and botany through fine art. *Kentucky Women* is a limited-edition series of original woodblock prints by Chicago-based Jewish artist Gabriella Boros that pairs remarkable historical figures with regional plants representing their accomplishments. The result is a beautiful and inspiring suite of portraits that invite viewers to learn about the diverse stories of Kentucky women and our natural world. *Kentucky Women* was conceived and executed by Boros during 2020 for an artist residency at Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest, with research assistance from the Filson Historical Society.

Boros has characterized each print as a true “labor of love” and estimates that approximately twenty-five hours of work have gone into each of the ten prints, from start to finish. Most of this time was spent in the artmaking, which involves stages of drawing, tracing, cutting, and printing. But much of the work is also intellectual and emotional. “Research is a very important part of my artistic process,” Boros says. “Deep engagement with history and ideas inspires much of my art. In order to depict these incredible women, I had to immerse myself in their stories and learn as much as I could about the places they lived, the kind of clothing they wore, and what their experiences might have been like.” The artist’s efforts enable us to reach across time, as well as geographic and social distance, to meet amazing women and contemplate opportunities seized, obstacles overcome, and passions pursued.

Included in the *Kentucky Women* series are: naturalist and mother Amanda Bernheim (1854–1922), pediatrician Florence Brandeis (1861–1941), conservationist Sally Shallenberger Brown (1911–2011), aviator Willa Beatrice Brown (1906–1992), journalist Alice Allison Dunnigan (1906–1983), family doctor Grace James (1923–1989), Kentucky First Lady Judi Conway Patton (b. 1940), activist Suzy Post (1933–2019), botanist Sadie Price (1849–1903), and musician Jean Ritchie (1922–2015).

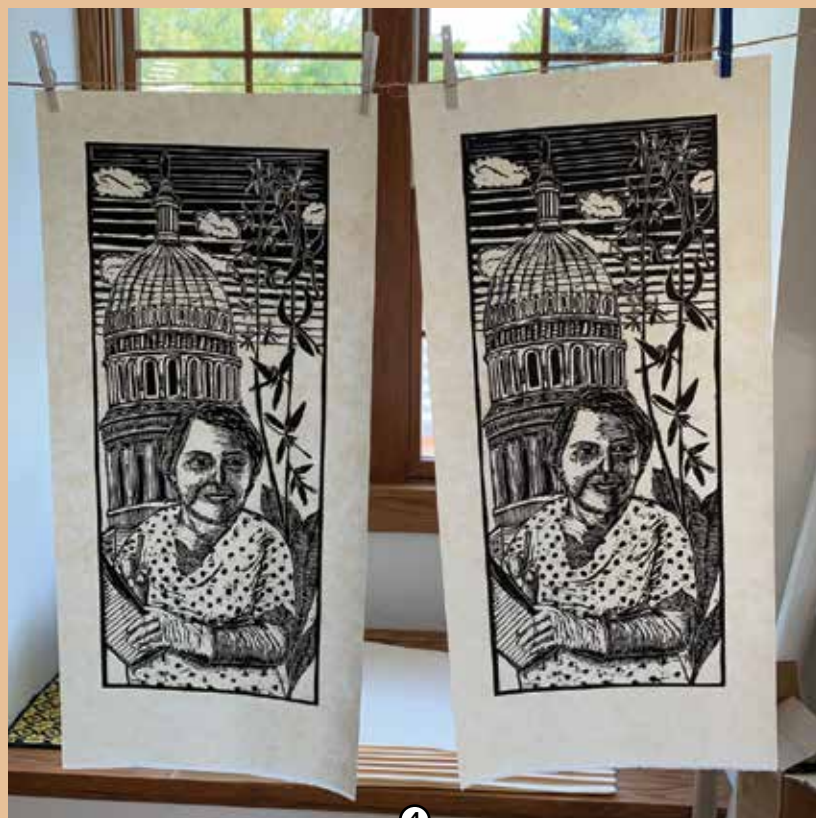
The original prints now preserved at the Filson have been photographically enlarged into banners installed in an educational walking loop around Lake Nevin at Bernheim Forest. You can learn more about Gabriella Boros and her art at [www.gabriellaboros.com](http://www.gabriellaboros.com), and the Filson looks forward to hosting her for a Zoom talk on June 29 and in-person walking tours at Bernheim Forest on July 10 and 11. To register for these events, please visit [filson.simpletix.com](http://filson.simpletix.com).







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1. Gabriella Boros designs her portrait of Sally Shallenberger Brown. (photograph courtesy of the artist)
2. Once transferred to the wood, the portrait of Suzy Post undergoes intricate carving. (photograph courtesy of the artist)
3. After the carved block is inked, the print of Florence Brandeis is carefully burnished to transfer the image to fine paper. (photograph courtesy of the artist)
4. Finished prints of Alice Dunnigan hang to dry in the studio. Boros printed only five copies of each portrait, ensuring a uniqueness and feeling not commonly associated with the print medium. (photograph courtesy of the artist)
5. The print of Amanda Bernheim and the Kentucky coffeetree (pictured) and nine others now hang as enlarged banners along the Lake Nevin walking loop at Bernheim Forest, available for touring now. (photograph courtesy of the artist)
6. Finished portrait of Dr. Grace James (29.5" x 14"), a visionary Louisville African American doctor and namesake of the new West End public school, the Grace M. James Academy of Excellence.
7. Gabriella Boros shared the *Kentucky Women* prints with Filson staff and Elmer Lucille Allen, a Filson friend and artist, in December 2020.



# Digital Exhibits

## *Bringing the Filson to You*

BY HANNAH COSTELLE

It's been a year since the Filson closed its doors to the public for everyone's health and safety. For the first time in decades, most of you can't visit our library or special collections reading rooms to hunt through maps and letters and photographs. You can't browse the exhibits that showcase our museum collections, can't see for yourselves our turn-of-the-century wedding gowns and Antebellum portraits.

But our collections have always been here to be seen and read, studied and understood by researchers and history enthusiasts of all backgrounds. So, when the pandemic hit, we knew we had to figure out new ways to bring the joy of discovery to the public, both here in our region and around the world. One of the ways we've been able to do this is through putting our most fascinating past exhibits and most loved collections online.

The Filson already had a few online exhibits before the pandemic, including the Frank Raymond Lane World War I Correspondence and Mammoth Life and Accident Insurance Company Collections. But it wasn't until in-person outreach was no longer an option that we saw the full potential of online exhibits for bringing our collections to the community. Here are a few exhibits we've put together over the past year that can bring a little more history into your life.

### **The Rogers Clark Ballard Thruston Mountain Photograph Collection**

In 1882, Rogers Clark Ballard Thruston (1858–1946), prominent Louisvillian and longtime president of the Filson, was hired as a geological assistant for the Kentucky Geological Survey. The Survey's goal was to explore and photograph natural resources in the Appalachian region. Later, from the 1890s to the early 20th century, Thruston continued photographing Appalachia during his time with the Kentucky Union Land Company. The result of his efforts is this collection of stunning photographs, which depict the people, homes, mining communities, and natural wonders of Eastern Kentucky. Counties featured in the exhibit include Bath, Bell, Breathitt, Breckinridge, Carter, Elliott, Floyd, Harlan, Knox, Letcher, Pike, Whitley, and Wolfe in Kentucky, and Wise and Lee in Virginia.



Photo from the Thruston Mountain Collection depicting the cabin and family of Henry Morris on Big Black Mountain in Harlan County, Ky., 25 September 1903.



Photo from the Thruston Mountain Collection showing the mouth of a Kentucky Union Land Company coal mine in Breathitt County, Ky., 1890.



Photo from the Thruston Mountain Collection showing a funeral procession in Harlan County, Ky., ca. 1882-1905.



Photo from the Thruston Mountain Collection of a wedding Party in Letcher County, Ky., 1884.



One of the dolls created by Ewen, along with a set of outfits. The doll's name is written on her back as "Lu Ann Melverton."

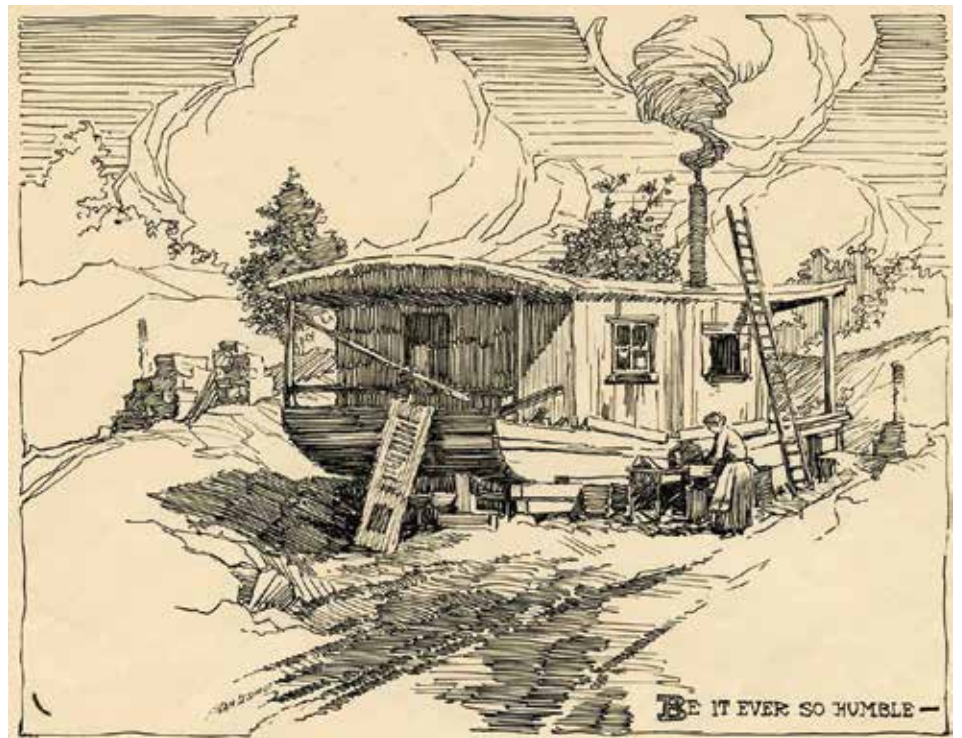


## All Dolled Up: The Handmade Paper Dolls of Carrie Douglas Dudley Ewen

Carrie Douglas Dudley Ewen (1894–1985) was a professional illustrator from Flemingsburg, Kentucky who studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and was a pioneer for women artists in the commercial sphere. She is best known for illustrating children's books and cookbooks, as well as designing holiday cards for Henri Fayette, NuArt, and Chrysons card companies. However, in her spare time, she also created whimsical works of art in a variety of media, like this collection of hand-drawn and painted paper dolls. Ewen gave the dolls as birthday and holiday gifts to the children in her family, who cherished them throughout their lives. The Filson's online exhibit shares images of over a dozen of these unique and beautiful dolls.

## Shantyboats: Life on the Ohio

Denigrated as "squatty little half-house, half-boat," shantyboats provided dwellings for as many as 50,000 people



Print by Alexander J. Van Leshout depicting shantyboat living in Louisville, ca. 1920s.

along American rivers during the Great Depression. From the 1850s until the 1950s, Louisville had a thriving shantyboat community by the outlet of Beargrass Creek along River Road near Butcher-town, at an area called "The Point." In this exhibit, you'll learn about the people and

customs of the river and the "underground economy" that thrived on fishing, basket making, and harvesting mussel shells for buttons. The exhibit pairs the research of Dr. Mark Wetherington, former Director of the Filson, with resources from our collections.





Photograph of Louisvillian Cora Owens Hume (1848–1939) dressed in deep mourning following the death of her second husband in 1881.



▲ Black straw bonnet with black silk ties and purple crepe embellishment. Most likely worn as part of a mourning ensemble belonging to a member of the Greene family, ca. 1850–1880.



▲ Mourning bracelet made of a loved one's woven hair, a common memento in the Victorian era. The Mourning exhibit features many more examples of hairwork and other mourning jewelry.

## Shrouded in Jet and Crepe: A Look into Mourning Attire

In the Victorian era, death and mourning were part of everyday life. High infant mortality rates, poor sanitation, and social and political unrest left many shrouded in grief, both emotionally and physically. Mourning etiquette in Europe and America entailed theatrical displays of grief, particularly for women. This exhibit shares a wide variety of nineteenth-century mourning garments and jewelry from the Filson's collections, as well as memorial ribbons and posthumous portraits.

## The 1890 Tornado

On March 27, 1890, a massive tornado tore across downtown Louisville, leaving a trail of destruction in its wake. The storm lasted only about five minutes, but it nonetheless leveled homes and businesses, destroying warehouses, churches, and the railroad station. One hundred people were killed and at least 55 were injured. The tornado's path was so localized in the West End of the city that many Louisville residents were unaware of the disaster until they read the next morning's *Courier-Journal* headline: "Louisville visited by the storm demon." This exhibit shares images of the tornado's aftermath from the Filson's photograph and print collections.

These are just a handful of over two dozen online exhibits the Filson now has available for anyone to explore at [filsonhistorical.omeka.net](http://filsonhistorical.omeka.net). Other exhibits include "The Evolution of Camp Zachary Taylor," "Before the Wrecking Ball: Views of Lost Louisville," "Women's Suffrage: The Movement in Louisville," "Sincerely Yours from The White House: Letters from U.S. Presidents," and "The Novia James White World War II Photograph Collection."

We miss seeing members of the public exploring our collections and exhibits in person. But we are so grateful for everyone's continued engagement through projects like these. Rest assured, even after the Filson opens back up, we will continue creating online exhibits. This has been a wonderful way to connect to our existing community and reach out to a new audience of history lovers all over the world.



Photo of the wreckage at the Union Depot Railroad Station on 7th Street in Louisville in the aftermath of the 1890 tornado.



Photo of Falls City Hall on West Market Street after the 1890 tornado ripped through Louisville. Two hundred people were trapped under the building's wreckage, many of whom were crushed or suffocated before rescuers could save them.



# Paul Günter

## Studio Portraiture to Art Photography

In conjunction with the 2021 Louisville Photo Biennial, the Filson is excited to present the upcoming virtual exhibit, *Paul Günter: Studio Portraiture to Art Photography* coming this fall.

Immigrating from Hanover, Germany in 1886, Paul Günter (1856-1936) settled in Louisville, KY establishing himself as a commercial and art photographer. Coming from a family of photographers, one can assume that Günter immigrated to the United States in hopes of opening his own photographic studio. Shortly after arriving to Louisville, Günter is listed as an artist with Stuber and Bro., a prominent photographic studio located at 616 East Chestnut street. By 1891, he is listed as the successor, to Daniel Stuber's studio, another notable German photographer. Günter's work documents three major aspects of his career and life:

- Studio photography: works he created to make a living
- Family photography: snap shots of intimate views of his family and friends
- Art photography: works focused on capturing the natural world, architecture, and people, including several unique views of the African American community

This virtual exhibit will walk viewers through the life and legacy of Paul Günter through the photographs he left behind.

### Related Programs

- Photographing Kentucky Icons: From the Ring to the River, C. Thomas Hardin—June 10 at 6:00 p.m.
- Ask a Curator, join us to chat with curators about the exhibit—September 14 at 6:00 p.m.

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, physical exhibits continue to be closed to the public. The opening of *A Child's World* has been rescheduled for later this year. *Women At Work: Women Venturing into the Public Sphere* can be seen online at <https://filsonhistorical.omeka.net/exhibits/show/women-at-work> for now, and we plan to open the physical exhibit later this year.



Trees swaying in the wind at an unidentified location, undated.



Real photo postcard of Paul Günter, reading "Good luck for the new year," 1911.



Group of unidentified African American's posing in front of a cabin, ca. 1900-1910.



Verso of a cabinet card showing Günter's studio information.



*Staff Profile Interview with*

# Hannah Costelle

*Research Specialist*

**Jamie Evans:** Tell us about your path to the Filson. Please include your education as well.

**Hannah Costelle:** I came to the Filson in a roundabout way. I attended Eastern Kentucky University. My undergraduate degrees are in journalism and English, and after college I did research for an ad company and worked at the public library. So, I had experience in some related fields, but I never considered myself a history buff. When I applied for the position at the Filson, I was sure that would be a strike against me. Luckily, they hired me anyway.

**JE:** What do you do as the Research Specialist?

**HC:** My main job is helping people do research. When we're open to the public, most of my days are spent in the library and special collections reading rooms answering reference questions and hunting down manuscript materials to share with researchers. But I also work on a hodgepodge of other projects, include cataloging collections, working on exhibits, and editing copy.

**JE:** How did your previous jobs prepare you for working at the Filson?

**HC:** Almost everything I did before the Filson involved research: reporting for my college newspaper, writing my senior honors thesis, hunting down data for an ad agency. All that gave me the right mindset to help other people dive into their own research projects with primary resources.

**JE:** Has the scope of your job changed with the adjustments the Filson has made do to the current pandemic?

**HC:** My job has changed a great deal in the past year. I still get to answer a lot of reference questions, but since we're closed to in-person research, all my interactions with the public are now online or over the phone. I've also been creating online exhibits so the Filson's collections remain accessible to the community even during the pandemic.

**JE:** What has been your favorite collection that you've catalogued?

**HC:** One of my favorites is the Menu Collection. It contains menus from dozens of local restaurants and events dating from the 1860s to the 1990s. I love what collections like this reveal about the day-to-day lives of people who don't make it into the history books. It's amazing to read the Tuesday specials they ordered at their local diner or the dishes they served on their wedding day. So much can be revealed about a culture through these seemingly insignificant details.

**JE:** Imagine it's 50 years from now and someone is looking at your contribution to the menu collection. What would your menu and order look like, and how would it provide insight into your experiences now?

**HC:** My contribution to the collection would be a menu for a get-together at my grandparent's house. It's been hard to gather

safely during the pandemic, but in the summer we were able to come together picnic-style outside. The menu would include our usual staples of chili, canned fruit, and ice cream, but it would also stipulate that all diners must bring their own hand sanitizer, dishware, and folding chairs.

**JE:** What are some of your hobbies and interests outside of the Filson?

**HC:** I often go hiking in the forests around Kentucky.

**JE:** Tell me about your most memorable hike.

**HC:** One of my favorite hikes was actually outside of Kentucky. My family and I went to Wyoming a few years ago and climbed Medicine Bow Peak. We went in the summer, and the wildflowers were blooming all over the mountains. It was beautiful.

**JE:** What is one thing you want your members to know about researching remotely at the Filson?

**HC:** That it can be done, and we're more than happy to do it. Don't put your research projects or family trees in a drawer just because you can't hunt through our library and manuscript collections yourself. We'll search our materials for you and send you scans of whatever we find. All you have to do is email your questions to [research@filsonhistorical.org](mailto:research@filsonhistorical.org). The first half-hour of research is free.

# THE FILSON

## SPORTING CLAY CLASSIC



### WHERE

**The Sporting Club at the Farm**

4939 River Road, New Albany, IN 47150

### ABOUT THIS EVENT

Join us for a great morning of networking and clay shooting at Southern Indiana's premier The Sporting Club at the Farm.

For more information and to register, visit [filsonhistorical.org/classic](http://filsonhistorical.org/classic)  
Proceeds will benefit the Filson Historical Society (501c3)  
Sponsorships starting at \$1000.

### WHEN

**FRIDAY,  
OCTOBER 29, 2021**

CHECK IN: 8:30 AM

SAFETY CHECK: 8:55 AM

START: 9:05 AM

LUNCH & AWARDS: 11:30 AM

### COST

**\$300 Individual**

**\$1,200 Team of four**

Each participant will receive:  
15 station clay shoot; Safety orientation; Complimentary coffee, water, and snacks; Swag bag including event t-shirt; 12 or 20 gauge ammunition; Catered lunch and drinks.



Filsonian listing reflects membership gifts received October 30, 2020–February 24, 2021

# The Filsonians

## October 2020–February 2021



The Thruston Legacy Circle is an honorary society established in 2015 to recognize those who have followed the example of R. C. Ballard Thruston by including the Filson in their estate plans. Since our founding in 1884, the Filson has been privately supported and planned giving is an ideal way to continue that tradition of private support.

If you have made a planned gift to the Filson and have not so advised us, we thank you and ask that you let us know so we can welcome you to the TLC. If you have not made a planned gift but would like more information about doing so, please call our Development Department at (502) 634-7108 or email Brenna Cundiff at [brenna@filsonhistorical.org](mailto:brenna@filsonhistorical.org).

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