The Albert H. Small Washingtoniana Collection

The Albert H. Small Washingtoniana Collection contains over 1,000 manuscripts, prints, maps, newspaper, and other objects relating to Washington, D.C. history. This collection and its substantial reference library was donated to the George Washington University Museum in February 2011. In Spring 2015, the Collection began its move to the Museum’s new location in Foggy Bottom.

Phase 1—Cleaning
Clean books and shelves are vital to the collection’s preservation. Using a HEPA-filter vacuum, Becca cleans a book before cataloging and shelving.

Phase 2—Cataloging
Natalie and Rebecca identified LC call numbers for books, creating bibliographic fields to be converted to records in Gelman library’s OPAC and searchable through the WRLC.

Phase 3—Finding Aid
Natalie and Rebecca created PDF finding aids to make the collections more accessible. Finding aids are linked on the museum’s website, and they will be included in ArchiveGrid in the future.

Reflections
This project is the first step of many, completing the groundwork to increase accessibility to these historic collections. In the future, interns may use tools and technology to improve upon this access.

Collaboration between the museum and library contributed to the project’s success. Whether smaller institutions in a larger academic network, or related institutions in neighboring communities, museums and libraries can collaborate to increase their audience and use of their collections.