

Stewart Bell Jr. Archives
Handley Regional Library & Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society

Access Policy

Purpose of Policy

Materials in our collections are frequently fragile, irreplaceable, and may require special handling. The access guidelines laid down in this policy are designed to ensure the preservation, integrity, and safety of all collections currently under our care.

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with other policies and procedures currently in place, including those of the Handley Regional Library system, and complies with standard practices of archives and special collections repositories as defined by the Society of American Archivists and other professional organizations.

Access

The collections of the Stewart Bell Jr. Archives are made available on equal terms of access consistent with the *ALA-SAA Joint Statement of Access: Guidelines for Access to Original Research Materials* (1994). Collections are available to the members of the public during our scheduled hours of operation with the following stipulations:

- Material does not circulate. Material may not leave the reading room.
- Access to some material may be restricted due to applicable laws, statutes, personal privacy rights, institutional proprietary rights, or through agreement between the Archives and transferring offices and/or donors of archival material.
- Material that is fragile and subject to damage from further handling may be withdrawn. The Archives will provide a copy or facsimile of the withdrawn material for research purposes.
- Access to unprocessed collections must be approved by the Archives Manager.
- Duplication of material is permitted according to the conditions of Stewart Bell Jr. Archives "Reference and Reproduction Policy." Archives staff may refuse any duplication request that does not comply with this policy. The user assumes all responsibility for any infringement of the U.S. Copyright Code.
- Anyone violating Reproduction and Access policies may be barred from the reading room and use of the collections.
- In general, access to the storage room is limited to Library staff, Archives volunteers, and authorized maintenance workers. Members of the public may access the storage room if accompanied by a staff member in order to view restricted items or during tours.

Reading Room Rules

- The Reading Room is designated for registered researchers using the collections of the Stewart Bell Jr. Archives. Use of the Reading Room as a study or meeting space is not permitted.

- Tours of the Archives are available by appointment with the Archives Manager and through certain programs.
- Appointments are not necessary to visit the Reading Room. However, researchers are advised to contact the Archives in advance of their visit to ensure materials will be available at the time of their visit.
- All researchers must sign the visitors' log at the beginning of each visit to the Reading Room.
- All researchers must have a current researcher registration form on file. Researcher registration forms must be renewed at the beginning of each calendar year.
- Researchers who refuse to fill out a registration form in full will be asked to leave the Reading Room. If staff have reason to believe that information on a form is or will be falsified they may ask for further identification.
- Food and drink are not permitted in the Reading Room and must be stored with other personal belongings.
- No jackets, coats or bags are permitted at the research tables. All bags, including purses, handbags, backpacks and laptop cases must be stored prior to using materials. Lockers and a coat rack are provided at the entrance to the Reading Room for this purpose.
- Personal devices such as laptops and tablets, as well as pencils and paper, may be used. Pens or other marking devices are not permitted.
- All personal items brought into research spaces are subject to staff inspection on exit.

Materials Handling Procedures

- Clean, dry hands (free of hand sanitizer and lotion) are best for handling most paper materials. Some materials may require additional protection and staff may request that you wear gloves to limit deterioration. Gloves will be provided.
- Maintaining the original order of the collection is essential to our ability to retrieve material. We typically serve only two folders/items at a time. Please examine one folder at a time and keep the materials in order.
- Items must be handled with care, and pages turned slowly, and items must remain flat on the table while being viewed.
- Materials may not be marked, erased, folded, torn, cut, traced, or altered in any way.
- Please refrain from applying pressure when viewing manuscripts; note taking on the surface of the materials and tracing are prohibited.
- Items must remain in their protective enclosures. Patrons wishing to view items outside of their enclosures must ask for staff assistance.
- Photography of materials is permitted unless otherwise noted. If using a tripod, please do not allow legs to touch the materials.
- Personal or handheld scanners are not permitted.
- All items must be returned to staff. Please do not re-shelve materials.

Computer Use

- Computers in the Reading Room are for the use of registered researchers using the collections of the Stewart Bell Jr. Archives.

- Computer users must adhere to all policies concerning computer and Internet use laid out by the Handley Regional Library.