

SERCA

SOUTHEAST REGIONAL
CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

paper | books | paintings | objects | textiles

SUMMER

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Help Shape the New SERCA Website!

Dear SERCA members,

As your new Communications Coordinator, I'm honored to continue the great work of my predecessor, Katie. I want to take this opportunity again to thank Katie for her dedication and years of service to SERCA—her efforts have truly strengthened our community, and we will continue to benefit from the solid foundation she built.

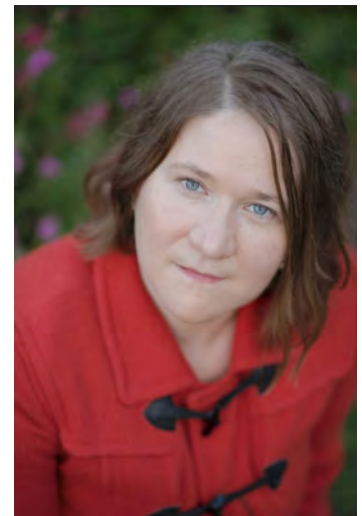
We've officially begun work on redesigning the SERCA website, with the goal of creating a platform that is current, engaging, and useful for both members and the broader conservation community. Part of this effort includes showcasing the incredible work and energy of our members—and for that, we need your photos!

We're still looking for photos from annual meetings, workshops, or SERCA events, action shots of you working on conservation treatments, behind-the-scenes views of labs, tools, or projects, and anything that reflects our role in preserving cultural heritage.

If you have images you'd be willing to share, please email them to: communications@sercaconservation.org

Your contributions will help bring the new site to life and represent the diverse work being done across our region. Whether you've submitted before or this is your first time, we'd love to include your perspective. All photos submitted will be fully credited to the

(continued on page 3)





Board Members

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COMMUNICATIONS COORD.

Marianne Kelsey

NEWSLETTER COORD.

Amparo Escolano

HEALTH & SAFETY COORD.

Katie Etre

MEMBER AT LARGE

Tahe Zalal

Future Leadership Opportunities

Dear SERCA Members,

As you already know, all positions on SERCA's Board of Directors are currently filled. However, as with any dynamic organization, leadership opportunities can arise unexpectedly. With that in mind, we encourage you to start thinking now about how you might like to get more involved in SERCA's leadership in the future.

If you're interested in potentially serving on the board down the line, we welcome you to submit a letter of interest. Having a group of engaged members ready to step into leadership roles helps ensure the strength, continuity, and future success of the organization.

To express your interest or learn more about ways to get involved, please don't hesitate to reach out to:
president@sercaconservation.org

Thank you for being an essential part of the SERCA community. We look forward to continuing to grow, evolve, and serve together.

Warm regards,

The SERCA Board

HAPPY SUMMER!

Remember: UV rays are great for tans, terrible for art. Protect your collections—and your skin!



From the Desk of Marianne Kelsey *(continued from page 1)*

individual or firm that provided them. Including your name or business name alongside your photo is a great way to promote your work, especially for those in private practice or seeking greater public visibility.

Thank you so much for being a part of this process—I'm excited about what we're building together!

All My Best,

Marianne Kelsey,
SERCA Communications Coordinator
Kelsey Conservation LLC.

SERCA Community Connections



Bookbindery/Conservation Studio for Sale in Beaufort, South Carolina

Price: \$9,800 (entire bindery as one lot), Well-cared-for and in great shape. Ground-floor location for easy removal. Owner trained at Canterbury Cathedral Bindery. For details contact Teri Lynn, herbertL@musc.edu

Major Equipment: Ingento floor paper cutter, Canterbury Cathedral Harris & Sons board chopper (a bit smaller than a Jacques; excellent condition), Lying press/tub with ebony track, Standing press, 2 nipping presses, Bench press, Finishing press, Sewing presses (1 Canterbury Cathedral design, 2 traditional), Type cabinet, Finishing stove (with clearance below for

circulation), Sealector Teflon tacking iron (adjustable temperature).

Lighting: 1 magnifier lamp, 4 freestanding photographer's lamps, 2 clamp-on table lamps

Hand Tools (all tools necessary for forwarding and finishing), including: Shears, Bone folders, Type holders, Band nipper, Laying/finishing sticks, Brass fillets and rolls, Polishing irons, Gold burnisher, cushion, knife, eraser, Stainless pressing tins, Wooden boards, New plough (fits the lying press), Cast iron weights, spokeshave.

Type Sets (Brass): Elizabethan / Camberwell Sizes: 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 22 pt (6 different sets), York / Camberwell Sizes: 10, 16, 20, 22 pt (4 different sets), Blanks (brass and lead).

Supplies: Hot glue, Lens tissue, Muslin & linen, Pressing & drying cloths, Kraft paper (for hollows/spines), Glassine, Sewing tapes, French chalk, Bath stone (for cleaning brass), Cord, headbands, Silk and linen threads, Glaire, Dyes & varnish

Everything listed above is included in the full package for \$9,800. Contact Teri Lynn directly, at herbertL@musc.edu for more information or to arrange a visit.

Serca Newsletter Archive

Explore our archive of past SERCA newsletters for valuable insights, case studies, and member contributions. Catch up on issues you may have missed!

<https://sercaconservation.org/serca-newsletters/>

Next issue: December 2025 Deadline for submissions: November 15, 2025

Development Activities at the University of Florida

Katie Smith

Conservator and Interim Preservation Librarian University of Florida



Katie at the bench.

Despite the six large libraries at the University of Florida, we are a relatively small team of conservators responsible for repairing all the collections. And, if we are anything like other places in the South, we are fairly far from any other conservator working in the field. This can lead to feelings of not only isolation, but also stagnation—stagnation in learning and growing your skills as a conservator because you may not have the time or means to grow. We always feel too busy to learn new things and, with shrinking budgets in the institutional world, the cost of attending workshops is often prohibitive. The ability to keep up your skills and knowledge can feel overwhelming.

Enter my general dislike of meetings and exclusive knowledge. Meetings are boring and often unnecessary, and I am inclined to believe that my team knows a lot of things I don't—and vice versa. With a team of three who all work in the same room (myself included), we

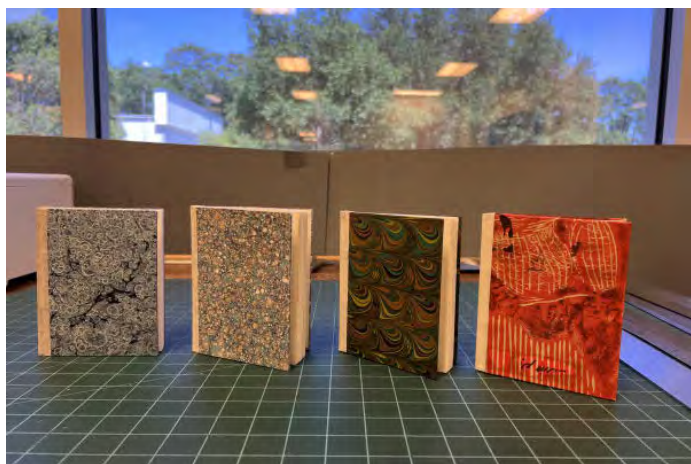
communicate all day, every day. We all want to develop the skills needed to support one another's individual projects if necessary. For these reasons, we've opted out of one-hour meetings. Instead, my team and I have a quick check-in once a month, followed by what we've labeled our "development activity."

Our development activities consist of two parts. First, we read a book together and discuss one chapter at each meeting. This book is directly or tangentially related to our conservation work—whether about the history of the book, book conservation, etc. We decided to slowly build our conservation knowledge as a team. We read on work time, not private time, as it's an important part of our day-to-day decision-making. We take turns choosing what to read. Once we finish a book, we move on to another. We also purchase each book for our preservation library, so we can grow and keep our reference collection up to date.

Second, we pick something that builds our hand skills and tacit knowledge. This can be anything from learning to make a historic book model, to printing in a certain format, silver cleaning,



trying new conservation repair methods on mock-ups, etc. Again, we trade off who chooses the activity. If it's something that takes a long time (like some historic book models), we break it up so that we only do a portion of the activity each month. If no one knows how to do what we want to learn, one person learns it first and then



Scaleboard Bindings Final Results, Left to Right:
Katie, Katie, April, Jimmy

teaches the rest of us. Occasionally, we hire someone to teach us (shout out to our local papermaker Amy Richard, among the many

who have spent time training our team).

Whatever model and/or repair example each team member makes is theirs to keep so they can build their own model libraries; however, the person leading the training must make two copies of any models we create—one of which goes into our conservation library. This library serves as a reference for our own conservation work, and can also be used by special collections curators for classes or other trainings.

This has really helped our team. We've become more unified and have been able to grow and feel more confident in our work. Our collection curators have become even more engaged with our unique knowledge and skill sets, since we've chosen items from their collections as the basis for our models. They're not just asking us to repair things—they're recognizing that we possess a unique physical knowledge that can support their research and resource sharing.

To see some of the historic structures we've made as a team, visit our website at: <https://conservation.uflib.ufl.edu/conservation/>

Montefiascone Workshops: Expanding Skills through History

By Sue Donovan,
Conservator for Special Collections , University of Virginia Library (photographs by the author)

Sue Donovan, Conservator for Special Collections at the University of Virginia Library, recently returned from two enriching weeks of conservation workshops in Montefiascone, Italy. Sue first participated in "Recreating the

Red Ochre Pigments.





Left: shell gold and other types of metals ready for painting

Medieval Palette” with Cheryl Porter, where students explored the materials and methods used to create pigments for medieval manuscripts. Through hands-on experimentation, Sue learned how to prepare and apply historical pigments.

In the second week, she took “The Safina Binding” taught by Kristine Rose-Beers and Fatma Aslanoglu. This course focused on a distinctive 15th-century Iranian binding structure known as the Safina. Illustrations of the Safina binding can be seen in contemporary drawings and paintings, which is quite fascinating!

With the knowledge and skills gained from these workshops, Sue is now even better equipped to interpret and care for the UVA Library’s special collections, particularly those with Middle Eastern and manuscript materials.



Up: Sue’s completed books: a one-quire “Safavid” limp textile binding on the left, and the long and narrow “Safina” binding on the right.

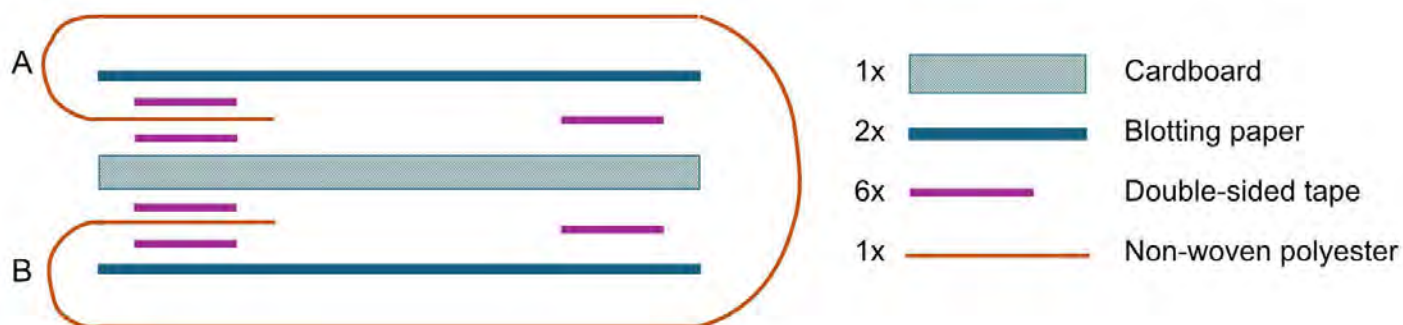
Left: Sue working on the Safina binding (photo: Fatma Aslanoglu)

"Blotter Stacks"

By Sigourney Stanford

Conservator, Georgia Archives (illustrations by the author).

While working as a paper conservation fellow at the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) in Philadelphia, I was introduced to and taught how to make "Blotter Stacks". This is a tool that removes the frustration of juggling lots of small pieces of non-woven polyester and blotting paper for pressing mends or just being a soft surface to put a weight directly on a paper object. It consists of non-woven polyester, blotting paper, and thick cardboard all attached together in one double-sided stack so that they act as a unit as opposed to individual pieces.



Final "Blotter Stack" structure

Blotter stack instructions:

1. Cut your thick cardboard (x1) and blotting paper (x2) to the same size.
2. Cut the non-woven polyester to the same length as the card/blotters and x2.5 the width.
3. Cut x6 pieces of double-sided tape to slightly shorter than the length of the card/blotters.
4. Attach x2 pieces of double-sided tape to each side of the cardboard close to the edges.
5. Peel off x1 piece of double-sided tape carrier on side A.
6. Stick the non-woven polyester to the tape near the edge.
7. Attach another piece of double-sided tape on top of the first.
8. Peel off the carrier for both pieces of tape on side A.
9. Stick the blotting paper onto side A.
10. Wrap the non-woven polyester around the

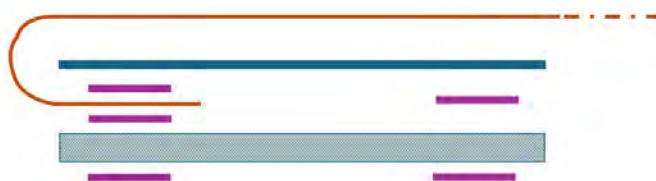
Steps 4 – 7:



Steps 8 – 9:



Step 10:



top of the blotter on side A and place on the surface side B face up.

11. Attach a piece of double-sided tape to the second piece of blotting paper near the edge and peel off the carrier.

12. Place the blotting paper double sided tape side up on top of the non-woven polyester next to the cardboard with a gap between of the thickness of the cardboard.

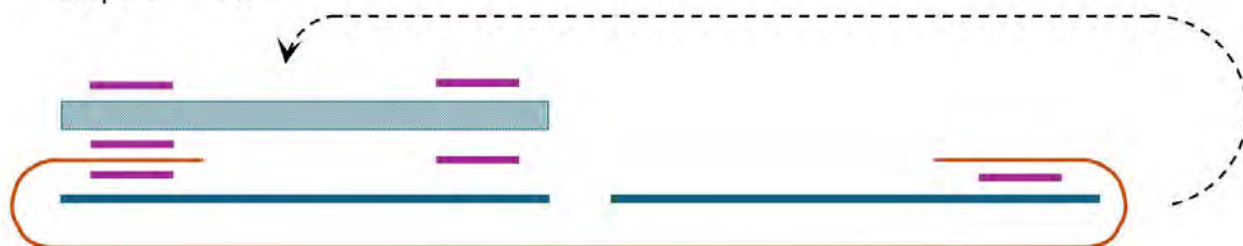
13. Wrap the tail end of the non-woven polyester around the loose blotting paper and attach to the double-sided tape.

14. Peel off the tape carriers attached to side B of the card and stick down the loose blotting paper.

Steps 11 – 12:



Steps 13 – 14:



Reuse and Recycle Tip: On-The-Go Solvent Testers

By Amparo Escolano
Conservator, South Florida Art Conservation LLC.

What you need:

1-2 oz dropper bottles or cleaned nail polish bottles (remove the brushes from these ones)
Labeling tape and gloves

How to make it:

Save and thoroughly clean empty dropper from your favorite skin care brand. Once dry, refill them with your preferred solvents or solvent mixtures. Label them clearly and keep them handy for quick, on-site cleaning tests.



'Tis but a scratch: First Aid in the Conservation Lab

Conservator, Mississippi Department of Archives and History



It is recommended by OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) to have at least one person trained and certified in first aid or CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) in your workplace. Such training will help to keep people safe until said person can reach professional healthcare. Such swift care will prevent injuries from getting worse and can keep a person alive during more severe situations until emergency services arrive.

The ideal number of people trained depends on the size of your institution. Likely, having 1-2 people trained per floor is best. However, such training is also useful for handling your own accidents, such as the self-Heimlich maneuver and handling bleeding cuts and burns. For these

reasons, first aid training is ideal for all conservators, whether in private practice or in an institution.

Both the Red Cross and the American Heart Association offer digital and in-person first aid and CPR classes. OSHA has a digital basic first aid course as well. Check <https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class>, <https://cpr.heart.org/en/>, and <https://www.oshaeducationcenter.com/compliance-training/first-aid-certificate/> for more information.

Having supplies to react to such injuries is necessary as well. Workplace first aid kits are often listed as “ANSI-compliant”, following the ANSI/ISEA Z308.1-2021: American National Standard – Minimum Requirements for Workplace First Aid Kits and Supplies. Within these standards, there are two different classes – A and B. The two classes of first aid kits are based on the anticipated number of users, the complexity of the work environment, and the level of hazards. See a further description of the two classes below. The physical containers are



classified as well by portability, ability to be mounted, resistance to water, and corrosion and impact resistance.

Class A is intended for general workplace use and likely will be the best for a conservation lab. Class B is intended for complex and/or high-risk work environment, such as factories and areas with moving machinery. Class B first aid kits contain a larger quality of each supply in Class A, as well as containing supplies for severe trauma such as a splint, sterile pads, trauma pads, and tourniquet. Class B first aid kit would likely be best for areas such as exhibits workshops- areas filled with large power tools. With these descriptions in mind, a conservator must decide which class of first aid kit is best for their working environment as well as where best to keep said first aid kit. The first aid kit should, however, be in open view and easy to access. Below are the supplies found in a Type A first aid kit. Remember a Type B first aid kit contains all of these supplies but in a larger quantity plus a splint, sterile pads, trauma pads, and a tourniquet.



TYPE A FIRST AID KIT

- 16 ADHESIVE BANDAGE 1" x 3" (2.5 x 7.5 CM)
- 1 ADHESIVE TAPE 2.5 YD (2.3 M) TOTAL
- 10 ANTIBIOTIC APPLICATION 1/57 OZ (0.5 G)
- 10 ANTISEPTIC 1/57 OZ (0.5 G)
- 1 BURN DRESSING (GEL SOAKED) 4" x 4" (10 x 10 CM)
- 10 BURN TREATMENT 1/32 OZ (0.9 G)
- 1 COLD PACK 4" x 5" (10 x 12.5 CM)
- 1 CPR BREATHING BARRIER
- 2 EYE COVERING W/MEANS OF ATTACHMENT 2.9" SQ (19 SQ CM)
- 1 EYE/SKIN WASH 1 F1 OZ TOTAL (29.6 ML)
- 1 FIRST AID GUIDE
- 1 FOIL BLANKET 52" x 84" (132 x 213 CM)
- 10 HAND SANITIZER 1/32 OZ (0.9 G)
- 4 MEDICAL EXAM GLOVES
- 1 ROLLER BANDAGE 2" x 4 YD (5 CM x 3.66 M)
- 1 SCISSORS
- 2 STERILE PAD 3" x 3" (7.5 x 7.5 CM)
- 2 TRAUMA PAD 5" x 9" (12.7 x 22.9 CM)
- 1 TRIANGULAR BANDAGE 40" x 40 x 56" (101 x 101 x 142 CM)

These first aid kits can be found at many vendors. Uline and Grainger seem to have the most variety of sizes, cases, and mounting types.

They must be checked regularly to be properly prepared for emergencies. The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) recommends that first aid kits be checked every six months, although recommendations from other institutions vary from one month to one year. A higher rate may be necessary if the first aid kits are in frequent use. During these regular checks, the amount of supplies in these kits should be compared to the contents list and

depleted supplies replaced. As Band-Aids seem to be the most used supply in a conservation lab, Band-Aids are likely to be the most frequently replaced supply. Adhesive bandages, such as Band-Aids, should be checked to ensure that they still adhere. Expiration dates on all medications, eye drops, hand sanitizer, antibiotics, burn dressings, and cold packs should be checked and expired material replaced. Having enough and functioning supplies in an emergency is always necessary.

Having all the tools you need – training and supplies – can help you not to panic during an emergency. By applying swift and correct first aid measures, you can prevent a first aid

emergency from becoming a tragic disaster. In ensuring an artifact/artwork's safety, a conservator must ensure their own safety as well.

Oh, and remember – so you too don't need to Google it – if a cut is bleeding for longer than 10-15 minutes, you will need stitches!

For more information on the American National Standards Institute visit: <https://www.ansi.org/>

For more information on OSHA Medical and First Aid recommendations visit:
[Medical and First Aid - Standards | Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#)

Membership

Membership Payments now available online via PayPal

Renewing your membership is now easier than ever—no more mailing checks! You can also register and pay for workshops online. Please remember to submit both the registration form and payment to complete your renewal. If you haven't renewed yet, take a moment to do so today—and feel free to share this with your colleagues!

Visit our website for more details: : <https://sercaconservation.org/membership/>

A Friendly Reminder!

