



CAMPBELL
House Museum
SAINT LOUIS

CAMPBELL HOUSE *Courier*



City Living Since 1851

Spring 2020 Newsletter

Museum Hours

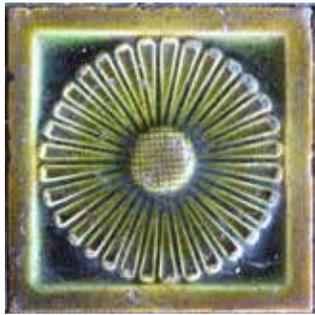
March to December
Wednesday to Saturday
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday
12:00 to 4 p.m.

Monday & Tuesday
By Appointment

January & February
By Appointment

Temporarily Closed



1508 Locust Street
St. Louis, MO 63103
314-421-0325

CampbellHouse
Museum.org



Museum Expansion Breaks Ground

On the sunny Friday before Christmas members of the Museums' Board, friends and volunteers gathered to mark the official start of an expansion project at Campbell House that has been years in the making.

Executive Director **Andy Hahn** and **Jeff Clark** of **Metropolitan Build**, the project's general contractor, spoke. "It is gratifying to finally see the start come to this project after many years of planning and dreaming," Hahn said.

A ceremonial shovel from the old **Lindburg Cadillac** was used for the ground breaking. The **Lindburg family** was the driving force in the Museum's last expansion in 1970 and **Jeanne Lindburg** is currently the Museum's 1st vice president.

The expansion will make the Museum accessible by adding a new entrance and an elevator along with program space in the form of a meeting and classroom.

Construction on the \$2 million project is set to be completed in the fall and a public dedication ceremony is scheduled for Sunday, October 18, 2020. Visit the Museum's website for more details.



Photos from the December ground breaking ceremony:

(top) Some attendees gather for a group photo

(above right) Executive Director Andy Hahn delivers remarks

(above left) Campbell House Foundation President Scott Johnson breaks ground

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CAMPBELL HOUSE MUSEUM

The Campbell House Museum enlivens the history of St. Louis and Westward Expansion through the story of the Campbell family and their home.

Since opening the Campbell House Museum has served the greater St. Louis area as one of the region's premier historic property museums. The Museum not only preserves the Campbell's house, but also their collection of original furniture, fixtures, paintings, objects and thousands of pages of family documents. After a meticulous five-year restoration the building reflects its opulent 1880s appearance, when the house was one of the centers of St. Louis society.



Director's Report

By Andy Hahn



This edition of the *Courier* was in preparation when the Museum closed indefinitely on March 16 because of the Coronavirus outbreak. This has of course resulted in the cancellation of all tours and events (which is why no future events are listed in this newsletter). Needless to say it has been very quiet at Campbell House, however myself or Assistant Director Michael Stoecklin have been at the Museum on alternating days to ensure the expansion project stays on track. We have even made some videos showing behind the scenes during this time—watch them at youtube.com/CampbellHouseMuseum.

As of this writing Campbell House has lost 6 weeks of visitor-driven revenue (admissions, donations and shop sales). This has been painful to the budget, but it has highlighted the importance of our annual members who provide the largest source of support for Museum operations. I am very grateful for their support. Not a member? Use the form on page 6 to become one. This is not the first pandemic endured at Campbell House and there is some comfort in knowing that others have survived similar events.

Board of Directors

- Mr. D. Scott Johnson,
President
- Mrs. Jeanne Lindburg,
1st Vice President
- Mr. Thomas Gronski,
2nd Vice President
- Mr. Scott R. Dolan,
Treasurer
- Mrs. Patricia H. Schlaffy,
Secretary
- Dr. Jackie Chambers
- Ms. Suzanne Corbett
- Mr. Fritz Z. Clifford, Jr.
- Dr. Louis Gerteis

- Mrs. Jane P. Gleason
- Mrs. Kathleen Horgan
- Mr. Jeff McClain
- Mrs. Lisa D. McLaughlin
- Mr. Dennis Rathert
- Mr. Tim Rohan
- Mr. James Sherby
- Mr. Jack Swanson
- Mr. Richard M. Wise

- Museum Staff
- Andrew W. Hahn,
Executive Director
 - Michael J. Stoecklin,
Assistant Director



New Members

- (since September 2019)
- Linda Ballard
 - Bonita Dillard
 - Marci Donovan
 - Carol Diaz-Granados Duncan
 - James Duncan
 - Ruth Dunn
 - Mary Frechette
 - Thomas Hall
 - Gillian Kern
 - Jenna Krukowski
 - Doug Lane
 - Joe Leach
 - Don & Kathy Lorino
 - Doug McDaniel
 - Anna Miller

- Bruce & Robin Oehler
- Margaret O'Hanlon
- Ben Parrack
- Pam Ronkoski
- Shari Salter
- Richard Savin
- Mrs. John Shillington, Jr.
- Keith Vaugier
- Robert Wasserman
- Andrew Weil

Memorials & Tributes

- In Memory of*
- Donald H. Bergmann
 - Kris Zapalac & John Martin

- In Honor of Jane Gleason*
- William & Sherrie McLeRoy

A highlight of 2019 was of course the beginning of construction on the Museum's expansion project. Thank you to the many generous donors who have made the project a reality, especially the Museum's Board of Directors for their leadership. The archaeology project was particularly exciting. The dig was even spotlighted by the *Post-Dispatch* Weatherbird on November 13, the day an article on the dig also appeared.

This year began with an exciting donation from a St. Louis family—a large (32 inches long) silver tray purchased from the Campbell estate in 1941. See it on display in the parlor when the Museum reopens!



Archaeology Project Completed

In advance of construction for the Museum's expansion, a team of archaeologists from the **Archaeological Research Center of St. Louis** have completed a dig in what was a parking lot behind the Museum. It is the first archaeological dig to take place at Campbell House.

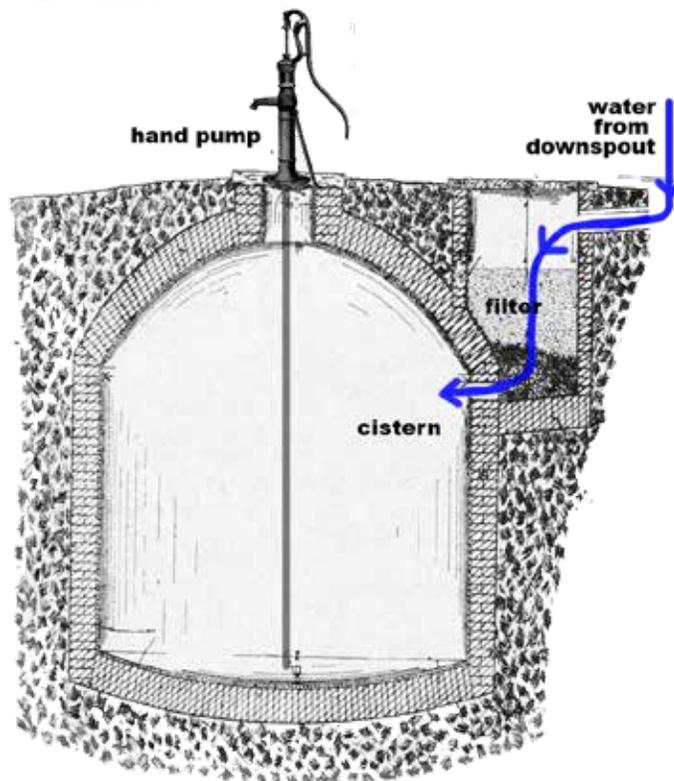
The team, headed by archaeologist **Joe Harl**, unearthed dozens of forgotten objects—including pottery, oyster shells and bottles, tiles and animal bones. They estimate the items came from over a span of decades—from the construction of the house in 1850s to the early 20th century.

"People used to assume anything in St. Louis city was destroyed by new developments, but really they just tend to get buried," Harl said.

The highlight of the dig was the investigation of the two cisterns in the garden. The cisterns were always evident from their limestone caps near the rose garden. However their size and construction was a mystery. The dig revealed the cisterns worked in tandem with each other—a smaller one to filter rainwater using gravel and charcoal and larger one with a hand pump to store the filtered water.

The dig site also revealed the foundations of the servants' hall which was demolished in 1969.

What the archaeologists have found in the dig tell more about the history of everyday life than any old book or movie ever could, Harl said. Harl will present his findings in the form of an illustrated lecture at the Museum when the expansion is complete. The archaeologist's excavation report will also be posted on the Museum's website this summer.



An illustration showing a water collection system similar to the one investigated at Campbell House—a small cistern for collection and filtration (right) and a larger cistern for storage (left)



(top) The two large brick cisterns were revealed when the garden wall was removed

(middle) Joe Harl surveys the top of the storage cistern which was measured to be almost 20 feet deep

(bottom) The underside of the filtering cistern showing the intake pipe from the downspout along with the brick and plaster construction of the walls

‘Your favour is duly to hand...’

Gleanings from the Campbell Collection at the Mercantile Library

By Tom Gronski

Friends and visitors to Campbell House are familiar with the world-class collection of furniture and artifacts contained within the Museum. And many are generally aware of the extensive archive of correspondence, documents, and printed material pertinent to **Robert Campbell**, his associates, or the Campbell House Museum itself.

Some of this archival material is maintained by the Museum, but other important pieces are housed at libraries which span the entire United States, including the **Missouri Historical Society**, the **Bancroft Library at University of California Berkeley**, the **Denver Public Library**, and the **Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Yale University**.

By far the largest collection of Campbell papers are kept by the **St. Louis Mercantile Library**. That collection comprises 35 linear feet, divided into six subject categories, including correspondence, business records, publications, financial documents, and other family material. The inclusive dates run from 1809 to 1920. The Campbell papers were considered “lost” for many years, but were donated to the Mercantile Library in July 1985 by the family of **Harry W. Kroeger**, one of the lawyers who partnered at Nagel, Kirby, Orrick, & Shepley, the firm that represented the St. Louis Union Trust Co., the trustee of **Hazlett Kyle Campbell**.

By 1994, the Campbell papers had been microfilmed and an extensive finding aid published by the Mercantile Library. In 2016 the Campbell letterbooks were digitized by the British company **Adam Matthew**. Today approximately 18,000 pages of the Campbell papers can be found on the site amdigital.co.uk.

Nearly half of the Campbell collection at the Mercantile Library is business

correspondence. This correspondence is contained in 27 letterbooks maintained by Robert Campbell, either through his personal business dealings or under his various business entities, which included **Sublette & Campbell (1836-1845)**, **R. & W. Campbell (1847-1852)**, & **Robert Campbell & Co. (1859-1876)**.

Letterbooks are large, ledger-size volumes, containing anywhere from 500 to more than a 1,000 pages of tissue-thin paper. Long before the days of photocopying, clerks would re-write a business letter to keep a copy of the original.

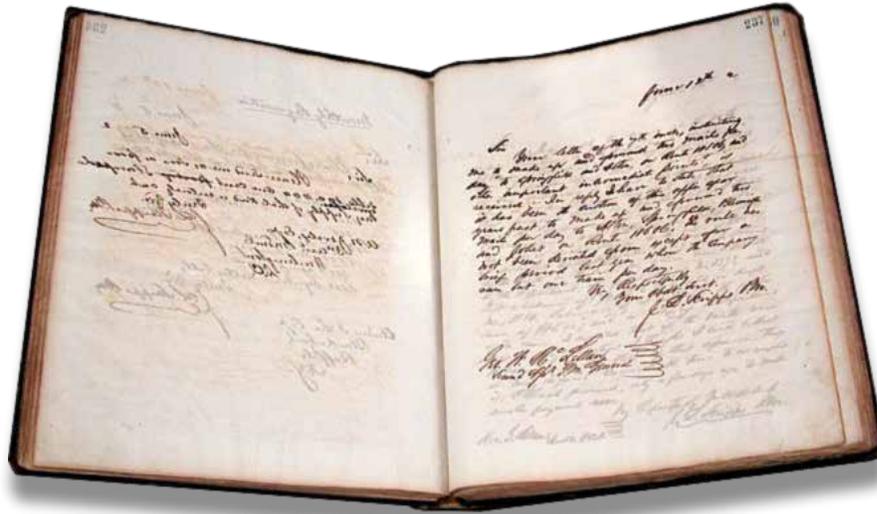
The first four Campbell letterbooks contain these types of copies. However, the first *mechanical* method of copying was “press copying,” first patented by James Watt in 1780, but not widely adopted until much later. Beginning with a letterbook dated 1850, all the Campbell letterbooks were created by this method.

A screw-powered letter press was used in conjunction with a press book – a bound volume of blank, tissue paper pages. A letter freshly written in

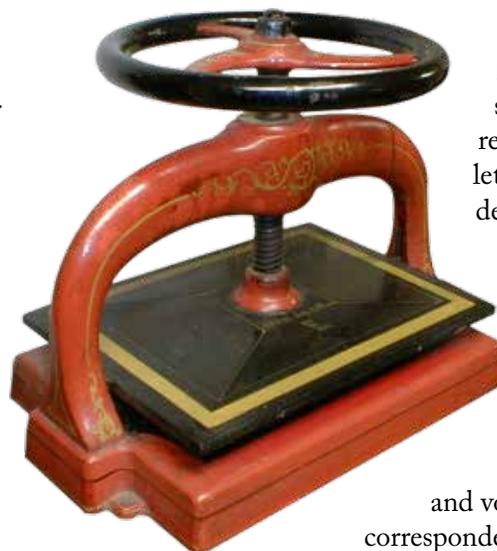
special copying ink was placed on a dampened page while the rest of the pages were protected by oilcloths. The book was then closed and the mechanical press screwed down tightly. The pressure and moisture caused an impression of the letter to be

retained on the underside of the tissue sheet. This impression could then be read through the top of the thin paper. A letter press reduced the labor cost, both by decreasing copying time and by allowing an office boy to do the copying previously performed by a more expensive clerk. As the same time, it eliminated any mis-copying. Copies were now exact duplicates of the letter sent, down to the signature.

For the last decade, Museum interns and volunteers started listing all the Campbell correspondence onto spreadsheets in order to create



(above) An example of a 19th century letterbook, illustrating how letter copies were bound in large books for reference—note the letter on the left is in reverse because the paper is so thin
(below) A screw-type letter copy press, similar to one used to copy Robert Campbell’s business correspondence



a digital record for search and catalogue capabilities. At last count, there are more than 28,000 pieces of correspondence in the Campbell letterbooks. Remember: these are all copies of hand-written letters dating between 1830s and 1880s. They could not just be scanned and catalogued. And even though dates, recipients, and locations could usually be easily identified, the letterpress copying process did not always produce crystal clear images – they are at times smudged, blurred, or faded. The content of the letters remained more or less a mystery.

So what better stay-at-home activity than to transcribe as many letters as possible? Transcriptions had been ongoing on a case-by-case basis, but never before had we systematically attempted to transcribe as many letters as possible.

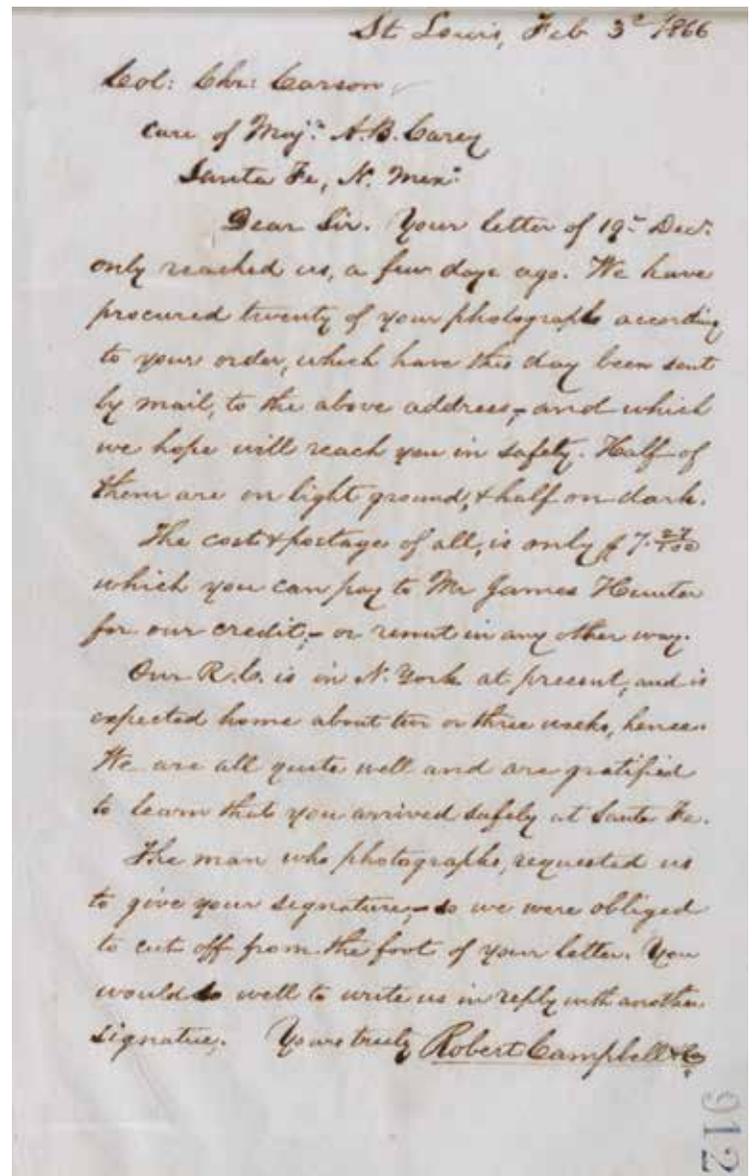
And what have we found? Correspondence was always referred to as “favours,” and invariably a letter started with acknowledgement that a favour had been received and Robert was now responding. It is true that most of the letters are mundane, daily business transactions: “you bought this,” “I bought that,” “you owe me money,” “I owe you money,” etc. But over a 50-year period you cannot avoid personal connections, commentary, and reference to historical events. Much of the information about Robert’s guardianship of children sent to school in St. Louis was discovered in the Campbell papers. Robert and his brother (and business partner) **Hugh Campbell** correspond with many historical figures significant to the western expansion of the United States, including those associated with the fur trade and the Santa Fe trail markets. This includes such legendary figures as **Kit Carson** or Daniel Boone’s grandson, **A.G. Boone** or **Adolphus Busch**, busy shipping hops to a brewery in Mora, New Mexico. But there are also letters that address the growing concern about the impending Civil War or the effects of a financial crisis. And even issues about the delivery of

the correspondence itself, either via stage, steamboat, or Pony Express. And this to say nothing of the numerous references to Campbell family life events and travels.

We are in the process of converting the spreadsheet information to a database for easier access and, more importantly, research capability. Robert Campbell’s legacy will continue in ways as yet undiscovered.



Col. Kit Carson (1809-1868)



Page 912 from Campbell letterbook 17. Image courtesy of St. Louis Mercantile Library & Adam Matthew

Saint Louis, Feb. 3, 1866

Col. Chas: Carson care of Maj. A. B. Carey, Santa Fe, N.Mex.

Dear Sir, Your letter of 19th Dec. only reached us a few days ago. We have procured twenty of your photographs according to your order, which have this day been sent by mail, to the above address—and which we hope will reach you in safety. Half of them are on light ground, & half on dark.

The cost & postage of all, is only \$7.27, which you can pay to Mr. James Hunter for our credit—or remit in any other way.

Our R. C. is in N. York at present, and is expected home about two or three weeks hence. We are all quite well and are gratified to learn that you arrived safely in Santa Fe.

The man who photographs, requested us to give your signature—so we were obliged to cut off from the foot of your letter. You would do well to write us in reply with another signature. Yours truly, Robert Campbell & Co.

Expansion Construction Photo Album

Check out more construction photos on the Museum's Facebook page at facebook.com/CampbellHouseMuseum/photos



October 29, 2019: archaeology work begins



December 7, 2019: Pouring foundation walls



February 19, 2020: 1st floor framing starts



January 15, 2020: Pouring of the concrete floor completed the foundation



January 15, 2020: 'Lake Campbell'--the newly dug elevator pit after a rainstorm



March 2, 2020: 2nd floor framing nears completion

JOIN THE FAMILY

RENEW or Become a Friend of Campbell House

(choose a membership level or make a donation)

- 1851 Society.....\$750
- Campbell Associate.....\$300
- Century.....\$100
- Sustaining.....\$75
- Active.....\$50
- Junior (age 40 and under).....\$40
- Other donation.....\$_____

All members enjoy these benefits

- Unlimited free museum admission and tours
- A 10% discount at the Museum Gift Shop
- Advance notice of member events & program
- Subscription to this newsletter

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ or

Credit Card number: _____ Expires ____/____ CVV: _____

Signature: _____

My gift will be matched by my employer.

Contact me about volunteer opportunities.

Contact me about a making gift of stock or about making a gift through my estate plan.

Please send to: **CAMPBELL HOUSE MUSEUM**
1508 Locust Street
St. Louis, Missouri 63103



May 1, 2020: Windows installed making the facade ready for brickwork



The Ballad of Robert Campbell

By Ginger Reinert, Museum Docent

This is a tale of adventure
and also of romance.

Young men of courage take the tour
of danger, risk, and chance.

*Oh, Robert, dear Robert we miss ye
Come back to Ireland's shore
Give up your wanderings, we plea
And leave us alone no more. (Refrain)*

Well many a lad in those days
Set out to themselves find
But this one in the Western maze
Did fame and fortune mine.

Refrain

He left with Ashley's one hundred;
one thousand miles did roam.
For this quest he was surely bred
to explore the rich unknown.

Refrain

Yes, Lewis and Clark before him
the West did open wide.
And mountain men did follow them
to trade with many a tribe.

Refrain

They traded supplies for beaver
endured the winter's cold.
Traveling the great Platte River
these men were oh so bold.

Refrain

Robert returned to St. Louis
found love and success there.
With the bliss of Virginia's kiss,
he forged a life to share.

*Oh, Robert, dear Robert God bless you;
we know you've done your best.
You lived the life of a hero
and helped to settle the West.*



March 27, 2020: The elevator tower begins to rise out of the ground



April 30, 2020: the old back stairs removed to make way for the elevator



April 10, 2020: the new elevator tower structure nears topping off



April 20, 2020: Scaffolding in the alley ready for the brick facade

CAMPBELL HOUSE FOUNDATION

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From the Archives

The mansion built by **Julia Chouteau Maffitt** at the northeast corner of Lucas Place and 18th Street was completed in 1877 at a cost of \$70,000 (\$1.7 million today). The Maffitt house was probably the largest ever built on Lucas Place, measuring about 20,000 square feet. It was designed by St. Louis' most prominent 19th century architect, George I. Barnett. Barnett also did work for the Campbell family, including designing their carriage house. These photos of the building's exterior, parlor and library were taken in 1898 and were recently donated to the Museum collection by one of Mrs. Maffitt's descendants.

Mrs. Maffitt was widely reported as the richest woman in St. Louis and she was also the great-granddaughter of the founder of the City, **Pierre Laclède**. Campbell House is the last house left from Lucas Place.



*Julia Chouteau Maffitt
(1816-1897)*

