

Staples & Charles Collection

VOLUME: 25 linear feet

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RELATED COLLECTIONS: To learn more about Staples & Charles, visit their website <https://www.staplesandcharles.com/>

Administrative History

Staples & Charles was established in Washington, DC in 1973 by Robert Staples and Barbara Fahs Charles to provide the museum community with interpretive planning and design at the highest intellectual and aesthetic level. Since establishing their own firm, Staples and Charles have been premier museum designers working both nationally in the USA and internationally. Clients include the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, Yale University Art Gallery, Detroit Institute of Arts, Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, The Coca-Cola Company, and South African Breweries. Staples & Charles closed in 2018 upon Robert Staples' retirement; however, Barbara Fahs Charles continues to work as a consultant.

Robert Staples and Barbara Fahs Charles met at the Office of Charles and Ray Eames. Staples, who studied industrial design, joined the Eames Office in 1957. Initially he designed furniture and was a principal contributor to the Aluminum Group and Airport Seating. At the Eames Office, he continued to design exhibitions, including "Photography and the City" for the Smithsonian and "Computer Perspective" for IBM. With Staples & Charles, Staples is the senior 3-dimensional designer.

Barbara Fahs Charles studied history and art history, and made theater costumes professionally prior to joining the Eames Office in 1967, initially to work on the model for the National Aquarium. Once the Eameses realized that she could research exhibitions, Charles found her design niche. She was responsible for developing the content of "Photography and the City" and "Computer Perspective." In 1971, she left the Eames Office to create a photographic census of about 200 American carousels.

Scope and Content Note

This collection documents the work of Staples & Charles Ltd. through project files maintained by Barbara Fahs Charles. The archivist, Staples & Charles staff, and representatives from American University's Public History program selected projects that best represent Staples & Charles' work and other areas of interest. The project files may include background research files and books; exhibition articles, reviews, and catalogs; correspondence; collateral material; VHS tapes; grants; contracts; interpretive elements and sample materials; construction drawings; exhibition drawings; case drawings; maps and diagrams; and installation photos.

The collection is organized by project, as received by Barbara Fahs Charles.

Provenance

Barbara Fahs Charles and Robert Staples, of Staples & Charles Ltd., donated this collection in 2014. Additional project archives are added annually.

Processing Note

This collection is organized by project, and retains original order as maintained and donated by Barbara Fahs Charles. Materials from binders are removed, pages numbered, and rehoused in original order into folders. There is an oversized component in this collection. Most of the oversized material is stored by size and can be found in oversized boxes and map drawers.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 1

Chicago Historical Society

Annual Report 1987-1988

Chicago History Museum – Contracts and Letters of Agreement

Chicago Ceramics and Glass

Chicago Ceramics and Glass: An Illustrated History from 1871-1933 by: Sharon A. Darling

Articles and Reviews

Collateral Materials: Invitation to Opening, Staples and Charles Postcard, CHS Catalogue of Books and Prints

Finished Installation Photos – Prints

Miscellaneous

Photos – Bob Staples Stretching Fabric for Cases

Sample of Stretch Fabric

Staples & Charles PR Materials

Type Specs

Chicago: Creating New Traditions

Chicago: Creating New Traditions by Chicago Historical Society (hardback and paperback copy)

Articles and Reviews

Collateral Materials

Miscellaneous

Negatives

Photographs

Chicago History Galleries

Miscellaneous

Photographs

Print Casebooks 5 Award

Reviews

Staples & Charles PR Materials

Teacher's Handbook

Type Specs

Galleries 1&2 – Mounting [2 Folders]

Galleries 3,4,5 [3 Folders]

Chicago Metalsmiths

Chicago Metalsmiths by Sharon A. Darling [2 copies]

Black & White Contact Sheets, larger format

Collateral Materials

Final Installation Photos

Miscellaneous

Reviews

- Staples & Charles PR Materials
- Princes and Folk Arts Galleries
 - Photographs
 - Type Specs
- We the People
 - We the People* by: Alfred F. Young and Terry J. Fife
 - Collateral Materials
 - Color Transparencies
 - Designs in Progress – Artwork for logo and layout for entry
 - Exhibit Opening and Facts
 - Exhibit Plans and Installation Slides
 - Graphic Panel Specs
 - Layout Specifications Vol. 2 [3 Folders]

Box 2

- Chicago Historical Society
 - We the People
 - Schedule and Layout Specifications Vol. 1 [3 Folders]
 - Letters from Curators and Articles
 - Newspaper Articles
 - Photographs
 - Reviews
 - Teacher's Handbook
 - Type Specs [2 Folders]
 - Type & Print Specs
 - Second Slides [2 Folders]
 - Staples & Charles Archives – Digital Images
- Levine Museum of the New South
 - Administration [2 Folders]
 - Administration – Donation to AU
 - Graphics – AV Panels [2 Folders]
 - Awards
 - Building Images [2 Folders]
 - Collateral Materials
 - Colors & Materials [4 Folders]

Box 3

- Levine Museum of the New South
 - Master Graphics [2 Folders]
 - Graphic Specs
 - Graphics: Farming [2 Folders]
 - Graphics: Textiles [2 Folders]
 - Graphics: Cities (Part 1) [2 Folders]
 - Graphics: Cities (Part 2)
 - Graphics: Theater
 - Graphics: Civil Rights (Binder 1) [2 Folders]
 - Graphics: Civil Rights (Binder 2)
 - Graphics: Cities [2 Folders]

Graphics: Production Correspondence [2 Folders]
Master: Farming [2 Folders]
Master: Textile [2 Folders]

Box 4

Levine Museum of the New South

Master: Cities (X, A-C) [3 Folders]

Master: Cities (D-end)

Master: Civil Rights

Master: Banking

Matt Duffy's Case Notebook

MNS Case Scenes 1-3 [3 Folders]

MNS Cases Scenes 4-6 [2 Folders]

MNS Transmittals [2 Folders]

Reviews

Staples & Charles PR Materials

Digital Images

Additional Materials: Museum Publications, Proposal, Transfer Docs, etc.

Stratford Hall

Contracts, Budget, and Schedule Documents

Curatorial & Educational Documents

General Information

Images

"Rediscovering the Historic House" Symposium

Box 5

Colonial Williamsburg

Administration

Budget, Schedules, Detour [4 Folders]

Discovering Martin's Hundred: Press Kit and Newspaper Clippings [2 Folders]

Documents from Clients [2 Folders]

Final Photos [2 Folders]

Final Screened Images [3 Folders]

Formatted Text [5 Folders]

Gallery A-B-C, Foyer [2 Folders]

Gallery D, E & G, F [3 Folders]

Gallery H & J [2 Folders]

Box 6

Colonial Williamsburg

Maps, Diagrams, & Plans [3 Folders]

Modifications after Opening

Project Specifications

Publications [2 Folders]

Subliminal & Screen Prints [3 Folders]

Monticello

Summary of Donation

Montpelier

Initial Consultation- 1989
Various Documents- 1990-1991
Stewardship and National Trust NEH Planning and Application- 1992-1994
RFP for Interpretive Design Services- 1995
Architects RFP for VC Exhibit Design- 2003-2004
Newspaper Articles, Press Kit Brochures

Montpelier Train Depot

Agreement Documents
Budget and Fabricator Documents
Press Materials
Concepts and Texts
Graphics and Installation Info not in Close-Out Notebook
Photos by Barbara Fahs Charles
Historic Photos
Architectural Drawings
Elements
Image Research Files
Texts- Earlier Versions
Disc for Folders 6-11
Barbara Charles Composition Notebook
In the Time of Segregation Interpretive Documentation [2 Folders]

Box 7 (11"x17")

"Cotton Fields to Skyscrapers: Charlotte and the Carolina Piedmont in the New South" – Levine Museum of the New South

Case Interior Drawings for Bracket Making and Captions – Martin's Hundred

Box 8

VHS:

Region at Work: A History of Charlotte – Levine Museum of the New South (2 copies)
Charlotte & the New South: Growing a Region – Levine Museum of the New South (2 copies)
Southern Root...Global Vision – Levine Museum of the New South
Martin's Hundred: Search for a Century – Colonial Williamsburg
The Wolstenholme Treasure – Colonial Williamsburg

Box 9

Montpelier

Various consultancies (2 folders)
NEH Planning Grant
DVDs sent in advance of IAC meeting 10.21-22.2010
Notes from planning meetings
Dining room table settings
Staff notes for old library
McIntosh drawings on disk 3
Illustrations and photos on disk 3
IAC planning session II 6.12-13.2011
IAC and I&I committee meetings 12.1-2.2011

James Madison's Montpelier (Montpelier Foundation)

Montpelier NEH Planning Grant

- Interpretive elements documentation
- Montpelier NEH #1 [4 folders]
- Montpelier NEH Planning Grant #2 [3 folders]
- Montpelier Foundation
 - Montpelier Train Depot
 - Montpelier Station [3 folders]
 - Montpelier Depot Texts [4 folders]
- Old Salem Museums and Gardens (Old Salem, Inc.)
 - Pleasure of Your Company
 - Images
 - In stereo viewer
 - Transmittals (returns)
 - Contact sheet of instillation photos, chart of donated items, corrected disk 1, replacement disk 1, p. 3 contact sheet
 - General
 - Printed materials
 - Artifacts outs [2 folders]

Box 10

- Old Salem Museums and Gardens (Old Salem, Inc.)
 - Pleasure of Your Company
 - OS PT 18-26/27 drafts, edits [2 folders]
 - OS MT, PT, ST approvals, final [4 folders]
 - Old Salem object labels cases 1-9 [3 folders]
 - Old Salem object labels cases 10-18 [3 folders]
 - Old Salem object labels cases 19-27 [3 folders]
 - Old Salem objects [3 folders]
 - Banners/graphics 2 [4 folders]

Box 11

- Old Salem Museums and Gardens (Old Salem, Inc.)
 - Pleasure of Your Company
 - Banners/graphics 2 [4 folders], continued
 - Old Salem momjian [2 folders]
 - Old Salem momjian collection images
 - Old Salem momjian collection loans [3 folders]
- Consulting Historian Edie Mayo Files
 - Old Salem Museums and Gardens (Old Salem, Inc.)
 - Pleasure of Your Company
 - Memos
 - Premier Exhibition- 1999
 - Dessert Course Research
 - Life in the White House Info
 - Exhibit Tourist Ephemera
 - Label Drafts
 - Publicity and Publications
 - Invites
 - Lecturing- February 2000
 - Gail Momjian China Exhibit- Barbara Charles
 - Labels

Label Editing
Philadelphia Trip
To Do Lists
Memos- Barb
Objects and Lists
S. Isaacs' labels
Stereo Cards
China Exhibit Object Lists
Exhibit Bibliography
First Ladies Master list
Division Political History Info and Loan
George and Martha Washington Food- 1790s
Adams
Jefferson- Food- Invitations
Dolley Madison
Madison- RSVP's
Monroe- John Q. Adams
"Calling Cards and Calls"
Jackson-Tyler
Sarah Polk
Pierce
Lincoln/Grant
Lucy Hayes China- RSVP Card
Arthur Cleveland
Carrie Harrison
Harrison
McKinley
Cortel You
Teddy and Edith Roosevelt
Wilson
Kennedy Social Calendar Programs
Ford
Nixon/ Carter
Carter- China
Reagan
White House Research
Readers Exchange-Food
Food/Recipes/Cookbook
Program Invitations and Likenesses
Food-Cookbooks
Momjian China Materials
White House Monkman
Meetings
Etiquette
Brochure
Production Schedule
Exhibit Titles
OS Lecture Series

Inside the White House
"Within These Walls"
Isaac's Memos
Library Commission of Philadelphia Sources
Workers at White House
Budget
Video/Music
Isaacs Publications

Box 12

Consulting Historian Edie Mayo Files

Old Salem Museums and Gardens (Old Salem, Inc.)
Pleasure of Your Company
Presidential Sites Info
Library of Congress Loan
Presidential Citations and Sources
Exhibit Floorplan

Thomas Jefferson Foundation

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, Inc. (1923-2000)
William Howard Adams, ed. *The Eye of Jefferson*, University of Missouri Press, 1976
Dumas Malone, *Thomas Jefferson: A Brief Biography*, 1986
Merrill D. Peterson, ed. *The Political Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 1993
William L. Beiswanger, *Monticello in Measured Drawings*, 1998
Peter J. Hatch, *The Fruits and Fruits Trees of Monticello*, 1998
James P. Ronda, *Jefferson's West*, 2000

Eames

The World of Franklin and Jefferson
Interpretive Program for Visitor Experience at Monticello
Master Plan, 1997-2006
Celebrating the Jefferson Moment: A Campaign for Monticello, 1996
Assuring the Jefferson Legacy: The Site and Facilities Plan for Monticello, December 2000
Monticello Historic Structure Report Vol. 1, 1993
The Ellipse at Monticello: A Study of Landscape Form
Monticello Transportation Assessment, ca. 1999
Contract Correspondence
Correspondence, other museums, focus groups
Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings- DNA Report
First Report on Visitor Center, Transparencies, Rendering Re-do
Initial Notebook, 1999- Monticello Exhibit Objects and Resources
Framing the West at Monticello
NEH Application
Correspondence

Box 13

Thomas Jefferson Foundation

Selection of Designer for exhibitions in Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center
Correspondence
Proof sheets

Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center
Contracts, Directories, Budget
Invitations, Press
Hands-on reproductions of Thomas Jefferson Records
Small Design Firm, Inc.
Donna Lawrence Productions, Inc.
aMPU (later Memory Collective)
Putting Up and Pulling Down Animation
Interpretive Elements Volume 3, Colors and materials
Animation Reference Photos
Monticello DVDs
Liberty Gallery- TJF Images
Lobby quotes
African American Graveyard
Letter of Agreement
Texts, images, drawings, and correspondence
Crossroads
Contract and BFC "Puzzle Skills"
Concepts, Budgets, and Schedules
Documents Provided by Client
Lightwells
Crossroads People
Crossroads Texts and objects

Box 14 (11" x 17")

Thomas Jefferson Foundation
Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center
Timeline Screenshots
Timeline Corrections Chart
Concept Drawings

Box 15 (16" x 20")

Thomas Jefferson Foundation
Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center
Materials provided to Salvatore Raciti for Timeline
Robert H and Clarice Smith Gallery and Plantation Model Interpretive Elements-
Documentation Vol 1
Robert H and Clarice Smith Gallery and Plantation Model Interpretive Elements-
Documentation Vol 2

Box 16 (16" x 20")

Thomas Jefferson Foundation
Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center
Robert H and Clarice Smith Gallery and Plantation Model Interpretive Elements-
Documentation Vol 2
Liberty Gallery Screens
Crossroads
Monticello Crosswords Interpretive Elements- Documentation vol. 1

Shared box with Frazier (16"x20")

Chicago Historical Society: Metalsmiths Poster Award and Photos
Chicago Historical Society: We the People Designs in Progress
Old Salem Museums and Gardens: Pleasure of Your Company Banners
Old Salem Museums and Gardens: Pleasure of Your Company Case Drawings
Old Salem Museums and Gardens: Pleasure of Your Company Exhibition Drawings
Thomas Jefferson Foundation- Framing the West at Monticello: Jefferson's Indian Hall, renderings by Maria Morga, 2002
Thomas Jefferson Foundation- Framing the West at Monticello: "An Interpretive Program of the Visitor Experience at Monticello," Renderings by Maria Morga, 2000
Thomas Jefferson Foundation- Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center: Donna Lawrence Productions, Presentation Portfolio

Map Drawer (C-1)

Staples & Charles, Colonial Williamsburg, Display Mock-Up
Staples & Charles, Old Salem Museums and Gardens, Exhibition Floorplan and Mock-Ups
Staples & Charles, Colonial Williamsburg, Exhibition Floorplan Poster
Staples & Charles, Chicago Historical Society Award – Metalsmiths
Staples & Charles, Chicago Historical Society Award – Ceramic and Glass
Staples & Charles, Chicago Historical Society Posters: Ceramic and Glass; Creating New Traditions; Metalsmith
Staples & Charles, Chicago Historical Society Miscellaneous Drawings – Art Case and Music
Decorative Arts Cases- 3 original drawings (RLS); Chicago Music- 1 original drawing (RLS)
Staples & Charles, Chicago Historical Society: Ceramic and Glass Drawings
10 Hand-drawn original drawings (RLS)
Staples & Charles, Chicago Historical Society: Chicago Creating New Traditions, Blueprints and Drawings
30 Hand-drawn original drawings (RLS); Bound set of 30 blueprints of drawings

Map Drawer (C-2)

Staples & Charles, Chicago Historical Society: History Galleries, Blueprints and Drawings
55 hand-drawn originals (RLS); 56 blueprints of drawings
Staples & Charles, Chicago Historical Society: Metalsmiths, Blueprints and Drawings
7 Hand-drawn original drawings (RLS); 2 Blueprints- Waldbillig Woodworking, Inc. Shop drawings
Staples & Charles, Chicago Historical Society: Price and Folk Art Gallery, Blueprint and Drawings
13 hand-drawn original drawings (RLS); bound set of 13 blueprints
Staples & Charles, Chicago Historical Society: We the People, Blueprint and Drawings

Map Drawer (C-3)

Staples & Charles, Levine Museum of the New South, Rendering for NEH Application (1999)
Staples & Charles, Levine Museum of the New South, Construction Drawings
Staples & Charles, Levine Museum of the New South, Installation Drawings (10/2001)
Staples & Charles, Levine Museum of the New South, Preliminary Drawings (05/2001)
Staples & Charles, Levine Museum of the New South, Graphics

Map Drawer (C-4)

Staples & Charles, Colonial Williamsburg, Blueprints and Elevations (1989)
Staples & Charles, Colonial Williamsburg, Blueprints and Elevations 1990

Staples & Charles, Colonial Williamsburg, Architectural Drawings
Staples & Charles, Colonial Williamsburg, Fabrication Drawings
Staples & Charles, Colonial Williamsburg, Preliminary Drawings
Staples & Charles, Consulting Historian Edie Mayo Files, Old Salem Museums and Gardens (Old Salem, Inc.), Pleasure of Your Company, Presidential text panel

Map Drawer (C-5)

Staples & Charles- Thomas Jefferson Foundation- Interpretive Program for the Visitor Experience at Monticello- Cooper, Roberts, and Partners Drawings
Staples & Charles- Thomas Jefferson Foundation- Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center- Ayers Saint Gross Design Development, 2005
Staples & Charles- Thomas Jefferson Foundation- Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center- Design Development, 2005
Staples & Charles- Thomas Jefferson Foundation- Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center- Construction Documents Vol. 1-3
Staples & Charles- Thomas Jefferson Foundation- Framing the West at Monticello- Original Design Drawings by Robert Staples
Staples & Charles- Thomas Jefferson Foundation- Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center- Espina Stone Co. Stone Layout Drawing