

# Jones Memorial Library

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Template Revised 4-4-24

## Finding Aid to the **Travis McDonald** Collection

1989-2023, 2026

**Collection Number:** MS2133

**Creator:** McDonald, Travis Cleveland., Jr.

**Title:** The Travis McDonald Collection

**Dates:** 1989-2023, 2026

**Volume of collection:** 15 cubic feet

**Language of materials:** English

### **Collection summary:**

Within this collection are field notes, correspondence, photographs, drawings (small to full-size folios), and bound reports of restoration field school projects, along with other materials related to the creator's professional work on boards, events, and various other property evaluations. In 2026, Travis donated a collection of "Old House books"-- reference books for the periods of styles of architecture, design, and decor widely found in Central Virginia, especially helpful to those seeking to restore their own "old houses."

### **Biographical note:**

Travis Cleveland McDonald, Jr. is the retired Director of Architectural Restoration of Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest in Forest, Virginia, where he served for 34 years overseeing the research and restoration of Thomas Jefferson's villa, Poplar Forest. Born November 30, 1951 to Travis C. McDonald and Frances Haversen McDonald, he is the fourth generation of McDonalds from Galveston Island in Texas. Prior to his career at Poplar Forest, Travis worked on restorations for the National Park Service, Colonial Williamsburg, and the 1812 Wickham house in Richmond Virginia. Travis has lectured, consulted, served on numerous boards, organized 5 symposiums, published more than 2 dozen articles, authored the book Poplar Forest: Thomas Jefferson's Villa Retreat, and established and led the Restoration Field School from 1990-2023. A complete list of Travis's accomplishments and copies of his published articles by and about him can be found in the collection file housed in box 1 of this collection.

### **Collection description:**

Materials and books related to Travis McDonald's work outside of the restoration of Poplar Forest, primarily related to his Restoration Field School, and inclusive of other materials related to the creator's professional work on boards, events, and various other property evaluations.

Materials include field notes and sketches, correspondence, photographs, drawings (small to full-size folios), and bound reports of restoration field school projects.

**Arrangement:**

While the materials of this collection arrived in various boxes with a loose alphabetical arrangement, the creator provided us with a comprehensive contents list, arranged alphabetically according to the name or location of surveyed property. To arrange the materials, we followed his order on that list, which is included in the collection files. The books have been cataloged individually with donor and manuscript record numbers noted.

**Alternative formats:**

There are some materials in this collection that exist in multiple formats. Ex: copy prints, negatives, xeroxed copies, small drawings that are copies of folio-sized materials, and printed materials that are also contained in thumb drives and on CDs.

**Digitized Copies:**

Parts of this collection have been digitized and can be found on Jones Memorial Library's website at [JMLibrary.org](http://JMLibrary.org). For information about obtaining other digital copies please contact the Jones Memorial Library reference desk at [refdesk@jmlibrary.org](mailto:refdesk@jmlibrary.org).

**Digital materials:**

This collection includes original electronic records, stored on CDs throughout the collection and a usb drive from the creator, located in box 1.

**Technical requirements:**

A computer equipped with a CD reader and a USB port are needed to view some of the materials.

**Rights note:**

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**Preferred Citation:**

George M. Jones Memorial Library (Lynchburg, Va.), Finding aid to the Travis McDonald Collection.

**Related materials:**

Architectural folios are located within the Lynchburg Architectural Archive collection and are designated as LAAM.

**Acquisition note:**

This bulk of this collection was deposited to the Jones Memorial Library by Travis McDonald in 2023, along with a deed of gift signed by Travis McDonald on 08-30-2023. The collection of “old house” books were gifted in March of 2026.

**Processing information:**

This collection was described by Gwen Wells in 2024-2025, with assistance from Travis McDonald. In the collection file are all of Gwen’s handwritten notes related to the arrangement and description of the collection. Materials were rehoused into hollinger boxes, with archival quality folders. Some original folders were retained because of notes written on them. The titles were retained and are reflected in the container list. Finding aid revised by Gwen 2026-04-02