

## ESVA HERITAGE CENTER FOCUS OF LIBRARY CAMPAIGN



*Photo above: Archival records from the Frances Bibbins Latimer collection need a safe place to assemble and showcase the materials documenting the Eastern Shore's rich history.*

(Accomac, Virginia) November 19, 2018 – The Eastern Shore Public Library Foundation has started a capital campaign for the Eastern Shore of Virginia Heritage Center to be located in the regional library being built in Parksley, Virginia. It is expected a successful campaign will bring the total building project funding to the \$5 million goal to complete the new 20,837 square foot facility. The ESVA Heritage Center will be a 7,836 square foot addition to the former Fresh Pride grocery store being remodeled as a regional library. It will include a larger Eastern Shore Room, a climate controlled archive room, archive processing room, lecture hall and other amenities.

Accomack and Northampton Counties have been losing valuable archive collections because of space constraints in Eastern Shore organizations that collect them. These archives have, in turn, been given to institutions in Richmond, Charlottesville, and Salisbury. The Eastern Shore Room is visited and contacted by national and international historians, genealogists, and researchers studying the birth of the United States and family histories. The ESVA Heritage Center will provide public access to Eastern Shore history and culture in one convenient location with digitization and computer equipment.

The current collections in the Eastern Shore Room were described by the former Regional Director of the National Archives, Kellee Blake, as “worldclass, a genealogical paradise, and a historian’s dream. It is one of the finest collections I have ever seen. It deserves a worthy new home.” There is urgency in building the ESVA Heritage Center as the Kirk Mariner and the Frances Bibbins Latimer collections, already donated to the library, are in temporary storage. Archives, which include letters, manuscripts, photographs, and books, need specialized climate-controlled and secure storage to preserve them. The ESVA Heritage Center will have the archive space for such storage as well as space for programs, displays, and research and digitization equipment that help bring the stories these archives tell to light.

The ESPL Foundation has raised \$4,300,000 on the way to the \$5 million to complete the Eastern Shore of Virginia regional library and Heritage Center. Groundbreaking is scheduled for Spring 2019. The Foundation encourages individuals and businesses to be original supporters of the new ESVA Heritage Center by sending their contributions to the ESPL Foundation, PO Box 554, Accomac, Virginia, 23301 or donate online to [shorelibrary.com](http://shorelibrary.com). Larger gifts will be considered as “Founding Members and Families” contributions. Capital gain saving gifts of stock or bonds and pledges over a number of years are also welcome. For further information, call the ESPL Foundation office at 757-787-2500.

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