

1902 POLL BOOKS VOTE!



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In 1902 Virginia passed a new state constitution in its legislature. The primary goal was to limit the African American vote throughout the state. There were numerous ideas as to how to do this without violating Federal Law. As a result, the following requirements were added – voters had to be able to fill out the voter registration form without any assistance, pay the annual poll tax for each of the three years prior, and to pass a quiz from the registrar on the Virginia State Constitution. The representatives did not want to disenfranchise poor whites, and thus also added a clause that any veteran of the US or Confederate military, or their son, was able to waive the above requirements and vote. As result of these news requirements, more than 88,000 individuals were disenfranchised.

This year, we submitted our 1902 Brentsville Colored and White Poll Books to the Virginia Association of Museums Top 10 Most Endangered Artifacts list, in an effort to bring awareness to these unique and important objects. We were selected as part of the Top 10, and beginning January 15 there will be public voting for awards of up to \$5,000 in funds for the conservation of these books.

Voting lasts from January 15 – 24 at <http://www.vamuseums.org/?page=Top10> – you can vote daily from each individual computer. There is no restriction on where the computer is, or who you are – each vote counts!