Among other specialists, Montes-Bradley and the students will interview Maurie McInnis, a UVA professor of American Art and Material Culture who also serves as Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, is a 1988 alumna and former Monroe Hill resident.

“The film making project on Monroe Hill is uncovering important information about the role that area played in the University’s history,” she said. “Just next door to the Academical Village, it was originally not part of the University, but as the school grew, it became incorporated into the University proper. One of the most interesting details…is the fact that it became the home to some of the University’s earliest scholarship students. These students were the Access UVA students of the 19th century; students of academic merit with financial need whose expenses were covered.”

Exploring the history of students who signed their names on the mortar between bricks, Montes-Bradley and students researched “all identifiable signatures,” Montes-Bradley said. “They reveal the presence of extraordinary individuals, many veterans from the [Spanish-American] War, university presidents, renowned scientists and other fascinating characters.”

Other scholars contributing their knowledge to the film are Ferraro, associate editor of the Papers of George Washington, located at UVA; archaeologist Ben Ford, a UVA alumnus and co-owner of Rivanna Archaeological Services; and Dan Preston, editor of the Papers of James Monroe, housed at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg.

Professor Stephen Plaskon has lived and worked in Monroe’s former law office for five years, overseeing many of Brown College’s short courses, programs, and activities, which often draw in UVA deans and alumni. He feels that, through this project, he is “channeling Monroe.”

Montes-Bradley expects the film project to wrap up sometime in the fall once the fall weather allows him to capture certain scenes. He hopes that On Monroe Hill will be a part of the celebration of UVA’s upcoming bicentennial.

With an award for production from the Jefferson Trust, and support from Brown College, the Curry School, Ash Lawn-Highland (Monroe’s more famous home), and the Presidential Precinct, the film has already secured worldwide distribution in the academic market for universities and libraries. On Monroe Hill will be featured in fall 2017 at the Virginia Film Festival.

To learn more about the Heritage Film Project and On Monroe Hill, visit www.heritagefilmproject.com.