



Congressional Papers Section

NEWSLETTER

Society of American Archivists

Spring 2020 Edition

Message from the Chair

Greetings Colleagues,

Before moving on to my notes for this issue of the newsletter, I want to ask: how are you doing? The last few months have been trying for all of us, to put it mildly. I hope that you are taking the time to care for yourselves, whether it be stepping away from your work to go on a walk or doubling down on a project that is offering you brief respite from the latest pandemic news. It is not easy to navigate our personal and professional lives right now, so please be generous with yourselves and others when facing these challenges.

This issue of the newsletter reflects the current reality that we face as congressional papers archivists. COVID-19 has upended the social, political and economic fabric of our world, but our work goes on. As we enter election season, interest in political collections will increase, along with the stakes when talking with perspective donors, given that defeat and retirement will lead some members to look for archival repositories after November. We should work hard not to forget the importance of these efforts. All of us are living through a historic event that has involved many interventions by the government. Future understandings of how the U.S. Congress approached the arrival of COVID-19 will in many ways hinge on our actions in the coming year.

Granted, our work will not be easy nor straightforward in the current circumstances. But when faced with difficult situations, I am often reminded of a quote by the late congressman Mike Synar: "If you don't like fighting fires, don't be a fireman. And if you don't like voting, don't be a congressman."

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I know that few if any of us choose to remain congressional papers archivists because it is easy or prestigious. Rather, we do so because in our hearts we believe in the critical role these collections play in the history of our nation, even if the work is hard.

We will continue to face challenges in the months ahead as the pandemic continues to reshape our lives. However, I hope that the stories in this newsletter help remind you of the good work being carried out by your colleagues. In doing so, may it highlight the things that have remained steadfast, even when faced with the unprecedented changes around us.

Nathan Gerth
CPS Chair

Conference Updates and Virtual Options

By Dina Mazina and Jolene Kennah

Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting 2020

Starting off with The Big One, SAA will not be meeting in Chicago this year. Instead, plans are underway to have a virtual conference August 3-8, 2020. This will include a **Virtual CPS Day**. Nathan is leading a working group to create a schedule of panels and discussions for everyone to enjoy. Keep apprised of updates on the SAA website. <https://www2.archivists.org/am2020>

National Association of Government Archives and Records Managers Annual Conference, 2020

NAGARA's July conference has been cancelled. Instead, NAGARA will be hosting a 2020 Summer Online Forum. For more information, visit <https://www.nagara.org/annualconferences>

American Library Association 2020 Annual Conference

ALA's conference in Chicago has been cancelled. In response a virtual conference has been planned for July. You can register here <https://2020.alavirtualevent.org/registration/registration-rates>

Library 2.020: Small, Rural, and Independent Libraries virtual conference June 17, 2020:

"This mini-conference will focus on innovation and innovative thinking in rural, independent, tribal, and other small libraries--as well as the many unique challenges that they face."

Curator's Cut: An Inside Look at DC's Suffrage Exhibits May 27, 2020:

"Join us for a digital trip to the nation's capital as we explore suffrage history with the curators of DC's most prominent women's suffrage exhibits! Panelists will explore topics including gaps in the women's suffrage narrative, relevance of the suffrage movement today, and the role museums and collections play in interpreting this important history. While the live webinar begins at 7pm ET, we will be offering an optional 30 min virtual tour of the 3 exhibits that will be referenced during the program. If you would like to watch those clips, please tune in at 6:30pm ET."

Library of Congress- Folklife Archival Challenge

SAA Free Online Webcasts:

SAA is offering a number of free online sessions:

[Navigating Workplace Conflict](#) | June 22, 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. CT

[Managing Your Career in a Crisis](#) | June 10, 2:00 p.m. CT

On demand:

[Financial Planning in Uncertain Times](#)

[Suddenly Working From Home: Best Practices for Team Management in Crisis](#)

[Salary Negotiation for Archivist](#)

[Citizen Journalists/Witnesses and AV Human Rights Archives](#)

[Archival Advocacy at Home](#)

[Cultural Diversity Competency](#)

[Digital Access to Dispersed Records](#)

CHARMed To Meet You

By Dina Mazina

CHARM stands for Capitol Hill Archivists and Records Managers. It's a social group for individuals working in the field of archives and records management in Capitol Hill offices and institutions. Every issue, we'll profile a member of the group so that we can get to know more about them and their work on the Hill!

Heather Bourk

Archivist for the House of Representatives

For this issue, I got the opportunity to ask Heather Bourk a few questions over email and learn some new things about her as she leads the archiving efforts for the House of Representatives. Heather earned her bachelor's degree from Ohio University and worked for several years in corporate communications before transitioning to a career in archives. She got her MLS from Catholic University in 2001 and interned with NARA's Special Access and FOIA Branch as a graduate student, marking her first foray into government records. After graduating, she worked as an archivist at Georgetown University, first on the main campus and then at Georgetown Law. She's been working at the House Clerk's Office of Art and Archives for just over 10 years in various positions. Last year, she took over the role of House Archivist, following the departure of Robin Reeder.

Heather credits her team at the Office of Art and Archives for making her job great. In addition to working closely with the other archivists, she gets to collaborate with the curators and the historians on print, web, and exhibition projects. "It's a great team," Heather says.

Another perk of the job is having access to many unique and special events. Heather describes some of her favorites: "I had the opportunity to sit on the rostrum during a joint meeting of Congress. Taking in the House Chamber from that perspective was unforgettable. I've also been on a tour of the Capitol dome. The views down into the Rotunda and from the top of the dome are incredible."

Heather was excited to share information about the Archives' Records Search page (<https://history.house.gov/HouseRecord/Search/>) on the History, Art, and Archives website. It is a database of House records that includes an image of the record along with descriptive information and metadata. The team is very proud of this resource and continue to regularly update it and work to enhance its usability for educators and students. Heather also wants other archivists to know their office is here as a resource on House and Members papers, and are always happy to get people in touch with their partner offices, the House Curator and the House Historian, regarding any questions concerning House history and artwork.

Outside of the office, Heather loves attending theater performances, especially at DC's renowned Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and rooting for our World Series champions, the Nationals! At the moment, Heather and her colleagues are continuing to work from home, which she says is going smoothly and they have access to all the resources they need to stay productive. She hopes everyone out there is staying healthy and adjusting well to their new work environments.

Thanks for taking the time to talk to us, Heather. We're CHARMed to meet you!

Institutional Updates

U.S. House of Representatives

By Alison Trulock

Since the winter CPS newsletter, the world has changed considerably, but the Archives staff at the House are still at work on projects and carrying out our responsibilities to House Members and staff, albeit from different locations for the time being.

We continue to write and research new content for the “Records Search” feature on the History, Art & Archives website, with the goal of adding 20 new documents by the end of the year. We’re also working to improve the overall usefulness and functionality of the Records & Research pages and add features for teachers and students.

Archives staff are also highlighting House records with blogs. This spring, Archives staff published blogs on square dancing, electronic voting in the House, Sarah Seelye (a woman who disguised herself as man to serve during the Civil War), Oscar De Priest and segregation in the House Restaurant, and Patty Duke’s secret testimony to the House.

Archives staff are also collaborating with our Curatorial and Historian colleagues on research for an upcoming exhibit marking the 150th anniversary of Joseph Rainey’s election to the House, as well as the experience of other African Americans who served in the House.

Prompted by an update to the backend and user interface for the online Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress (BioGuide), Archives staff are also working to update and clean up the research collection information for House Members, with an initial focus on women Members for a forthcoming update to the Women in Congress publication.

Archives staff are beginning to ramp up our efforts for the upcoming end of the 116th Congress and transition period to the new Congress. Staff will be participating in transition briefings for departing Members hosted by the Chief Administrative Officer, which have been reformatted to be hosted remotely. Archives staff also developed internal guidance for House officers, committees, and leadership about the kinds of materials to preserve to document the pandemic and the House’s response.

We announced at the December ACRC meeting, that the House would transition to ArchivesSpace to collect record accession and description data that will eventually be transferred to NARA. We are making progress and hope to have the transition complete by the end of the year.

We hope that everyone is safe and healthy during this unprecedented time, and we look forward to being able to meet in person in the future.

Institutional Updates

University of Mississippi, Modern Political Archives

By Leigh McWhite

With the approaching centennial anniversary of the Nineteenth Amendment in August 2020, commemorative preparations and activities within Mississippi began early. Among these efforts was a series of brief videos prepared by the League of Women Voters (LWV) of Mississippi and aired on Mississippi Public Broadcasting which highlighted the history of women's suffrage within the state, the battle over ratification, and the subsequent founding of the LWV. The Modern Political Archives (MPA) served as one of several resources for the research and images of this film series.

The Political Papers Archivist also participated in a panel on the history of women's movements at the February 2020 University of Mississippi Forum on Women and Civic Engagement, highlighting the variety of material available in the Archives and Special Collections on the women's suffrage movement within the state. These resources include the Mississippi Woman Suffrage Association (MWSA) digital collection, the files on women's suffrage within several congressional collections, the papers of a founding member the MWSA, and the League of Women Voters of Mississippi Collection. The department also presented a selection of items from these holdings in a small display on the Mississippi women's suffrage movement.

In the large-scale 2020 exhibition "Space: Exploring the Final Frontier in the Archives," four bookcases documenting the United States' twentieth century space program incorporated material from a number of congressional collections. These included signed photographs and letters by astronauts, items related to the appearance of astronauts at Joint Meetings of Congress, and material associated with NASA and the space industry in Mississippi.



Neil Armstrong addressing Congress in 1969, from the William M. "Fishbait" Miller Collection.

Framed composites of photographs, miniature flags, and patches given by NASA after the completion of successful missions to members of Mississippi's congressional delegation lined one of the walls.

During the 2019-2020 academic year, eleven undergraduate courses at UM incorporated material from MPA into assignments at the suggestion of the Political Papers Archivist.

All of these classes received an on-site archival orientation on the protocols and methods of conducting research. Some of the faculty opted to include active learning components during these sessions: students divided into small groups to examine pre-selected primary source items and respond to questions on handouts created for each object.

Continued on next page

Institutional Updates

University of Mississippi, Modern Political Archives continued

For example, in a history class on “Global Mississippi” several students investigated a 1942 constituent letter on immigration from the papers of John E. Rankin who fought against legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives to permit the immigration of Jews from Europe.

Other professors chose instead to require brief research papers on specific topics and a specific selection of identified collection material. Thus, one option for an African American Studies course on student activism included several files within the papers of U.S. Senator James O. Eastland on the subject of the 1970 protest and shootings at Jackson State University. County files from the collections of Eastland and Congressman Jamie L. Whitten were among the sources for a local history class during the students’ preparations for conducting oral interviews with African American residents in Union County, Mississippi.

None of these courses were specifically focused on politics or government. Yet, the vast scope of subject matter within congressional collections will quite often lend itself for use in a variety of academic classes. Including such material in undergraduate coursework expands awareness of this material beyond visiting academic scholars to a younger audience. As a bonus, it often introduces their professors to the wealth of material within congressional collections as well!

Institutional Updates

Vanderbilt University Special Collections and University Archives

By Zach Johnson

Vanderbilt University Special Collections and University Archives are working to accept the Senatorial papers of retiring U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee. Alexander's pre-Senate papers from his time as Governor of Tennessee (1979-1987), U.S. Secretary of Education (1991-1993), and two presidential campaigns (1996 & 2000) are already processed and available with approval in Special Collections. The additional materials will nearly double the existing 420 linear feet collection and contain significant digital material.



*Ambassador Sasser (center) examines his notes from a trip to the Kremlin, flanked by Zach Johnson (left) and Gray Sasser (right).
Photo courtesy of Vanderbilt University Special Collections and University Archives.*

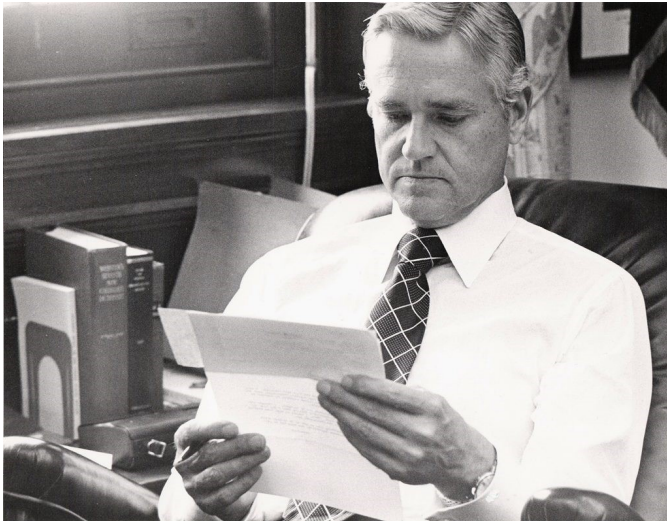
Vanderbilt also hosted former U.S. Senator and Ambassador to China James R. “Jim” Sasser in January 2020 for the first time since the processing of his papers began in 2015. He was accompanied on his visit by his wife, Mary Sasser, and son, Gray Sasser. The trio examined documents and reminisced about interesting events such as a CODEL visit to the Kremlin and the 1999 attack on the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. The Sasser Papers are mostly processed and fully open for research. The most described parts of the collection are the Ambassador, Speeches, and Staff Files series.

In March, Special Collections finished a three-year project to process the papers of John Seigenthaler, prominent journalist and longtime editor of *The Tennessean* who was intimately involved in Tennessee politics for many decades. Seigenthaler served as Administrative Assistant to U.S. Attorney Robert F. Kennedy and was a longtime friend of the Kennedy and Gore families. The collection is completely processed and fully open for research.

Institutional Updates

South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina

By Dorothy Walker



Senator Ernest F. Hollings. Photos courtesy of SCPC.

South Carolina Political Collections has recently received a significant addition to the [papers of Senator Ernest F. Hollings](#), who passed away on April 6, 2019 at the age of 97. The original donation of Hollings' papers to the University of South Carolina helped establish SCPC as a Congressional repository, and it has long been the largest collection in SCPC's holdings, at more than 800 processed linear feet. The materials recently added include photographs, ephemera, personal and Congressional correspondence, speeches, and topical and research files from Hollings' home office. A small collection of books, drawn from the Senator's vast personal library, are now available for perusal in the Hollings Library's reading room. Many of these volumes, covering primarily history, government, and current events, feature Senator Hollings'

trademark annotations and notes. SCPC also received the desk that the Senator used at his home.

SCPC has also received a sizable addition to the [collection of Congressman James R. Mann](#), who represented South Carolina's 4th Congressional District from 1969 to 1979. Mann was well known as a member of the House Judiciary Committee at the time of the Watergate hearings.

Digital collections: SCPC staff are working to add new digitized documents and photos to an existing digital collection, "[Butler Derrick: In His Own Words](#)." The collection features a selection of speeches, newsletters, writings, press releases, and more from Derrick's papers. He represented SC's 3rd District from 1975 to 1995. SCPC also holds the collection of Derrick's predecessor, [William Jennings Bryan Dorn](#), who served from 1947 until 1975, as well as Derrick's successor, current U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham.

As with the rest of the University Libraries of the University of South Carolina, SCPC is currently closed, but we look forward to reopening when the situation allows.



(Above) Congressman James R. Mann.

(Left) Hollings reference collection.

Institutional Updates

Ohio Congressional Archives

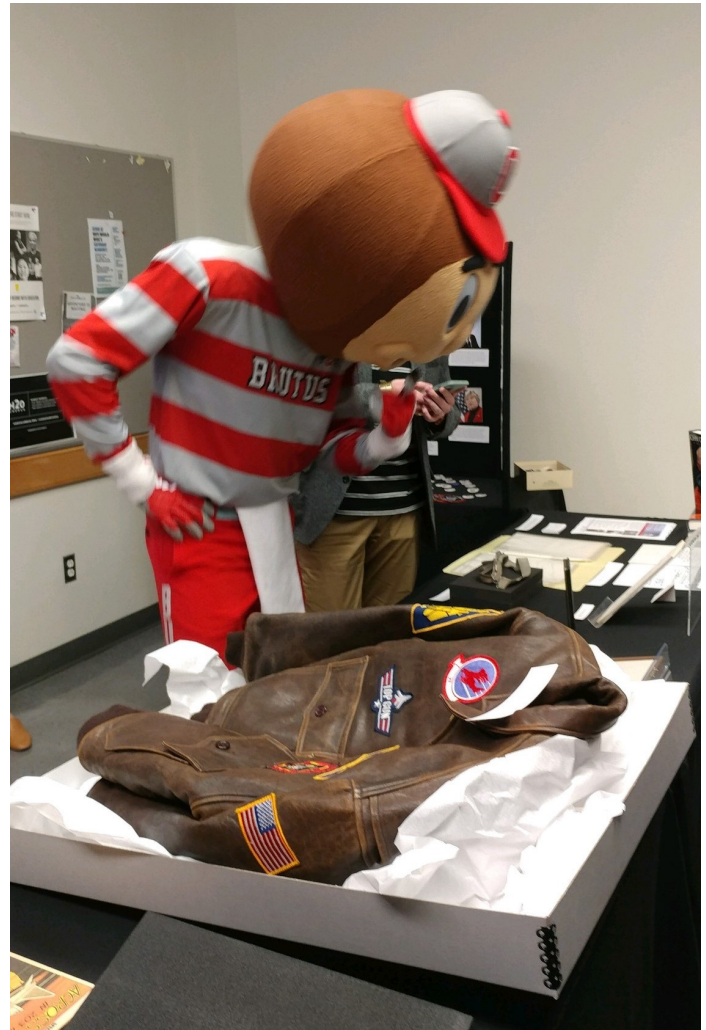
By Carly Dearborn

In September 2019 I joined the Ohio Congressional Archives (OCA) at Ohio State as the Public Policy Archivist. I joined Ohio State from my position as the Digital Preservation and Electronic Records Archivist at Purdue University and jumped right into planning for a year of celebrations. Not only has Ohio State been celebrating its sesquicentennial anniversary throughout the 2019-2020 academic year but the John Glenn College of Public Affairs - whose students and faculty I provide research and instructional support to - is also celebrating its 50th anniversary. Sadly, many of the exhibits and events celebrating these anniversaries have since been canceled as the University and Libraries moved their operations to home offices.

In 2018, OCA acquired the papers of Congressman Patrick (Pat) Tiberi who retired from the U.S. House of Representatives in 2018 after serving for 17 years. Tiberi served on the House Ways and Means Committee, chaired the Joint Economic Committee and focused on legislation related to tax reform, economic policy, trade, and healthcare. His collection will be open for research in 2023 after it has been processed.

A significant portion of Tiberi's papers include born-digital material and digital processing work will begin in earnest this spring. Thankfully, digital processing is largely unaffected by remote work and so it will continue to be a focus of mine throughout the summer. In addition to processing Tiberi's papers, I will also update and enhance the existing digital collections of Congresswomen Deborah Pryce and Mary Jo Kilroy.

I have also spent the past few months reviewing our current collecting policy and thinking of ways in which it can be updated to better serve OCA's community of researchers. I am investigating language to broaden our scope in order to collect the iterative process of policymaking from the perspective of both elected and unofficial actors. I've started with a survey of publicly available peer collecting policies. It has been a



In October I displayed OCA collections at the John Glenn College of Public Affairs' 50th anniversary alumni celebration and had the chance to show Brutus Buckeye the Top Gun jacket gifted to John Glenn by Tom Cruise – an oddly popular item from the John Glenn collection.

Photo courtesy of Ohio Congressional Archives.

great way to get to know many of you and your collections and has provided valuable language to help me explore new collecting opportunities.

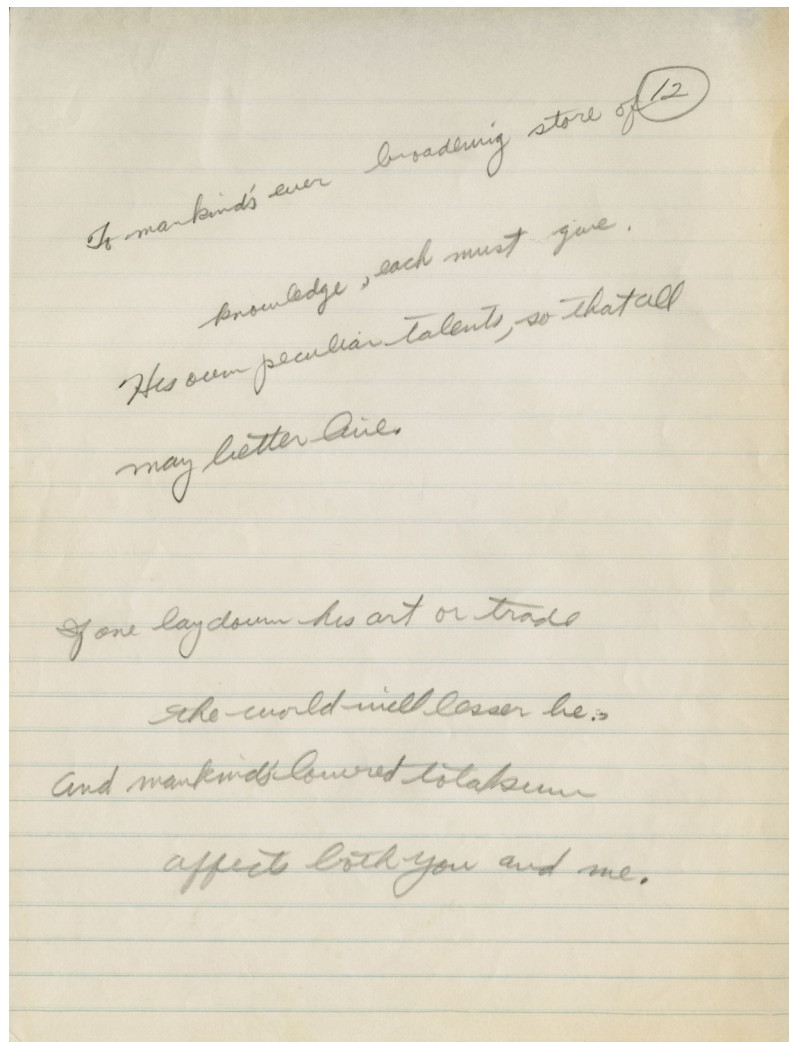
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Institutional Updates

Ohio Congressional Archives continued

Just as Ohio State closed the campus and we moved to remote work, I was in the middle of installing an exhibit about the life of John Glenn. I had planned to display this note including the first verse of a poem Glenn wrote during the psychological evaluation process for Project Mercury astronauts. Written while he passed the time in a dark, sound-proof isolation chamber, I've always thought it a powerful statement on Glenn's philosophy of service and sacrifice. It feels so prescient today as we each give what we can – whether that be staying at home or serving in healthcare or other essential work.

To mankind's ever broadening store
Of knowledge, each must give
His own peculiar talents, so that all
May better live.



*Selected page from John Glenn's notes from time spent in an isolation chamber, March 1959.
Photo courtesy of Ohio Congressional Archives.*

Institutional Updates

John J Burns Library, Boston College

By Katelyn Lamontagne & Alison Harris

John J. Burns Library, Boston College announces the opening of two congressional collections: the Margaret Heckler papers and the Edward P. Boland congressional papers

Margaret Heckler represented Massachusetts' 10th District in Congress from 1967-1983. A moderate Republican, she championed women's rights legislation, was a strong supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), and co-founded the Congresswomen's Caucus. In addition to her work on women's issues, Heckler was a vocal supporter of veterans' health and education benefits throughout her sixteen years on the Veterans' Affairs Committee. She was particularly concerned about the physical and mental health challenges facing Vietnam veterans returning from combat. Heckler also worked on alcohol fuels legislation, food stamp amendments, and nutrition guidelines as a member of the Agriculture Committee from 1975-1980. After redistricting in 1980, Heckler lost the 1982 election to incumbent Democrat Barney Frank.

Shortly after her defeat in 1982, Heckler was nominated by President Ronald Reagan to replace retiring Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Richard Schweiker in early 1983. During her short tenure at HHS she led the administration's response to the AIDS epidemic and launched the Secretary's Task Force on Black and Minority Health, which resulted in a landmark report on the differences in health outcomes of whites and minorities in America. In late 1985 Heckler was asked to resign and accept the post of ambassador to Ireland after criticism from White House officials about her management of the department and commitment to the administration's conservative Republican values. In



Rep. Margaret Heckler shaking hands with a Massachusetts veteran at a Congressional hearing, circa 1977. Margaret Heckler papers, John J. Burns Library, Boston College.

December of 1985 she was sworn in as ambassador and served in that role until August of 1989.

Margaret Heckler's papers include correspondence, legislative files, scheduling files, campaign materials, photographs, speeches, audio and video recordings, clippings, ephemera, Republican Party materials, and personal materials. The collection documents her work on the Massachusetts' Governor's Council from 1962-1967, in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1967-1983, as HHS Secretary from 1983-1985, and as ambassador to Ireland from 1986-1989. View the finding aid at <https://hdl.handle.net/2345.2/CA1998-004>.

*Katie Lamontagne
Project Archivist, Boston College*

Institutional Updates

John J Burns Library, Boston College continued

The Edward P. Boland congressional papers are now open for research and study at Boston College. Boland was a Democrat from the 2nd District of Massachusetts from 1953-1989. Boland served on the Appropriations Committee, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and the House Committee to Investigate Arms Transactions with Iran. Known to all as “Eddie” he was a highly bipartisan congressman who was not a fan of the spotlight and preferred working behind the scenes.



His work as the Chairman on the Appropriations Committee put him in a significant position of power as he was in control of the “purse strings” and his steady hand resulted in strong support of many initiatives including Housing and Urban Development and NASA. Eddie was particularly interested in space exploration and we can see that reflected in the collection with numerous photographs, invitations, and artifacts and ephemera related to NASA events.

Boland served faithfully and tirelessly over thirty years to address his constituent’s issues, con-

cerns, and problems that benefited both those in Massachusetts and working Americans. He sponsored a vast amount of legislation including environmental issues, the war in Vietnam, oil and fuel problems, and

economic concerns. He only faced one serious re-election challenge in 1968 from the Mayor of Springfield, Charles V. Ryan. The challenge was a direct result of the controversy over the closing of the Springfield Armory which was in Boland’s district. After an intense campaign battle, Boland was victorious in his re-election.

The papers include correspondence, legislative and committee files, photographs, speeches and remarks, audio and video recordings, clippings, artifacts and ephemera, campaign materials, Democratic Party materials, as and public relations materials. View the finding aid at <http://hdl.handle.net/2345.2/CA1998-003>

*Alison Harris
Project Archivist, Boston College*

(Left) Chairman Boland. Edward P. Boland congressional papers, John J. Burns Library, Boston College.

(Above) Boland at the launch of the First Shuttle Mission Colombia, April 14, 1981. Edward P. Boland congressional papers, John J. Burns Library, Boston College.



Institutional Updates

Carl Albert Congressional Research & Studies Center, University of Oklahoma

By J.A. Pryse, Senior Archivist III

Carl Albert Center Human Rights Digital Archive Collection - <https://www.cachumanrightsarchive.com/>

Project: The Carl Albert Congressional Research and Studies Center is a unique and nonpartisan institution that strengthens representative democracy through scholarship, learning, and service. As the Center continues to work towards progressively exhibiting digital materials from the vast repository, it has become *essential* to address personal politics, public opinion, and the political Representative's views on human and social rights issues.

Students from the School of Library and Information Studies, the Department of History, and the Price College of Business, at the University of Oklahoma, have worked collectively to construct a digital platform to view repository materials with collections currently focused on: Education – segregation, integration, immigration; Women's Rights – fertility, voting, Equal Rights Amendment; LGBTQ+ issues – education, protected rights, healthcare, hate related crimes; Voting Rights; Civil Rights; and Gun Rights.

The diversity of student interpretations and educational focuses, not only have shaped a fascinating depiction of American history, but has created an opportunity to engage a wide variety of individuals with the opportunity to relate to personal experiences. The Center has found that the ability to visually witness progress over time, often leads to greater understanding of current historical processes and policies. The unique archival materials within the Center's collections provides a rare 'behind-the-scenes' look into the impact of thought *combined* with action, which is rarely represented to the public front.

The Center's collections represent the American public which consists of over 300 million individuals, each with his or her own personal beliefs, values, attitudes, and opinions. The Center

houses millions of pages of correspondence from constituents declaring their opinions to their representative, hoping to be heard on issues that affect their families, their friends, and the United States as a society. These views and opinions, written by all ages of individuals, examine the lives of the American people on a personal and visceral level, at times.

It is impossible to imagine where the United States was as a society one hundred years ago, and how quickly U.S. citizens have created *real* progress over a very short amount of time. It is unmistakable that forming an equal environment *for all* is a long, tumultuous road for which the American people still trudge. The topics of immigration, segregation, and basic human rights, has a long history in public policy with strong personal views both for and against.

[One constituent, from California writes to Congressman Lyle Boren on June 14, 1943 on their view of immigration:](#)

The bill to end Oriental exclusion is a war-hysteria bill. Its passage will destroy 60 years' work to keep our Pacific Coast white. Present laws bar aliens' ineligible to citizenship. Blundering idealists press to destroy our present protection.
[CAC_CC_7_2_7_2_0000_006]

[Another, from Oklahoma writes to Congressman Lyle Boren on July 25, 1945:](#)

We are interested in the matter brought before the public lately by Robert St. John. Since the refugees he mentions are all intelligent people, and educated above the average, why cannot these people be allowed to enter the U.S. permanently as a part of their country's quota for naturalization? Hoping that you are as interested in helping those people as we.
[CAC_CC_7_2_7_2_0000_007]

As the student's interests span throughout the variety of collections, focuses develop into topical

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Institutional Updates

Carl Albert Congressional Research & Studies Center continued

collections of their own. Education, for example, created an opportunity for insight into how the University of Oklahoma has evolved from an all-white school into an inclusive community of all ages, races, beliefs, and opinions. The idea of a young, black, woman, roped off, isolated from her peers, is incomprehensible to students of modern time. The thought of segregated eating or studying quarters is so removed from the students of 2019, that it seems as if it could be hundreds of years ago, or more.

[Yet, in 1948, the President of the University of Oklahoma, George L. Cross, writes to OU Faculty \(as a whole\):](#)

*In a letter dated January 31 (1948), the Attorney General states: "the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma is not and would not be justified in formally or otherwise admitting or decreeing the admission of, and hence may not lawfully admit, said negro applicant at this time." You are, therefore, **instructed to refuse admission to all negroes who have applied or who may apply for admission to the university of Oklahoma.***

It is often times, unfathomable, to comprehend the ideology of society past, nevertheless these stories exist in their own time in history. The positive responses towards desegregation is also held within the collections.

[A young man, aged nineteen, from Bartlesville, Oklahoma, Winston Weathers, writes Governor Robert S. Kerr, in 1946:](#)

*As a, white resident of the first district of the State of Oklahoma, may I urge you to act in the University of Oklahoma case involving Ada Lois Sipuel who was denied admittance to that school. **I urge that you support legislation that will abolish such a law of segregation in our educational institutions.... In an age when we are all so earnestly endeavoring to achieve freedom throughout the world and are sincerely striving to build up***

good will among the nations, what a poor example the State of Oklahoma is setting in this instance...

[CAC_CC_031_1_14_22_0004]

To read more about the project, please visit, Carl Albert Center Human Rights Digital Archive Collection at <https://www.cachumanrightsarchive.com/about>. We are adding more items every week, so please bookmark and continue to check back for source material. If you have ideas for future collections or topics, please contact JA Pryse at japryse@ou.edu!

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George L. Cross, President of the University of Oklahoma, "Letter to Dean J.E. Fellows from President of the University of Oklahoma, George L. Cross, stating that Admissions is to "refuse admission to all Negroes.: 1948," Carl Albert Center Human Rights Digital Archive Collection, accessed January 2, 2020, <https://www.cachumanrightsarchive.com/items/show/3>.

Winston Weathers, "Letter from Winston Weathers to Governor Robert S. Kerr," Carl Albert Center Human Rights Digital Archive Collection, accessed January 2, 2020, <https://www.cachumanrightsarchive.com/items/show/7>.

Institutional Updates

Carl Albert Congressional Research & Studies Center continued

Carl Albert Center COVID-19 Pandemic Digital Curation Project

Global pandemics are not likely to be one-time occurrences. It's necessary that when the next event occurs, we know what happened last time and how the government responded. Absent a complete or near complete archiving of materials, we will be forced to rely on faulty memories and incomplete web searches that will waste precious time. Additionally, algorithms determined by external website capturing organizations such as Internet Archive and the Wayback Machine, are often scarcely scheduled which can lead to incomplete data collection.

The ever-changing nature of the Web is complex. One of the most challenging aspects of documenting historical events is the ability to capture and preserve digital data created, multiple times throughout a minute, hour, or day. The Center's archivists' unique skillsets with complex digital data curation and creation, inimitably places an enormous responsibility to collect, preserve, and disseminate relative information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The importance of *scraping* website data as well as social media data for government officials is imperative to grasp and relay the scope of efforts and effects that COVID-19 has on the State and all surrounding cities. As website and social media data are fluid and can change often, the Center will create a mechanism to capture data daily on all platforms as well as all assigned websites. As such, the archivists will collect social media and public relations material including press conferences, related to the Pandemic.

Currently, while there are some organizations recording personal stories of individuals affected by this pandemic, an entity comprehensively archiving the government response to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic in Norman, OK did not exist. We found that it is necessary to preserve the government's response for not only future research and posterity but also as a reference for government officials to refer to for future outbreaks or pandemics. As such, the Center is uniquely poised to archive Oklahoma's local, state, and federal level government response to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic for research and epidemiological response to future outbreaks.

Fortunately, the Center has support from community partners and local leaders including **Mayor Breea Clark**, **Representative Emily Virgin**, and representatives from **Tom Cole's** district office. Our ongoing relationships with other congressional and state legislative offices will help with additional information gathering. We also hope to engage with the governor's office and other executive branch agencies such as the Department of Education and Oklahoma State Department of Health. As an institution with experience in archiving records from different levels of government, the Center has the appropriate experience and tools necessary to collect, preserve, and share both paper and digital records, correspondence, public communications, and website data related to the State of Oklahoma and the City of Norman, Oklahoma's COVID-19 pandemic response.

The Center's COVID-19 Pandemic Digital Collection (see <https://covid19.omeka.net/>) holds many formatted webpages, news clips, newsletters, community stories, and images. We are asking for **community support** to contribute personal images, stories, and more, to provide a robust collection which will support an efficient and more comprehensive investigation of materials related to the pandemic. By focusing on the community, local, municipal-level government response to the pandemic in this project, the Center's archivists will be able to properly archive all documents and quickly retrieve information from the easily navigable and informative online COVID-19 Pandemic Digital Collection website.

If you wish to contribute, simply navigate to the CONTRIBUTE button and follow the easy prompts. If you have questions or ideas for our collection, please contact JA Pryse at japryse@ou.edu.

