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Section Updates

From the Chair

Karen Spicher

Since our last meeting at SAA's annual conference in Chicago, the Manuscript Repositories Section steering committee has been active in a number of areas. First, we've expanded the content of the Annual Meetings section of the web site, which now includes an agenda, minutes, and presentations from 2007, as well as steering committee minutes and our annual report.

Several steering committee members worked on developing session proposals for the 2008 conference, which will be held in San Francisco, August 24-30. I

am pleased to report that the program committee has accepted the following sessions:

- "Less Process-More Pixels: Alternate Approaches to Digitization and Metadata," developed by Tara Lavar
- "Trash or Treasure? Experiences with Deaccessioning and the Implications of Digitization," developed by Tara Lavar and Beth Bensman

We contributed endorsements to two additional session proposals and a full-day workshop, all of which will be on the program:

- "We're Ignoring That: Collection Development and What Not to Collect," developed by Elizabeth Slomba
- "Getting Our Hands Dirty (and Liking It): Case Studies in Archiving Digital Manuscripts," developed by Catherine Stollar Peters (now also our co-web liaison), Michael Forstrom, Gabriela Redwine and Melissa Watterworth
- "Implementing More Product, Less Process," a workshop developed by Dan Santamaria, scheduled for Sunday, August 24, 9:00-4:30

Our section meeting will be on Friday, August 29, 9:00-11:00. We're tentatively planning a program addressing web 2.0 tools and how these tools can enhance access to manuscript materials. Also on the agenda will be our annual business meeting, elections, and time for announcements from members.

Many of our members have expressed an interest in digital literary manuscripts, a topic that was addressed by presenters at our meeting last year. Catherine's session for 2008, listed above, promises an in-depth look at the topic. Meanwhile, members of the steering committee have been surveying existing preservation guidelines, including documentation made available on the web by [Interpares](#) and the [Library of Congress](#), and internal documents developed by the Harry Ransom Center and the Beinecke Library.

Input from section members on program planning or other activities is always welcome. Please especially consider contributing to the newsletter, which is published on the web three times per year. Announcements, articles, and images can be submitted to Mat Darby, Vice Chair/Newsletter Editor (msdarby@mail.utexas.edu). And if you'd like to get more involved in the section, contact Beth Bensman, Past Chair/Chair of Nominations (dalmadore@yahoo.com) for information about running for the steering committee. Thanks, everyone, for your efforts!

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News from Members

The Ward M. Canady Center Announces Processing and Acquisition of Glass History Collections *Kimberly Brownlee, The University of Toledo*

The Ward M. Canaday Center for Special Collections at the University of Toledo recently completed processing the historical records of Owens-Illinois Inc., the largest producer of glass containers in the world. The collection -- over 400 linear feet and including over 1100 bottles -- came to the Canaday Center in September 2005, and since that time has been organized, and an original exhibit was created on the history of the company. The exhibit catalog can be viewed on our [web site](#). The collection is now open to researchers.

In addition, the Center recently acquired the historical records of Owens-Corning, the largest producer of glass fibers in the world. This collection consists of approximately 200 linear feet, and processing work has begun. It is expected to be available to researchers within a year.

The addition of these two collections, along with the historical records of Libbey-Owens-Ford Inc. (now Pilkington), one of the leading producers of flat and automotive glass, whose records are already on deposit, make the Canaday Center the premier research facility for the study of the history of the glass

industry in the world. These three companies are among the largest producers of glass in the world, and all three are interrelated, owing their existence to Edward Drummond Libbey, who brought his New England Glass Company to Toledo in 1888 and shortly thereafter hired Michael J. Owens, who invented the first automatic bottle machine.

As an added bonus, the Canaday Center also recently acquired the technical library and papers of Dominick Labino, well known glass artist, scientist, engineer, and inventor. Labino worked for both Owens-Illinois and Johns-Manville Fiber Glass Corporation, where he retired as vice president and director of research development in 1965. Once able to focus on his art full-time, Labino developed a glass formula that would melt at a lower temperature and built a furnace that could be used by individual artists in their own studios, thus allowing glass to become a medium for art and enabling the growth of the American Studio Glass Movement that he had co-founded. Today, his works are on display in over sixty museums in Europe, Asia, and the U.S., including the Toledo Museum of Art. Coincidentally, Edward Drummond Libbey, along with his wife, Florence Scott Libbey, founded the Toledo Museum of Art.

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Arkansas Civil Rights History Internet Database Launched

Diane Worrell, The University of Arkansas

Historical materials documenting the changing nature of civil rights in Arkansas are now available free to the public through the Internet. Sponsored by the special collections department at the University of Arkansas Libraries, *Land of (Unequal) Opportunity: Documenting the Civil Rights Struggle in Arkansas* is an online resource of documents and images that trace the history of civil rights in the state. The web site, launched on February 1, contains more than 2,000 pages of documents, photographs, broadsides, pamphlets, drawings, cartoons and other images.

While the project emphasizes the 1957 Little Rock Central High School integration crisis and the rights of African American Arkansans, it covers all time periods and includes civil rights issues pertaining to women, homosexuals and the Japanese Americans held in Arkansas relocation camps during World War II. Users may browse the digital collection or search by keywords.

In addition to the documents and images, the web site offers a detailed bibliography and timeline, 10 lesson plans for junior high school students, and five digital posters, all free of charge. The web site server is named for Scipio A. Jones, in honor of Arkansas' premier black attorney and can be found online at <http://Scipio.uark.edu>.

"Arkansas has a long and remarkably complex civil rights history," said Tom W. Dillard, project director and head of special collections. While the 1957 Little Rock Central High School integration crisis is well known, it is just one of many historical events involving civil rights. Dillard noted that as early as 1868, Arkansas enacted a civil rights law. Before the Civil War, a few farsighted Arkansas leaders advocated granting property rights to married women. When a wave of segregation laws was enacted around 1900, black leaders organized protests. "During World War II, 16,000 Japanese Americans, mostly American citizens, were incarcerated in relocation camps in Arkansas -- adding a unique aspect to our collective civil rights history," Dillard said. In more recent decades, Arkansas was the scene of a dramatic confrontation in the legislature over adoption of the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the constitution. The state has in more current decades begun to grapple with recognizing the rights of homosexual Arkansans and Spanish-speaking immigrants.

While the majority of the materials on the web site are held by the University of Arkansas special collections department, other institutions around the state also contributed materials, including the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies at the Central Arkansas Library System in Little Rock; the Riley-Hickingbotham Library at Ouachita Baptist University; Ottenheimer Library at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock; the Torreyson Library at the University of Central

Arkansas; the Arkansas History Commission; and the Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives in Washington, Arkansas.

Funded in part by the Arkansas Humanities Council, the project is ongoing. Staff members in special collections will refine and add materials to the web site. In addition to Dillard, the project staff also included Timothy G. Nutt, Scot Oldham, Beth Juhl, Arthur Morgan, Anita Mysore, Todd Lewis, Cheri Pearce, Andrea Cantrell and Molly Boyd.



Student participating in civil rights protest at Arkansas A&M College, Pine Bluff, ca. 1962, from the Orval E. Faubus Collection.

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Connecticut Historical Society Acquires Early Iron Industry Records

Barbara Austen, Connecticut Historical Society

Recently acquired by the Connecticut Historical Society is a collection of 48 account books that document the iron industry in northwestern Connecticut. The volumes span 1748 to 1875 and in addition to information on the iron industry, they also provide evidence of the literacy rate, women's economic role in the community, the presence of skilled labor, accounting practices and the lives of free blacks. Of particular interest is a volume entitled "Womans Book", 1783-1823, that contains only the accounts of women, nearly all identified by their relationship to a man, in which the women pay their bills by spinning yarn, mending or making clothing, selling butter, and nursing the sick.

The individuals primarily represented in the collection are Samuel Forbes and John Adam. Samuel Forbes, (1729-1827) was born in Simsbury, Connecticut, the son of John and Lucy Pierce Forbes. When he first moved to Canaan, Samuel went to work for his father's partner Richard Seymour in an iron forge. John Forbes bought the forge in 1751; his son Samuel developed it into a major manufactory along the Blackberry River in Canaan. Along with a general store, Samuel Forbes directed production at the Salisbury furnace and iron works in East Canaan. As part of the firm Pettibone & Forbes, Samuel also owned two ore beds in Salisbury. He owned several blast furnaces in Norfolk, Conn. and a nail mill in nearby Washington, Connecticut.

John Adam (1714-1802) was born in Scotland and immigrated to Boston in 1737. He married Sarah Leonard of Easton, Massachusetts, and later lived in Taunton, where they had sons John (1755-1826) and Robert (1762-1796), among their other children. In 1794 John Sr. moved to Salisbury, Connecticut.

John Adam, Sr.'s son John had been a partner in a slitting mill in Taunton, Massachusetts, before moving to Canaan, Connecticut, in 1780, where he married Abigail, the daughter of Samuel Forbes. The partnership of Forbes & Adam was formed shortly thereafter. By 1785 they had a successful rolling and slitting mill in East Canaan.

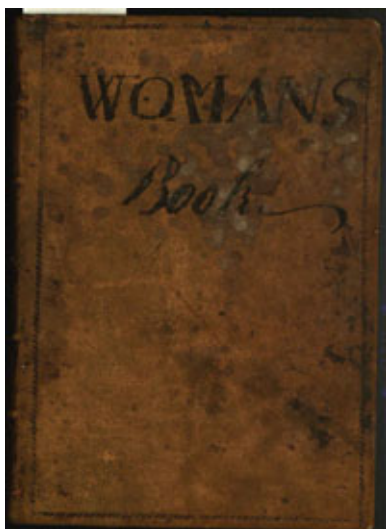


Image of "Womans Book," 1783-1823.

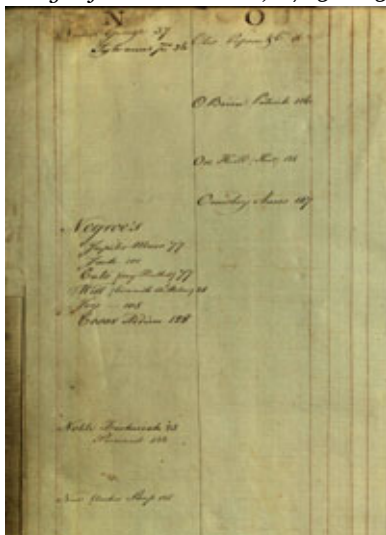


Image of account book documenting the iron industry in northwestern Connecticut.

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Purdue's Archives and Special Collections Announces the Opening of the Bruce Rogers Papers **Amanda Grossman, Purdue University**

The Purdue University Libraries Archives and Special Collections recently completed processing the Bruce Rogers Papers. Rogers, a Lafayette, Indiana, native, graduated from Purdue University in 1890. He went on to excel in the fields of typography, graphic design, and fine printing, with the production of the Oxford Lectern Bible in 1935 marking the apex of his distinguished career. Rogers invented several types, including the Centaur type, which is still widely used today. The papers include correspondence, photographs, examples of Rogers's work, and ephemera, representing both Rogers's life and professional career. Students of graphic arts and those with an interest in book design, typography, and fine printing will find the Bruce Rogers Papers a valuable resource. A finding aid to the papers is available at Purdue's [web site](#).

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The Southwestern Writers Collection Acquires the Cormac McCarthy Papers **Katie Salzmann, Texas State University-San Marcos**

The Southwestern Writers Collection at Texas State University-San Marcos has acquired the papers of Pulitzer Prize winning author Cormac McCarthy. The complete collection of McCarthy's literary archives documents his entire

writing career. At the core is correspondence, notes, hand-written and typed drafts, setting copies, and proofs of each of his 11 novels, from *The Road* (2006) back to *The Orchard Keeper* (1965); also included is the draft of an earlier unfinished novel titled "The Passenger."

Additionally, the archive contains materials related to his work on the 1994 play, "The Stonemason," as well as four screenplays, including "No Country for Old Men," which McCarthy began as a screenplay in 1984, and then completed 20 years later as a novel. That work was later adapted for film and directed by Joel and Ethan Coen and released in 2007.

The Southwestern Writers Collection has long been interested in McCarthy's career, acquiring materials over the years as they became available. Several related archives already held by the Collection complement this major acquisition. Typescripts of one play and two screenplays by McCarthy were previously donated by Bill Wittliff and McCarthy.

The McCarthy Papers join another significant collection of his materials, purchased in 2006 from book collector and bibliographer J. Howard Woolmer. The Woolmer Collection of Cormac McCarthy spans 1969-2005 and features approximately 100 letters between McCarthy and Woolmer that reveal the development of both a professional and a personal friendship between the two men. They also provide insight into McCarthy's writing career and the progress of various novels. The Woolmer Collection also contains over 200 books and magazines -- including first editions of all of his published works, many signed and inscribed by the author.

The Southwestern Writers Collection holds two additional collections relating to McCarthy: *The Perspectives on Cormac McCarthy* Collection contains drafts and proofs of essays by various scholars focusing on the novelist and his work; and the papers of John Sepich, author of *Notes on Blood Meridian*, contain drafts and other materials documenting his research on this critical book published by Bellarmine College Press in 1993. A new edition will be published in the Southwestern Writers Collection Book Series with The University of Texas Press in fall 2008, the same time that the Cormac McCarthy Papers are slated to open for research.

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Medical Library Launches Web Site Celebrating Dr. John C. McDonald ***Dee Jones, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center***

The Medical Library of the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in Shreveport is pleased to announce the availability of the John C. McDonald, M.D. web site. This web site celebrates the life and work of the Health Sciences Center's Chancellor and Dean, Dr. John C. McDonald. A pioneer in organ transplantation, McDonald was instrumental in the creation of organ sharing networks on the state, regional and national level.

Papers, correspondence, newspaper articles, photographs, slides, videotapes, memorabilia and other primary source materials drawn from the McDonald Archive highlight this web site that can accessed at www.johnmcdonald.org. For more details, please contact Dee Jones, Head of Cataloging at djone4@lsuhsc.edu or 318-675-5458.

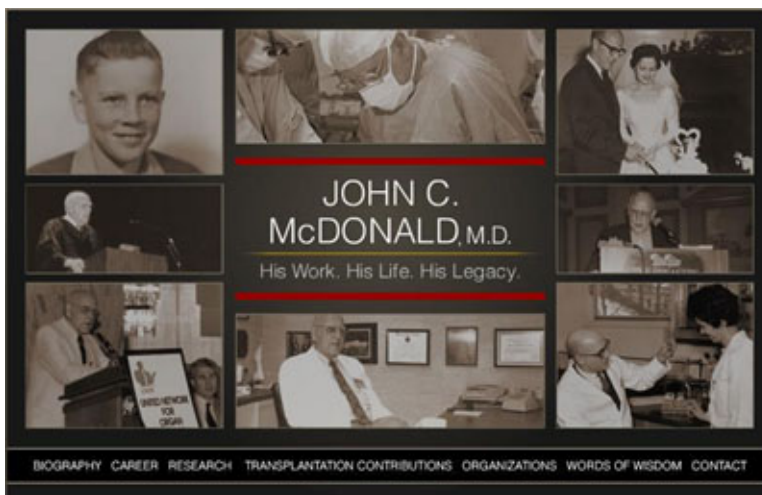


Image from www.johnmcdonald.org.

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Collections Recently Processed at NCSU Libraries Special Collections Research Center Linda Sellars, North Carolina State University Libraries

The collections of the NCSU Libraries' Special Collections Research Center support and document the wide variety of research interests of the North Carolina State University community. Some recently processed collections offer views of some of these research areas:

- The G. Milton Small Papers, 1950-1984 (MC 6), contain architectural drawings and photographs of projects and structures designed by architect G. Milton Small between 1950 and 1981. Small was a student of Mies van der Rohe and was one of the foremost modernist architects working in the southeastern United States in the later half of the 20th century. The collection also contains photographs taken by architectural photographers Joseph Molitor and Holland Wright.
- The Leslie N. Boney Architectural Papers, 1901-1988 (MC 96), document nearly a century of building projects from North Carolina architects Leslie N. Boney, Sr., Leslie N. Boney, Jr., and their firm, Boney Architects, Incorporated. Building project files in this collection include schools, churches, banks, residences, offices, libraries, and retail establishments across North Carolina; and materials include correspondence, inspection reports, architectural drawings and blueprints, project specifications, photographs, contracts, bid data and forms, and a small number of personal papers of Leslie Boney, Sr.
- The Dale E. Sayers Papers, 1959-2004 (MC 360), follow Sayers' career as a researcher and educator in physics. Sayers co-developed the modern extended x-ray absorption fine structure (EXAFS) technique. His other research interests included x-ray absorption spectroscopy, amorphous materials, mammography technology, synchrotron radiation, and environmental science. These files include Sayers' research papers, grant files, presentation files, correspondence, and course files.
- The William H. Johnson Papers, 1941-2005 (MC 62), document the research and teaching career of an NCSU professor of Biological and Agricultural Engineering. Johnson's main research area was tobacco processing, and he was part of the research team that developed the tobacco bulk curing process; but he also studied energy use and conservation. Students and researchers can use the research materials, patent documentation, professional papers, and committee and work group materials in this collection to learn more about tobacco processing and curing, biological and agricultural engineering, and energy use and conservation.
- The Ralph W. Cummings Papers, 1840-2001 (MC 312), document Cummings's career as in the fields of soil science and agronomy. Cummings was a member of the faculty of North Carolina State

University and worked in research and leadership positions for national and international organizations, such as the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and the World Bank, concerned with world agriculture and agricultural education. Cummings' specific areas of research interest were aquaculture, plant genetics, and agroforestry. The collection also contains the some personal papers of Ralph Cummings and other Cummings family members.

Finding aids are available on the NCSU Libraries' [web site](#).

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Special Collections Exhibit Celebrates the Life and Work of Jim Haskins

Florence Turcotte, with contributions from Joel Buchanan, University of Florida

An exhibition celebrating the unique contributions of scholar, writer, activist and professor James (Jim) Haskins was displayed in the Special Collections exhibit space on the second floor of Smathers Library on the University of Florida campus during the month of February through March 15, 2008.

James S. Haskins (1941-2005) was raised in the segregated African-American community of Demopolis, Alabama. Born into a large family, Jim used books as a way to find peace and to develop his imagination. Ironically, he obtained his books from a white woman because as a young Negro he was not permitted to enter the library.

He went to Alabama State College where he became involved in the Civil Rights movement and was eventually dismissed because of his activism. However, his talent and passion for learning led him to earn a full scholarship to Georgetown University where he earned his degree in 1960. His early work reflected the struggle and achievements of African Americans as they overcame through loss and overwhelming odds. His first book, *Diary of a Harlem Schoolteacher* chronicles his personal efforts in this regard.

Haskins alternated between his two homes in New York City and Gainesville, where he served on the faculty of the English Department at the University of Florida until his death in 2005. He authored more than 160 books for adults and children, including many non-fiction and biographical works about African Americans. Joel Buchanan, the curator of the exhibit noted, "He put Negro life and experience in very simple terms that were easily understood by children, which is very special."

Haskins was the recipient of numerous book and writing awards, including five Coretta Scott King Honor Awards for various works for children and young adults. These included the highly acclaimed *Bayard Rustin: Behind the Scenes of the Civil Rights Movement* in 1998. In 1977 he was the recipient of the Coretta Scott King Author Award for *The Story of Stevie Wonder*. All of his books and awards were displayed in the exhibit cases, along with numerous local awards and honors. An entire exhibit case was devoted to Haskins' work chronicling African musicians, jazz and nightlife. Awards and recognition for books for the adult trade audience included the 1979 ASCAP Deems Taylor Award for excellence in writing in the field of music for *Scott Joplin: The Man Who Made Ragtime*; and the English-Speaking Union's selection of *Bricktop*, written with Bricktop, as a Book-Across-the-Sea in 1983. His book *Mr. Bojangles*, written with N.R. Mitgang, was the subject of a Showtime movie starring Gregory Hines. In addition, his book *The Cotton Club* was the inspiration for the motion picture of the same title in 1984, and the exhibit included a continuously running video of the film.

Another exhibit case focused on his research and work on *Voodoo and Hoodoo: Their Tradition and Craft as Revealed by Actual Practitioners*. Many of Haskins' personal effects and art works were also transmitted to Special Collections, and these objects were interspersed with the more scholarly materials to create personal connections between Haskins and viewers of the exhibition. These included pieces of furniture from his home and office: his leather armchair, wooden coat-rack and a hand-stitched quilt. Haskins' ever-present leather briefcase, eyeglasses and tweed jacket with suede elbow-

patches complete the image often recalled by his former students, who said he always "looked like a professor". Haskins dedicated himself to educating humanity about the African American experience, and always maintained a dignity and quiet intelligence that was noted and respected by all who knew him.

The exhibit provided a sneak preview of the yet to-be processed Jim Haskins Collection at the University. The collection contains his writings, manuscripts, oral histories, personal correspondence and research materials, and is housed in Special Collections. Donations for the processing and establishment of this collection in Jim Haskins's memory can be mailed to the Director of Development, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, P.O. Box 117001, Gainesville, FL 32611-7001. For more information or assistance please contact Florence M. Turcotte, curator of literary manuscripts, at (352) 273-2755.

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American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Records Now Open for Research ***Sarah Keen, Cornell University***

In 2004 the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) chose the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections at Cornell University as the home for its extensive archives, documenting its rich 100-year history. Following a three-year processing project, the Association's records are now open for research. The processing project was funded by the Association and was managed by archivist Sarah Keen.

The historical records of the AAFCS measure approximately 350 cubic feet and date from the late 1800s to the present. The collection provides a rich source of material on the history of home economics and its growth as a field of study and practice. The collection documents the activities of the Association in the areas of consumer issues, international programs, public policy, education, and many more issues as they affect the lives of individuals, families, and communities.

AAFCS was founded in 1909 as the American Home Economics Association and it will be celebrating its centennial in 2008-2009. Throughout its existence, the organization has been active in public policy, consumer and family education, and international outreach programs. It is the only national organization representing family and consumer sciences professionals across practice areas and content specializations. Its members are active in a variety of program areas, such as financial literacy, nutrition and dietetics, communications, apparel and textiles, education and technology, parenting and childcare, and family economics and resource management.

The finding aid for the collection is available [here](#). Additional information about the collection, videos of materials from the AAFCS archives, and links to other home economics-related resources at Cornell University can be found at [the Cornell Library's web site](#).

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New Web Sites Allow Students and the Public to Engage with Historical Materials ***Kathryn Otto, The Minnesota Historical Society***

The Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) has two new web sites developed by staff in the library and archives division: *True North: Mapping Minnesota's History*, www.mnhs.org/truenorth, and *Placeography: A Website About Any Place Anywhere that Anyone Can Edit*, www.placeography.org.

True North offers tools, content, and lesson plans for 5-12 grade social studies teachers and students that supports teaching of geography and history standards and encourages further exploration of the themes and resources. It contains over two hundred digital maps, both pre-existing as well as newly created maps. Maps can be overlaid, color-altered, saved, and printed.

True North also contains links to external sources such as tribal web sites, academic resources, and research agencies, as well as valuable pre-existing content on the MHS web site such as Minnesota Place Names, the library-archives catalog, the Visual Resources Database, and historic plat maps. In addition, *True North* includes curriculum materials developed to support teacher instruction, including lesson plans, guided worksheets, a library of teacher-submitted lessons, and a standards/lessons correlation chart.

Placeography is a wiki where you can share the history of and stories about a house, building, farmstead, public land, neighborhood, or any place to which you have a personal connection. If you don't have a place to contribute you can enjoy learning about others.

Placeography is a collaborative web site that allows anyone to create, edit, and link to pages devoted to preserving the history of places. Once an entry is created, others can add stories and memories, even pictures. Although just recently launched, *Placeography* already has hundreds of stories and photos posted by users on places across Minnesota. From individual homes to the State Capitol, the goal of *Placeography* is to create a comprehensive historical database that includes both well known and lesser-known locations.

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Robert W. Woodruff Library Hosts 5th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium **Andrea Jackson, Atlanta University Center**

The Robert W. Woodruff Library (RWL) of the Atlanta University Center hosted the evening program for the 5th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium on Friday, March 21, 2008. The symposium's theme was "Walter Rodney's Pan-Africanism and its Meaning in the 21st Century." Jesus "Chucho" Garcia, one of Venezuela's foremost experts on the Afro-Venezuelan community and lifelong activist against racism, was the keynote speaker. Scholarly faculty and student panels were held at the Morehouse School of Medicine earlier in the day. All programs were free and open to the public.

Walter Rodney (1942-1980), a Pan-Africanist historian, educator and political activist, is widely known for his work, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, which was originally published in 1972, continues in publication today, has been translated into Portuguese, German, and Japanese, and is widely used as a text in colleges and universities in the U.S., Europe, Africa and the Caribbean.

RWL's Archives & Special Collections is the repository for the Walter Rodney Papers which span the years 1960-1987. The collection provides insight into Walter Rodney's life as a scholar and an activist, primarily revealed through his writings and teaching. The collection has been available for research since 2004. An electronic copy of the collection's finding will soon be available on the Library's web site.

For more information on the Symposium, the Walter Rodney Papers, or to make an appointment for research, contact Archives & Special Collections -- by email: archives@auctr.edu or phone: 404-978-2052.

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Virginia Lacy Jones Papers Now Available for Research at the Robert W. Woodruff Library **Andrea Jackson, Atlanta University Center**

The personal papers of Virginia Lacy Jones, esteemed Atlanta University Library School Dean and director of the Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center (AUC), are now open for research in the Woodruff Library Archives & Special Collections Department.

Affectionately known among library educators as "The Dean of Deans," the late Dr. Virginia Lacy Jones was the first director of the Woodruff Library of the AUC and the second dean of the Atlanta University (now Clark Atlanta University) School of Library Science. Renowned for her scholarship and leadership, Dr. Jones was the second African American to receive a Ph.D. in

Library Service, accomplishing this historic feat in 1945 at the University of Chicago. She was active in several professional associations, having received both the American Library Association Honorary Member Award and the Melvil Dewey Award for creative professional achievement of high order.

The Virginia Lacy Jones Papers, consisting of correspondence, writings (by and about her), personal papers, organizational affiliations, photographs and some oversized materials, provide a glimpse into her personal life and professional career as a librarian and extend throughout her lifetime from 1912 to 1985. Included are the many awards and honors she received for the hard work, leadership and untiring fight she led for equality among black librarians and several of Dr. Jones's scholarly articles showcasing the disparities between black libraries and their white counterparts. Also documented through several speaking engagement requests, greeting cards and personal correspondence is the respect and love from friends, colleagues and family. In 1985, the Woodruff Library of the AUC dedicated the Virginia Lacy Jones Exhibition Hall in her honor.

Stacy Swazy Jones, processing archivist of the Virginia Lacy Jones Papers, was inspired by Dr. Jones's hard work, and her dedication to African American librarians and to improving the library profession. "Dr. Jones's Papers represent historical aspects of the struggle for equality among African American librarians," she said.

Dr. Lorene Brown, former dean and retired professor of Clark Atlanta University School of Library and Information Studies, had the distinct honor of working with Dr. Jones. "She was my professor, mentor and friend," Dr. Brown said. "Dr. Jones was the personification of a wise counselor, an inspired teacher, patient mentor and demanding scholar with a strong sense of humility about herself."

To view the Virginia Lacy Jones Papers, researchers are encouraged to contact the Archives & Special Collections to make an appointment at archives@aucr.edu or 404-978-2052.



Photo of Virginia Lacy Jones.

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Developing a Tool to Manage Manuscript Collections at Syracuse University ***Sean Quimby, Syracuse University Library***

The Special Collections Research Center (SCRC) at Syracuse University Library traces its roots to the university's acquisition of German historian Leopold von Ranke's working library in 1889. Nearly 120 years, and many name changes, later, SCRC continues to collect rare books, manuscripts, archives, and ephemera that support research and teaching at Syracuse. In that time, librarians and archivists have relied upon countless record-keeping tools, from parallel files to Excel spreadsheets, to account for the day-to-day work involved in caring for the collections. Never before had library staff relied upon a single

tool to keep track of accessions, purchases, and patron use of special collections materials. In January 2007, SCRC staff set about developing a central administrative database to account for these activities and bring together a century's worth of record keeping.

The Challenge:

SCRC kept data about collections and their use in a wide array of formats. For years, public services staff maintained a card file system for patron registration. All visitors filled out a card, which was then filed alphabetically. Collections used were recorded on the back of the card. Likewise, new manuscript accessions were recorded in an alphabetical card file by collection. Accession numbers were assigned unique numbers by year, for example, M64-01, for the first accession in 1964. Staff recorded the physical extent, donor, and date of gift for each accession. In recent years, library staff began to record accessions in an Excel spreadsheet. SCRC also maintained vertical files for each donor that included deeds-of-gift, correspondence, box-lists, and miscellany relating to gifts. Electronic copies of recent donor correspondence reside on a network drive.

The Tool:

In February 2007, we invested in a site license for FileMaker Pro, and proceeded to define a preliminary database structure. (Figure 1.) Tables included: patrons, donors, collections, accessions, purchases, and acquisitions funds. The patron registration table replaced the existing card file system, and included mainly contact information. Likewise, the donor table tracked contact information for SCRC donors. We built in a "portal" to the accessions/gift table, so that information about each donor could be viewed alongside his or her associated gifts to the library. While certain information in the collections table duplicates the metadata one might find in a MARC or collection-level EAD record, the purpose of the collections table is administrative in nature. Therefore, we track whether or not the collection has been processed or cataloged, whether or not it is physically prepared for removal to an offsite, high-density storage facility, and the current physical locations of that collection. (Figure 2) In addition, we built a "portal" to the accessions database so that staff could view all accessions/gifts associated with that collection. While the bulk of our collection development takes the form of gifts-in-kind, curators also draw upon acquisition funds to build collections. For this reason, we built a separate purchase table, also with a "portal" to the collections list, and a table for each acquisition fund to ensure that we spend our resources responsibly.

"Clean" information:

The design of a database structure is a comparatively simple task. Ensuring that the data that populates that database is clean and accurate is far more challenging. SCRC staff imported collections, accessions and purchase data from pre-existing Excel spreadsheets. Student assistants manually keyed donor and legacy accessions information into the database, a project that is still underway. Editing content is ongoing, with a key component being staff training. Technical expertise among library staff is varied, and so it is imperative that all staff recognize that a database is only as useful as the data it contains.

What Next?:

Currently, our database indicates that we own some 2,104 individual collections of manuscripts, 4,578 accessions/gifts, 2,108 purchases (dating only to 2000) and 1,170 patrons. This sort of aggregate data alone is vital. In addition, we have developed a script that allows us to connect patrons to collections used. Another script actually exports our collections lists (author, title, and subjects) as XML encoded data for display via our public web site: <http://library.syr.edu/information/spcollections/findingaids/>

This makes the process of updating our web site much simpler, as it can be done, literally, at the click of the button. In addition, we can now run reports on collection location, processing status, EAD conversion status, collection use, and more. Down the road, we may opt to use the collection listing to export the EAD front-matter portion of each finding aid. We also intend to track the photo-duplication process, including item-level metadata about materials digitized at the request of patrons that might be repurposed by Syracuse's digital library program.



Figure 1. Database structure of new tool.



Figure 2. Screenshot of new tool at SCRC.

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Leadership and Next Newsletter Deadline Manuscript Repositories Section

[Leadership](#)

News items, articles, letters to the editor, and comments are welcome.

Next Newsletter deadline: June 10, 2008

Send to [Mat Darby](#)

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