

# Windows

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY  
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



**ON THE COVER:**  
Photo from the Lynch Colored High School/ West Main Alumni Association collection. In 2013 many yearbooks and photographs from Harlan County, Ky., schools were given to the University Library for digitization and preservation.

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## Dear Friends:

Dear Friends,

I write as students depart for spring break and stillness descends upon campus. Soon, UNC's libraries will be filled with students creating videos in the Undergraduate Library, giving shape to 3D-printed inventions in the Kenan Science Library and studying in just about any space they can find.

The pause, though, allows us to appreciate the campus and its early spring beauty, and also to reflect on a busy and productive semester that is allowing us to celebrate many exciting beginnings.

In Davis Library, a new service desk welcomes visitors. It offers a single, inviting place to check out or return books, and to ask any kind of question. Patrons love the updated look, and staff have worked tirelessly to make it a reality.

In Wilson Library, two spring exhibitions showcase different aspects of the collections: one highlights the Rare Book Collection's outstanding Wordsworth holdings; the other provides a look back at 100 years of Carolina fashion. Both merit a trip to campus, and both were made possible thanks to generous support from our Friends.

The staff of the Southern Historical Collection are working to meet a significant new challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The grant will create a permanent endowment to fund the position of African American collections and outreach archivist. No other research library that we know of has a position quite like this, and I am confident that our Friends will help us rise to this challenge.

Finally and sadly, we bid an unexpected farewell to our colleague Will Owen, whose sudden death in December shocked us all. Will's extraordinary life, career and friendship inspired us for his nearly 40 years at UNC. I am so grateful to his staff for continuing to provide excellent service without ever missing a step—which is exactly as Will would have wanted them to do.

Sincerely,



Sarah C. Michalak  
University Librarian and Associate Provost for University Libraries



## Peggy Myers accepts position in University Development

After more than 15 years with the University Library, Peggy Myers, director of library development, has accepted a new position as deputy director of principal gifts in UNC's Office of University Development. As deputy director, Myers will play a key role in the University's upcoming multibillion dollar campaign working with some of the University's largest donors.

Myers has a long history with the University Library. As an undergraduate, she worked in Special Collections in the Southern Historical Collection. She



returned to the Library in 2001 to serve as the Library's associate director of development, responsible for major gifts, planned gifts and special projects.

In 2010 she was appointed director of library development. Myers previously held development positions at the NC Museum of Art as well as UNC's School of Law, College of Arts and Sciences and Graduate School.

## Nick Graham appointed University Archivist

Nick Graham was appointed University Archivist in October 2015. Formerly the program coordinator for the Library's North Carolina Digital Heritage Center, he now provides vision and leadership for University Archives and Records Management Services (UARMS). He is responsible for managing the University records program in compliance with North Carolina public records laws and assists UNC administrators, faculty and staff in this effort.

"This is an incredibly exciting time to be working in University Archives," Graham said. "We are working hard—not just at UNC, but across the profession—to collect and preserve electronic records. It wasn't that long ago that all of the University's business was conducted using paper. Now official records could be in a word processing file, a spreadsheet or email, and it's our job to figure out how to collect this material and preserve it for posterity."

Graham will also develop programs that recognize, promote and celebrate UNC history, as well as build archival



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**"Now official records could be in a word processing file, a spreadsheet or email, and it's our job to figure out how to collect this material and preserve it for posterity."** —Nick Graham

collections that document the University. Graham loves the passion that people have for UNC's history. Students and alumni frequently contact University Archives to learn more about people, places and events from Carolina's past. "Digging into university history and finding fun and interesting things to share is one of the parts of my job that I enjoy the most."

Archivists are particularly concerned that there are important groups or activities that are not documented. "We can't do it all ourselves and rely on students, faculty and alumni to get in touch with us to let us know what's

happening on campus. If they have papers, photos or other documents to give to the archives, even better," Graham said.

Prior to this appointment, when he was at the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center, Graham also served as assistant to the director of Wilson Library. Before that he held positions in the University Library as North Carolina maps project librarian and head of public services for the North Carolina Collection.

Graham holds a bachelor's in British and American literature from New College of Florida in Sarasota and a master's of library science from UNC's School of Information and Library Science.



# New Desk, (Even) Better Service

Getting help in Davis Library is now even easier thanks to the installation of a modern service desk. The new desk offers a convenient single stop for anyone with general questions, in-depth research needs or with books to check out or return. The combined desk configuration brings Circulation and Reference services together, making it easier for staff to refer patrons to expert help, resulting in better service.

The former desk was poorly suited to the activities of a modern library and tended to be more of a barrier than a service point. "We work so closely with our patrons today. It can be hard to help people when a wall prevents you from sharing a computer screen or even just carrying on a normal conversation," said Joe Williams, the Library's director of public services. The new desk extends into the gallery area so it is more visible and easier to approach from different directions. The lower desk height promotes consultation and collaboration, and is also wheelchair-accessible. Coming soon will be a new self-service checkout machine.

The convergence of Circulation and Reference services in a single location provides a more seamless and responsive experience for faculty, students and visitors to Davis Library, as well as ensures effective use of both public and staff space.

## Davis Library service desk gets an overhaul

New storage cabinets hold circulating items that need to be kept secure overnight, such as dry erase markers and erasers, flash drives, headphones and laptop charging cords.

New bookshelves, located behind the desk, keep hold and requested materials close at hand.



The desk has been **relocated forward** into the gallery, improving visibility.

The new desk is **more approachable and functional**. The parapets are gone, and the desk is **deeper front to back**, which invites patrons to set down their bags on the desk.

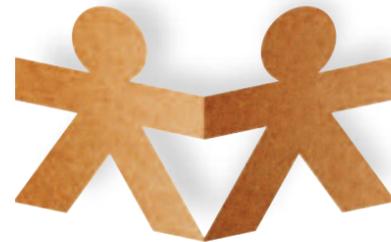
# Archiving Outside the Box

by Catherine House

When you hear the word “archive,” do you picture row after row of boxes filled with historical documents? In Wilson Library’s Southern Historical Collection (SHC), this is exactly what you’ll find. With more than 15 million items organized in more than 5,000 discrete collections, the SHC is a popular destination for scholars, researchers and family historians who, often times, travel lengthy distances to get their hands on primary documents, such as journals, photographs, artifacts, letters, scrapbooks and manuscripts.

## Sometimes you need to take the archive to the people.

But amassing valuable research materials in one centralized location does not always meet the needs of diverse groups. Sometimes you need to take the archive to the people. Through several creative projects, the SHC has been working with communities all over the South to help them build their own archives. In library speak, these are referred to as community-driven archives. Bryan Giemza, SHC director, explains: “In a community-driven archive, it’s not an individual or institution deciding what goes into the archive, but rather a collective of people who are able to curate and present their own history.”



### Step 1: Partner up

One of the SHC’s largest projects involving community-driven archives is their partnership with the Historic Black Towns and Settlements Alliance (HBTSA). A collective of historically black towns throughout the South, the HBTSA began as a conference among the towns’ mayors and evolved into a regional initiative to promote historic preservation and cultural tourism. “We are working to show community members how their things may be of value to researchers and how they can use them to improve their overall lives,” said Chaitra Powell, the SHC’s African American collections and outreach archivist.

A big part of the project is figuring out each town’s individual needs. So in

2015, Giemza and Powell traveled to several towns to meet with mayors and other leaders. Their agenda was simple—listen. They found that some towns already had a pretty good collection of materials, while other towns needed guidance on where to even begin collecting.

In Hobson City, Ala., for example, Powell said, “A good number of people came out, and they all had these really amazing stories of growing up in Hobson



A local restaurant in Mound Bayou, Miss.

City. They told of how it had a black fire chief and how people took care of each other. You could tell they had this passion and wanted the real story of their town to be told.”

But when the group started talking about archival artifacts, the pickings became very slim. “No one really knew where all the photos or documents were. To me, it seemed the best approach for them would be to start with an oral

history project,” Powell said.

In contrast, Mound Bayou, Miss., is the headquarters of an African American fraternity which holds an archive. “These materials document the lives and activities of a wide variety of the town’s residents,” Powell said. “Getting the materials into a safe place was the priority for us in Mound Bayou.”

Eatonville, Fla., was somewhere in the middle. The town has a well-established annual festival where people come and talk about historical preservation. During this year’s festival, Powell was invited to speak about building an archive on a budget.

The SHC’s goal for each town is to develop their archival capacity through meaningful partnerships. In cases where communities simply need an archival home for items, the SHC readily provides that service. For towns that want to maintain their own archives,

“...They all had these really amazing stories of growing up in Hobson City... You could tell they had this passion and wanted the real story of their town to be told.”

— Chaitra Powell

“In a community-driven archive, it’s not an individual or institution deciding what goes into the archive, but rather a collective of people who are able to curate and present their own history.”

— Bryan Giemza



A sports-related artifact from Eatonville, Fla.

“Rather than dictating the terms of what we’ll do, we’re open to working with [towns] in the way that they need us to.” — Chaitra Powell

UNC’s librarians rely on the relationships they’ve built with town mayors, historians and students—those with a stake in seeing their history preserved—to decide the best approach. “Rather than dictating the terms of what we’ll do,” Powell said, “we’re open to working with them in the way that they need us to.”

The difference in approach can provide a more accurate view of a community’s history. As an example,

Giemza shares a conversation he had in Mound Bayou: “This woman said to me, ‘We’ve had three academic histories written out of our town. Three scholars published books and you want to know what they all have in common? They are wrong.’”

To get it right, scholars need more than access to a town’s administration building because, more than likely, they are not aware of a lot of things that the



Chaitra Powell works with a student.



Biff Hollingsworth, an archivist in the Southern Historical Collection (SHC), digs through a storage unit.



Mayor Darryl Johnson and Bryan Giemza



Mound Bayou, founded by former slaves in 1887, is the oldest all-black municipality in the U.S.

townspeople know—things they haven’t seen, discovered or understood.

In many cases, the important “stuff”—e.g., marriage licenses, birth records, journals, family Bibles, letters, scrapbooks—are still buried in attics and basements. People may not realize that these items are of interest to others outside their families, or, considering past inequities, there may be issues of trust.

That’s why community-driven archives are key to preservation. And also why it doesn’t always make sense to haul off items to the first institution that lays claim to them. “If towns are going to promote cultural tourism through history, the materials may need to stay in the towns,” Giemza said. “But the townspeople need to have a common vision—a plan to ensure that the chain doesn’t break because the last thing we want is for these materials to deteriorate in an attic before the next person finds them.”

Even in cases where archival materials can safely stay in place, the SHC sees tremendous benefits in their outreach efforts. “Communities that are in control of their own history are more likely to be invested in preserving it and

sharing materials that would otherwise remain hidden,” Giemza said.

Another community-driven archival project the SHC has been involved with is the Eastern Kentucky African American Migration Project (EKAAMP). Conceptualized by Karida Brown while working on her doctorate at Brown University, the aim of the project is to document the unique cultural history of African Americans who migrated into and out of eastern Kentucky throughout the 20th century. Although not typically associated with the Appalachian region, there were tens of thousands of African Americans who migrated from the rural South to the coalfields of West Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky as a first stop throughout the Great Migration. While the majority of African Americans continued on, many across the country still consider Appalachia home.

Brown, who has family roots in Eastern Kentucky, saw a need to document this piece of African American history. She began interviewing members of the community—she and others have recorded more than 200 oral histories—and teamed up with the SHC to archive

“This woman said to me, ‘We’ve had three academic histories written out of [Mound Bayou]. Three scholars published books, and you want to know what they all have in common? They are wrong.’” — Bryan Giemza



Eatonville, Florida

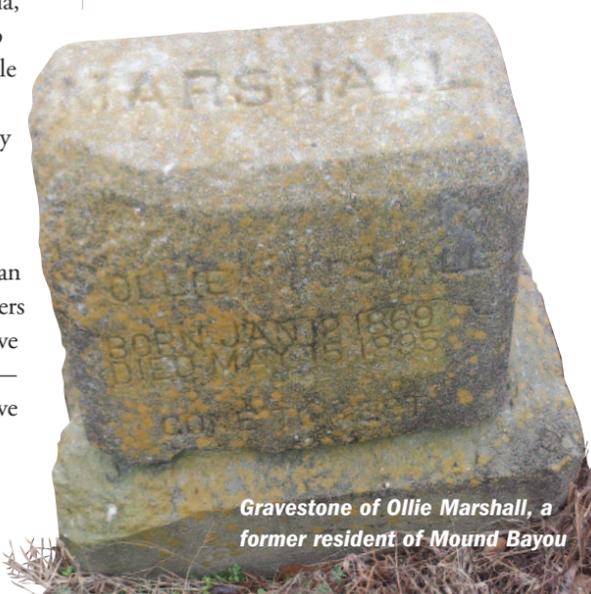
Eatonville was one of the first all-black towns to be formed after the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and was incorporated on Aug. 15, 1887.



A resident of Eatonville, Fla.



Bryan Giemza in Eatonville, Fla., with Mayor Bruce Mount and Mayor St. Julien.



Gravestone of Ollie Marshall, a former resident of Mound Bayou

“Communities that are in control of their own history are more likely to be invested in preserving it and sharing materials that would otherwise remain hidden.”

— Bryan Giemza

them along with collections of photographs, organizational records and family papers.

“As the granddaughter of Harlan County coal miners, it was obvious to me that the Eastern African American community needed an archive of their history,” Brown said. “And it was important to me that the families and individuals have a say on how the materials are archived.”

EKAAMP ties nicely with UNC’s mission of teaching, research and service—and with the SHC’s goal of bringing the archives to the people. While the recordings and many items do reside in Wilson Library, the project is also being digitized. There’s a website (EKAAMP.web.unc.edu) and a traveling exhibit—“Gone Home: Race and Roots through Appalachia”—that expand the reach of the project.



### Step 2: Go digital

In May 2013, the SHC partnered with the Appalachian Student Health Coalition (ASHC)—a Vanderbilt student group formed back in 1970 that provided healthcare services to rural Appalachian communities. The group organized “health fairs” at local schools or churches in which medical and nursing students performed health screenings. As medical staff provided care, community workers sought out local leaders who would

continue to advocate for local health councils and creation of resident-controlled primary care clinics in their towns.

The SHC is building a dynamic archive for the ASHC by collecting and safeguarding papers, photographs and other documents, and by creating a digital presence for the coalition. Ashlyn Velte, a graduate student in library science at UNC who created the website (StudentHealthCoalition.web.unc.edu), explains that much of the information “doesn’t have a life on paper,” but that many of the people involved have memories to share. The “stories” section of the website showcases these memories through videos and written pieces. Other sections include interviews, profiles, maps and a timeline.

The website not only serves as a

virtual community for the ASHC group, but also as inspiration for others interested in pursuing similar work.

“Increasingly, the complexity of the group’s dynamics comes across as they share what didn’t work well during early health fairs and the different opinions the coalition members have about the work they did,” Velte said. “In this way, they have been documenting the lessons they learned from their experience with the ASHC.”

In designing the website, the SHC has tried to capture the ASHC’s ethos of community engagement by supporting and empowering the coalition to be the creators and arbiters of their own archive. A community-driven archive, after all, should represent the community’s view—not the researcher’s.

While digitizing collections isn’t new for the SHC—they began widespread digitization in the 1990s, which resulted in the award-winning Documenting the

American South project—it’s become an essential component in the creation of archives. Digital archives are not only a great avenue for preserving materials, but they also serve as a central place for participants—community members, scholars and academics—to share information. And hosting these digital collections is another way the SHC is archiving outside the box.

Besides hosting digital collections themselves, the SHC recently created an exhibit for the Google Cultural Institute, a nonprofit which aims to bring cultural materials to the masses through digitizing collections and sharing them on their website (www.google.com/culturalinstitute). Google had contacted the SHC to see if they would be interested in putting together an exhibit for Black History month. “We have a lot of platforms for putting our stuff online, but this was an opportunity to have our collections aligned with other African American collections across the country,” Powell said. “It also allowed us to show that the SHC has all of these really critical and important materials related to African American history.”



Southern Historical Collection (SHC) staff members (standing) meet with participants in the Eastern Kentucky African American Migration Project (EKAAMP).

Black and white photos are from the Lynch Colored High School/West Main Alumni Association collection. In 2013 many yearbooks and photographs from Harlan County, Ky., schools were given to the University Library for digitization and preservation.



Eastern Kentucky

Tens of thousands of African Americans migrated from the rural South to the coalfields of West Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky as a first stop throughout the Great Migration.



Chapel Hill, NC

The Southern Historical Collection (SHC) held a Historic Black Towns and Settlements Alliance Workshop in April 2015.



About 50 exhibits launched on Feb. 1. The SHC's exhibit is entitled "Before I'm 25 . . . Stories of African American Youth," and featured African American youths throughout history who, despite obstacles placed in their way, demonstrated incredible energy, integrity and resilience.



### Step 3: Anticipate growth

Another area of interest to the SHC is the South's Latino population, which, in North Carolina alone, has grown from 1.2 percent of the state's population in 1990 to 8.8 percent in 2013. Ultimately, the SHC would like to hire an archivist—someone in a similar position to Powell's—who can work with Latino communities. "The rate of change [in the Latino population], arguably, has been so great," Giemza said, "that I think we are right in the moment

that people are going to look back on and say 'how did that unfold?'"

Helping Latinos preserve their histories has its own set of challenges. As with African American communities, there are issues of trust—undocumented immigrants may be fearful of sharing information—and some may not have a lot in the way of physical artifacts. Sometimes it's just what they could bring with them—and crucially, their stories.

UNC's Institute for the Study of the Americas has been working on a digital archive of the oral histories of Latin American migrants in North Carolina. Called "New Roots: Voices from Carolina del Norte!," the project began in 2006 and has generated more than 130 interviews. These first-hand narratives include stories of migration, settlement and integration in North Carolina. The SHC's Southern Oral History Program has helped process and archive the interviews. In February, "New Roots" launched a bilingual website (<http://newroots.lib.unc.edu/>), providing public access to this extraordinary collection.

"This is an absolutely fantastic project, and it gives us a model to think about how

we can expand that work," Giemza said.

It's also a good representation of how nontraditional methods of curating collections can enhance existing archival collections. But bringing community-driven archives to fruition is a huge commitment. Other institutions have begun to show interest in this type of archival work,

## Archiving shouldn't stop at the end of a generation or at the edges of a building.

but UNC, for the most part, is laying the groundwork for this up and coming approach to archiving. To be sustainable they know they have to continue to build a strong network of communities—to involve as many people from as many areas as possible, including the next generation of archivists. Just as history shouldn't be left to wither away in an attic, archiving shouldn't stop at the end of a generation or at the edges of a building.

## A bold commitment

Helping communities create their own archives takes a lot of effort, not to mention time. Fortunately, the UNC Library has received a \$500,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), ensuring that the Southern Historical Collection (SHC) is able to continue this important outreach work. The Library must raise \$1.5 million in matching funds to meet the challenge grant requirements. Combined with the NEH grant, the \$2 million will be sufficient to create an endowment that will make the position of African American collections and outreach archivist a permanent position within the SHC.

**"the rewards are tremendous"**

An endowment for this position shows UNC's long-term commitment to preserving the real stories of African American communities. "It's assuring communities and individuals that African American collections are a priority for the archives at UNC," said Chaitra Powell, who currently serves in the position. "It's a bold commitment for the University to make. As long as there is a library at UNC, African American collections will be at their center."

Bryan Giemza, director of the SHC, said that he and his staff are not aware of another academic research library that has permanently endowed a similar position with such a heavy emphasis on outreach. "We believe that UNC is, if not the first, then among the very first university libraries to make this commitment," he said.

The outreach archivist will lead an effort to collect untold stories of African American communities, something the SHC views as critical to improving historical research and understanding. For an archivist like Powell, this means cultivating

relationships around the region, such as the SHC has done in partnering with the Historic Black Towns and Settlements Alliance, and making sure the communities she works with have the context and tools to collect and preserve their history.

"It's everything from, 'I've got this box in the attic,' to 'How can we structure a community archiving event?'" she said.

The position also entails developing a "toolkit," a manual of sorts that will help patrons create their own archives. The toolkit could be a digital presence, where people click through steps, or possibly

a physical kit, such as a backpack. Powell explains that a backpack could be stocked with starter materials: a recorder and list of questions to do an oral history; document brushes to remove mold or dust off debris; or archival sleeves to protect photos. "We're still developing it, but we want it to be compelling and something we could share with multiple stakeholders," she said.

While community archives are time-intensive, Giemza said, "As a university of the people, our efforts really distinguish us in this area of genuine and authentic service. And the rewards are tremendous because communities that are in control of their own history are more likely to be invested in preserving it."

To learn more about the SHC's African American collections and outreach initiative and how to support it, contact Bryan Giemza at [bryan@unc.edu](mailto:bryan@unc.edu); (919) 962-4341 or Dwain Teague in library development at [dteague@email.unc.edu](mailto:dteague@email.unc.edu); (919) 962-3437. Or make a secure gift at <http://bit.ly/SHCchallenge>.

# Yesterday's Yearbooks

by Rachel Canada

Before yearbooks (e.g., *Yackety Yack*), there was the autograph album. Dating back to the mid-16th century, autograph albums began as a university tradition in Europe and served as a memento of college life. Owners recorded poetry, messages and reminders of friendships developed while at college. Each album strove to show the owner's personality, wit and taste, but, unlike diaries, these albums were intended to be shared with others. At UNC, autograph books were used for collecting signatures at graduation and often served as address books post graduation.

There are several examples of autograph books in the Southern Historical Collection (SHC). Thanks to a gift from Thomas S. "Tom" Kenan III '59, the SHC has acquired three more such books that belonged to two UNC alumni: John Grant Rencher (1862) and William Conway Rencher (1866).

John and William were brothers from Santa Fe, N.M. Their father, Abraham Rencher (1822, 1831) was a politician originally from Chatham County, N.C., that served as governor of New Mexico and as charge d'affaires to Portugal. Two of the autograph books

belong to John and one to William. All three tomes have the hallmark of the autograph book—the owner's name, a quotation in Latin, fraternity membership and debating society membership. Pertinent information about classmates can also be gleaned from these books. In one of John's

**Each album strove to show the owner's personality, wit and taste, but, unlike diaries, these albums were intended to be shared with others.**

books, there are carefully drawn calling cards for the class marshals, indicating their fraternity membership and hometown.

The autograph books are of special interest to those studying genealogy, self-expression, networking and friendships. The Rencher brothers' autograph books straddle an interesting time in University history, as the class of 1861 was the last

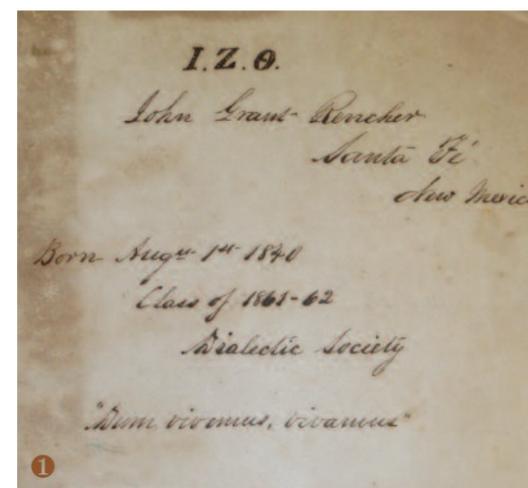
graduating class not affected by the Civil War. In the years leading up to the Civil War, the University of North Carolina had an enrollment of 456 students in 1859, the second largest in its history. But in the spring of 1861, a great number of students rushed to volunteer for service. William enlisted as a major in the Confederate Army. And on Nov. 30, 1863, John enlisted as a lieutenant at the age of 24. He was wounded on May 6, 1864, at Wilderness, Va., and left the service in January 1865. Penciled in the brothers' albums are fellow students' regiment numbers, the battles in which they participated and other notes on their service.

The popularity of autograph albums faded in the late 19th century with the advent of the class yearbook. But these albums illustrate a distinct time in University history and give great insight into student life at Carolina.

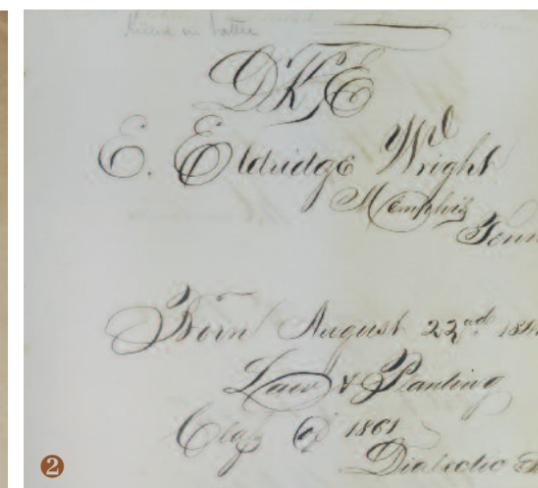
*Gifts of materials such as the ones given by Thomas S. "Tom" Kenan III '59 are essential to building the rich collections that comprise the SHC. If you have a collection you'd like to donate or know of a collection that might be of interest, contact Bryan Gienza, SHC director, at [bryan@unc.edu](mailto:bryan@unc.edu); (919) 962-4341.*



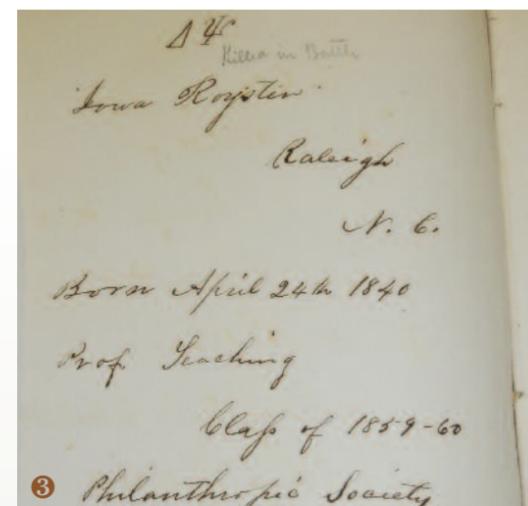
The three newly acquired autograph books.



1



2



3



4

Pages from John Grant Rencher's autograph books.

1 Title page listing Rencher's vital University statistics and his motto, *Dum Vivimus, Vivamus*, "While we live, let us live."

2 Autograph page for Elisha Eldridge Wright (1861). Rencher edited the page in pencil, "Killed in Battle." Wright died in 1863 at the Battle of Stones River.

3 Autograph page for Iowa Michigan Royster, who graduated from UNC with highest honors in 1860. After graduation, he served as a University tutor but left this position and enlisted in the 1st North Carolina Cavalry as a private in 1862. On June 5, 1863, he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the 37th Regiment North Carolina Volunteers. Royster was wounded at the Battle of Gettysburg and died 10 days later.

4 Calling cards of the Class of 1860 Marshals.

# Mysteries of University History

## Undergraduates seek clues in Wilson Library's special collections

by John Blythe

As a member of UNC's Student Action with Workers, Shannon Brien has listened to University housekeepers share frustrations about low wages and poor working conditions. Brien, a senior majoring in history and Chinese, has even heard stories about the class action lawsuit housekeepers filed against the University in the 1990s and the resulting settlement, which included retroactive salary adjustments and the establishment of career training classes for the workers. But the full history didn't ring true until this past fall, when she began digging into correspondence and newsletters she found in the papers of Chancellor Michael Hooker (1995-1999) in the University Archives at Wilson Library. There she found letters from housekeepers involved in the lawsuit, reminiscences of housekeepers from decades ago and pages from a 1940 edition of *The Voice of the Janitor's Association*, a newsletter produced by those who cleaned campus buildings at that time.

"I think it's really important if someone wants to be an activist that they have a grasp of the history of the issue that they're working on," Brien said.

Brien is among several groups of undergraduate students who found themselves probing the special collections of Wilson Library for class projects this

past semester. She was a student in a public history class that explored the histories of UNC's buildings and their namesakes. Brien wrote about the Cheek Clark Building at 601 W. Cameron Ave., which was once home to the University Laundry and now serves as offices for the University's housekeeping services and other departments of facilities services.

The instructor for Brien's class was Anne Whisnant, an adjunct professor in UNC's Department of History and deputy secretary of the faculty, who regularly teaches an introductory class on public history. During previous semesters, she has focused on the history of the Blue Ridge Parkway, a topic about which she has written a book. But, this past fall, Whisnant decided to shift the class

toward discussion of a timely topic, the naming of University buildings.

"Obviously the real joy of this is thinking about the vast number of records we have," Whisnant said. "We're sitting on top of a giant treasure trove of University materials." That treasure trove is Wilson Library.

Rachel Kirby, a master's student in folkore from Salisbury, researched Memorial Hall for Whisnant's class. The University has served as home to two Memorial Halls. The first was completed in 1885. That building eventually fell into disrepair and was demolished in 1930. The second Memorial Hall was built on the site of the first and completed in 1931. It underwent renovations in the early 2000s and reopened in 2005.

**Kei Kaneda, a Japanese American student admitted to UNC during World War II, is pictured in the 1947 Yackety Yack (p. 65).**

"There is an overabundance of information on Memorial Hall, and I, by no means, got through all of it," Kirby said. "The goal was to get the bulk of the archival work done in four weeks, and that didn't happen."

Kirby said that the pace of her digging through the archives slowed as she stopped to read letters that North Carolinians wrote in 1884 to then-President Kemp Plummer Battle in response to the University's plea for money to support construction of the new building. Although University leaders had initially proposed that the building should honor David Lowry Swain, a former governor of North Carolina and president of the University from 1835-1868, by the time of their fundraising appeal, they had decided that the new structure should honor other prominent North Carolina men, too. Some letter writers praised that decision; others expressed concern.

Kirby points to the letter of C.W. Broadfoot of Fayetteville, who wrote that he was pleased that a tablet in the new building would honor John Holmes Dobbin, a Fayetteville native and UNC graduate who was killed fighting for the Confederacy during the Civil War.

"I fear that your plan will rather detract from than add to the reputation of my distinguished townsman," Broadfoot wrote on Feb. 14, 1884. "He stands as I conceive prominently forward, together with some dozen (not more) other great and good men of our State, whose example ought to be held up in every way to our youth—but if you class him with forty-eight others, you must of necessity include in the list many, not specially worthy of note."

While Kirby and Brien searched Wilson Library's special collections for the stories behind the names of UNC buildings, Anna Zimmerman and her



classmates in English 360-Contemporary Asian American Literature and Theory—sought to uncover the history of Japanese-American students at UNC during World War II. Zimmerman, a sophomore from Marshall, N.C., was among a group that pieced together the lives of Kei Kaneda and Shizuko Hayashi, two Californians of Japanese descent who were among the more than 110,000 Japanese Americans relocated and incarcerated during the war. Eventually Kaneda and Hayashi were able to leave internment camps and enroll at UNC.

Zimmerman said that she was excited not only to discover that UNC admitted two Japanese American students during the war, but also to learn that Kaneda was a member of a student group that campaigned for civil rights for African-Americans in the mid-1940s. She found that tidbit in a biography of Rev. Charles M. Jones, a Presbyterian minister and activist in Chapel Hill. The book is held in the North Carolina Collection.

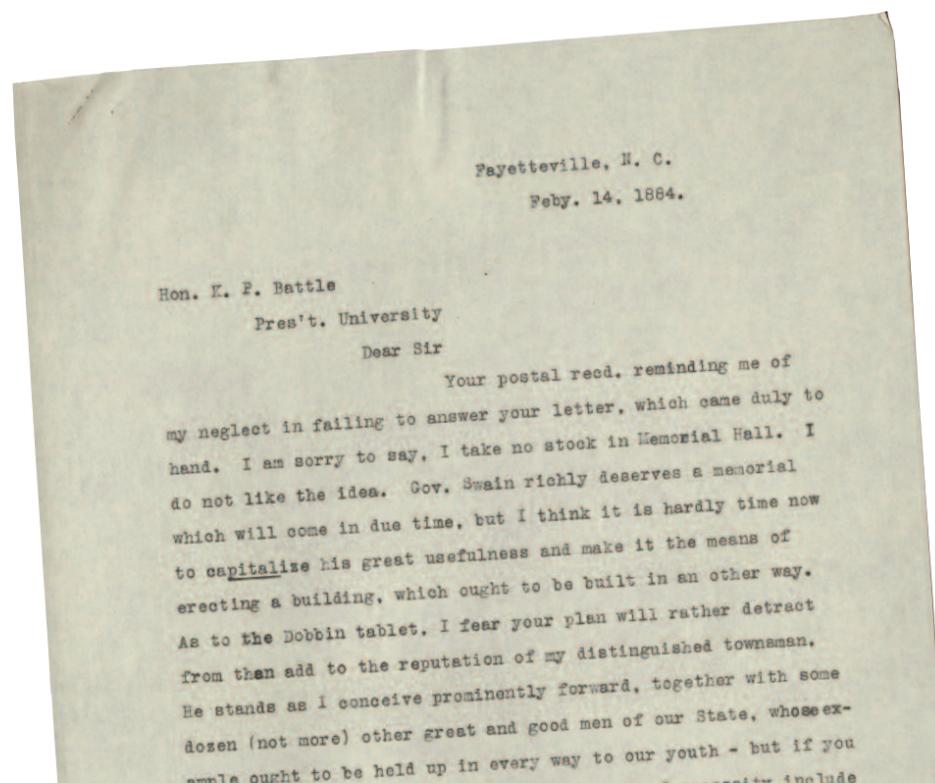
"It was incredibly exciting to see Kei in a picture with other student activists in the book and to learn about her work in organizing interracial work camps to promote racial equality," Zimmerman said.

That detail about Kaneda is just the kind of discovery that Heidi Kim hoped her students might make. Kim, an assistant professor in the Department of English and Comparative Literature, has spent several years studying the incarceration of Japanese Americans as a historical and literary event. In the course of her research in a California archive she discovered that UNC had accepted two Japanese Americans as students. But she knew little else about that story. Kim hoped the students could flesh it out in Wilson Library's special collections.

"I stressed to them that they were really stepping into the unknown and if they didn't find anything, that's part of the process," she said. "I told them it was like leaping off a cliff and seeing what you hit on the way down."

Kim's and Whisnant's classes shared their discoveries during public presentations at Wilson Library in late November. Each class is also producing a website. The website produced by Whisnant's class is near completion and available at <http://dhpress.unc.edu/unchistory/>.

*Blythe is the special projects and outreach coordinator for the North Carolina Collection.*



**A letter written in 1884 to then UNC President Kemp Plummer Battle from C. W. Broadfoot of Fayetteville in response to the University's pleas for support of construction of the original Memorial Hall.**

# Loss of one of the greats

## A tribute to longtime UNC Librarian Will Owen

The Library is deeply saddened by the unexpected passing of our colleague Will Owen—a gifted librarian, scholar and mentor who touched many in a career that spanned nearly four decades. He died at his Chapel Hill home on December 2 at the age of 63.

Owen began work at the UNC Library in 1976 as a student assistant in the collection development department. At the time of his death, he was associate university librarian for technical services and systems, a position he had held since 2011. Since July, he had also served as the Library's interim director of human resources.

With Owen's passing, the Library and the field have lost "one of the greats of librarianship and a leader whose accomplishments embody the best of the profession," said Sarah Michalak, university librarian and associate provost for university libraries.

Owen believed that libraries should provide the broadest possible access to scholarly information. When he became one of the Library's first computer administrators in 1985, there were just a few computers in campus libraries. "It was the two of us doing all of the technology," recalled David Romani, UNC Library's lead systems administrator. Romani and



Photo by Jay Mangum

Owen removed ceiling panels and ran cable for the first system of networked computers in Davis Library.

As technology became an increasingly prominent part of library work, Owen became UNC's first systems librarian and then head of the systems department. His guiding principle was always that the technology—and the technology department—should be a solid and reliable support that makes it possible for colleagues to focus on their primary mission of carrying out the work of the library.

Owen earned his master's in library science in 1990 from North Carolina

Central University. He also held master's and bachelor's degrees in comparative literature from the State University of New York at Albany and had completed coursework toward a doctorate in comparative literature at UNC before focusing on his library career.

The curiosity and drive that characterized his studies led Owen to pursue many interests—from art to music to architecture—with equal depth and zeal. One unique passion in which Owen was wholly invested was Australian Aboriginal art. In 1990 he had intended to use frequent flier miles for a European Christmas vacation with his partner, Harvey Wagner, professor of operations at UNC's Kenan-Flagler Business School, but every plane was booked. An agent offered seats on a plane to Sydney, and the surprise destination led the pair to a passion for Aboriginal art. This chance encounter with Australian Aboriginal art sparked a lifelong passion. During numerous trips to Australia, Owen and Wagner assembled a significant collection of Aboriginal art, ranging from traditional forms to modern interpretations in sculpture, photography and video.

Owen is survived by Wagner, his partner of 34 years.

If you would like to make a contribution in Will Owen's memory, you may wish to consider the following two funds, representing institutions of importance in his life:

**Will Owen Memorial Library Fund**  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
PO Box 309  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514-0309  
Give securely online at  
<https://giving.unc.edu/gift/lib>

**Hood Museum of Art**  
Dartmouth College  
Hanover, NH 03755  
(603) 646-2805  
[hood.museum@dartmouth.edu](mailto:hood.museum@dartmouth.edu)

## Upcoming Library Exhibitions

### Lyric Impressions: William Wordsworth in the Long Nineteenth Century



**JANUARY 20 – APRIL 18**

This display of more than eight books, prints and maps explores the reception of Wordsworth during the tumultuous period from the French Revolution through World War I. Inspired by the Rare Book Collection's William Wordsworth Collection and Professor Mark Reed's gifts to it, the exhibit highlights the social and cultural conditions that precipitated Romantic literature and have ensured its enduring popularity. *Melba Remig Saltarelli Exhibit Room*

### From Frock Coats to Flip-flops: 100 Years of Fashion at Carolina



**FEBRUARY 25 – JUNE 5, 2016**

In 1900 the properly dressed Carolina student ordered his clothes from a tailor and wore stiff-collared shirts. Over the next 100 years campus dress became increasingly less formal, and by the year 2000 classrooms were filled with students in T-shirts and flip-flops. This exhibition explores the stylistic shifts that took us from collared to casual and what these changes—big and small, gradual and sudden—reveal about 20th-century student life at Carolina. *North Carolina Collection Gallery*

### Corruption of the Innocents: Four Centuries of Cultural Alarm over Popular Children's Books



**APRIL 28 – AUGUST 15**

Adults worry that popular culture might harm children; nowadays, we suspect video games, television and movies. Almost four centuries ago, the poet George Wither worried similarly about nursery rhymes: "Children and youth are almost generally so seduced and bewitched with vain, if not wicked, songs and poems," he wrote, that poesy has come to seem "the language and invention of the devil" (Hallelujah, 1641). Other popular children's texts, such as chapbooks and magazines, even educational primers, were all at one time suspect.

This exhibition, curated by the students of Professor Laurie Langbauer's ENGL 295 class, draws on the University Library's centuries-old treasures of popular children's books. It explores the menace that a variety of those forms—fairy tales, dime novels and comic books among them—at one time or another have seemed to pose. *Melba Remig Saltarelli Exhibit Room*

### Set in the Southern Part of Heaven: Chapel Hill through Authors' Eyes



**JUNE 20 – OCTOBER 2, 2016**

Featuring well-known writers from the 1800s to today, this exhibition highlights stories and other writings set in Chapel Hill. While many of the authors focused on memories of their college days, others recorded the beauty of local landscapes, seasonal changes or the spirit of a moment in time. Images from the Photographic Archives will accompany the written word to provide glimpses of familiar places and days gone by. *North Carolina Collection Gallery*



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**Staffing Changes**

Peggy Myers accepts position in University Development / Nick Graham appointed University Archivist



**4**

**New Desk, (Even) Better Service**

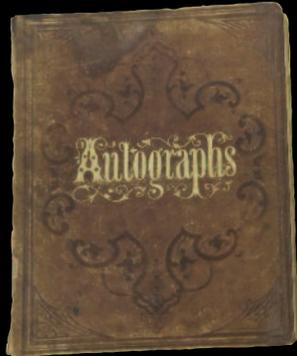
Davis Library service desk gets overhaul



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**Archiving Outside the Box**

Southern Historical Collection partners with towns to create community-driven archives



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**Yesterday's Yearbooks**

Autograph albums once served as mementos of college life



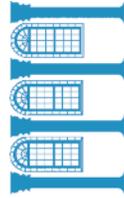
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**Mysteries of University History**

Undergraduates seek clues in Wilson Library's special collections

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