

MAC midwest archives conference

n e w s l e t t e r

Preserving the Documents of the Past and Making Them Accessible to the Future!

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MAC in Madison 2022

Celebrating its 50th anniversary and first in-person meeting in three years, the Midwest Archives Conference will hold its 2022 Annual Meeting May 5–7 at the Madison Concourse Hotel and Governor's Club in Madison, Wisconsin. The city of Madison is located on ancestral Ho-Chunk land, a place their nation has called Teejop (day-JOPE) since time immemorial. The hotel is within walking distance of numerous attractions, including the Wisconsin State Capitol, the Madison Children's Museum, and many local restaurants, and an easy bike, drive, or bus ride away from many other venues. The meeting's Local Arrangements Committee, Program Committee, and Education Committee will be presenting conference attendees with an exciting slate of programs, sessions, workshops, and tours, all crafted to entice you to visit Madison. The Local Arrangements Committee is working hard to secure several tours that you won't want to miss. Tentative tours include the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Wisconsin State Archives Preservation Facility (SAPF), a First Nations Cultural Landscape walking tour of the UW–Madison campus, and much more. The opening reception at the Wisconsin Historical Society will offer highlights from its renowned North American History collections. The Program Committee is excited to announce that 21 proposals have been accepted to present at the 2022 conference. Sessions address the conference theme “Moving Archives Forward” by exploring professional, environmental, societal, and cultural factors that affect the way we move forward, the way we see trends, and the way we identify challenges and opportunities. A variety of topics will be covered, such as oral history, digital preservation, processing and MPLP, instruction and outreach, business archiving, lone arrangers, project management, and DEI in the archival profession. Based on feedback from previous conferences, sessions will vary in length between 45, 60, and 90 minutes. Masks will be required during all sessions. Calls for pop-up sessions (to be voted on by MAC members) and posters will be announced in the coming months. And, for the first time, MAC is offering a hybrid option for the annual conference, including virtual access to the plenary, Members' Meeting, and selected sessions. More details on the Annual Meeting will be forthcoming in the next *MAC Newsletter* and on the MAC website. In the meantime, feel free to check out the Destination Madison website at <https://www.visitmadison.com> for more details about visiting Madison, Wisconsin.

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Dear MAC members,

I've always enjoyed looking back to the year I was born to see what the trends were, what was on the radio and in the news, and who else was born that year. So of course, I had to do the same for the year MAC was born, 1972. On the radio was Don McLean's "American Pie" (my teenage daughters now stream it), and HBO started (still paying for content). Most important, in Chicago a group of Midwest archivists met as an organization for the very first time. In a quirk of the calendar, our 50th spring conference this year will be the same days (May 5 and 6) as that very first meeting. I'm glad we expanded to a third day to give us extra time to celebrate!

In his 1993 *Archival Issues* (18:1) article about the history of MAC, Patrick Quinn wrote: "The central purpose of the Midwest Archives Conference is, and always has been, to confer, to get together, to exchange ideas and viewpoints and solutions to archival problems. Indeed the very name of the organization was deliberately chosen by the founders to convey this purpose." I sincerely hope that you will join us either in person in Madison or virtually as we follow in our founders' footsteps to meet, discuss, and even answer some questions.

That same *Archival Issues* includes an article by Mark Greene on access and restrictions. Although not the point of Greene's article, one of the ways we encourage access to MAC is by providing a scholarship to our Annual Meeting. The Mark A. Greene Award for First-Time Meeting Attendees covers registration fees for individuals attending their first MAC conference. To honor both Mark and our golden year, MAC is committed to fully fund this important award. Won't you join me in donating \$50 to celebrate MAC's 50th year?

A number of other Council initiatives related to our anniversary are in the works. While we honor the past, we will also be looking to MAC's future—who are we now and what do we want MAC to be? Please be sure to watch for an email announcement early this year with more details.

As president, I am daily reminded that MAC does not survive without its dedicated members, including members who volunteer their time and energy in leadership positions and on committees, as well as members who ask questions and encourage MAC to do more to advocate for others. Further into Quinn's article he notes, "Hundreds of others have served as members of these and other committees, have been participants in MAC program sessions or have otherwise contributed to the organization. To call MAC a membership-driven organization is to understate the obvious." I feel honored to work with so many amazing MAC members who are dedicated to the present and future of MAC.

If you have ideas for our celebration, or any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me via email (chute.6@osu.edu) or phone (614-292-3271). I'm always up for a MAC conversation!

I look forward to hearing from you. See you in Madison!

Sincerely,



Tamar Chute

President, Midwest Archives Conference

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Vice President's Column MAC Meetings and Symposia Update

By Michelle Sweetser, Bowling Green State University



Symposium Scholarships

As I write this column, we are making the final preparations to host over 100 participants in an all-virtual Fall Symposium. Cochairs Tara Laver and Lindy Smith report on the Symposium elsewhere in this issue, but I want to alert members about Council's appropriation of funds at its July meeting to support ten student scholarships and two scholarships for precariously employed individuals. Council felt this is a low-cost way to provide opportunities to access valuable educational content to those who might otherwise be unable to participate. As a result, we created a low-stakes process with minimal requirements for entry: those interested in the scholarships simply had to express interest using a Google form by the October 1 due date. A total of twenty-six applied for the student scholarship and six for the precariously employed scholarship. Winners were drawn at random.

Speakers Agreement

For many years, MAC has required individuals who present at the Annual Meeting to complete an agreement ensuring that all parties are clear about expectations related to publicity, attendance, and registration for the meeting. At its fall meeting in 2018, Council approved the collection of demographic data about speakers, including "race, ethnicity, gender identity, years in profession, and type of institution in order to attempt to rectify any imbalances during planning" through this agreement form.

A member of an accepted panel for the 2022 Annual Meeting in Madison raised concerns this fall about the demographic categories presented in the Ethnicity category on the form. We acknowledge that the categories in the Ethnicity section of the current agreement are problematic, from the choices provided to the instructions to make only one selection from the list. We apologize and acknowledge that we want to do better. All speakers have been made aware of this situation, and we will disregard any data that may have been submitted because it cannot accurately portray demographics as the tool itself is flawed.

So, how will we improve moving forward? Council has asked MAC's Ethics and Inclusion Committee, chaired by Harrison Inefuku, to review the demographic portion of the form so we can ensure that the categories more accurately reflect the diverse population of members and nonmembers who share their knowledge and expertise in MAC's educational spaces. Council has also discussed the reasons and purposes for collecting this data and is in ongoing conversation about whether the speaker agreement is the best venue for this effort. I will be conducting some research and bringing a proposal to Council for consideration in the spring. If you have thoughts about the need, purposes, and method by which demographic data related to speakers is collected and utilized, I would love to hear from you.

Annual Meeting in Madison, May 2022

Masking Policy

You'll learn more elsewhere in this newsletter about the exciting program that we have planned, from our tours to reception site. MAC volunteers and Council, as well as our support team at AMC, have engaged in many conversations about how best to handle an in-person meeting while protecting the health and safety of those in attendance. We will be actively monitoring the situation and will keep members and attendees apprised of changes.

As the COVID-19 situation is continually in flux, **MAC will require all attendees to wear masks in event spaces, even those fully vaccinated**, to provide the safest meeting experience possible. This requirement is in accordance with current CDC recommendations for counties with substantial or high transmission and with a current mandate within Dane County itself. As you make a decision about in-person conference attendance, I encourage you to learn more about the health and safety protocols

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currently in place at the Madison Concourse Hotel (<https://www.concoursehotel.com/safety>). Meanwhile, we will continue to monitor these resources and recommendations and will keep you informed.

Additionally, we are working with the hotel to explore the possibility of additional distance between chairs at sessions, the feasibility of spreading people out during breaks and at the reception, opportunities to utilize outdoor spaces or to open windows, and the like. These options depend upon venue, weather, costs, and attendance, but we will do everything possible to make the Annual Meeting a positive and safe experience for all.

Virtual Option

While we are committed to offering a safe in-person Annual Meeting experience in Madison, the last two years have demonstrated that a healthy appetite for virtual educational opportunities exists as well. I am excited to report that in addition to an in-person event, MAC will offer a virtual conference option for the 2022 Annual Meeting!

The virtual option will provide access to roughly one-third of program content for roughly one-third the price of the in-person registration fee. Attendees who select the virtual option will receive access to the plenary session, one predetermined session per time slot (seven total sessions of varying lengths), and the MAC Members' Meeting. Virtual registrants will be able to engage with presenters via chat in Zoom, and our virtual conference will be supported by in-person technical support to guarantee a positive experience for both presenters as well as attendees.

We hope that this opportunity will allow those who are unable to travel for whatever reason—travel budgets or restrictions, health considerations, child- or eldercare obligations, family conflicts, and so on—to continue to grow professionally and to benefit from MAC's high-quality professional development offerings. I hope to see you in Madison, be it in person or virtually!

Calling all MAC Members! Have You Renewed for 2022?

MAC membership is based on the calendar year, so to maximize your membership and ensure eligibility to vote in the 2022 MAC election, be sure to renew before January 31. Membership comes with benefits that keep you in touch with colleagues across the Midwest through the *MAC Newsletter*, abreast of current trends in the field with *Archival Issues*, and ahead of the class with educational opportunities, and it offers the chance to serve and connect with peers.

Renewing online is easy. Simply go to midwestarchives.org, and select the Membership Renewal Form located under the "Membership" drop-down menu. Log in with your username and password to complete the form, making sure your contact information is up to date. From there, you can pay online or with a check in the mail. Have questions about renewing? Email membership@midwestarchives.org.

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Between Council Actions

Council passed the following motion via email on August 30, 2021:

- To approve Harrison Inefuku as chair of the Ethics and Inclusion Committee.

Council passed the following motion via email on September 13, 2021:

- To approve sponsorship of a University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee student to conduct a 150-hour fieldwork project for MAC, with the option of an additional 50 hours. MAC will spend up to \$3,000 for the work.

Council passed the following motion via email on September 24, 2021:

- To approve Jenna Jacobs as vendor coordinator.

Council passed the following motion via email on October 11, 2021:

- To approve the job description for the volunteer coordinator position.

Council passed the following motion via email on October 15, 2021:

- To approve a statement in response to the removal of the LGBTQ exhibit in Kansas City. Statement is on page 19 and online at <https://www.midwestarchives.org/statement-in-support-of-lgbtq-history>.

Council passed the following motion via email on October 15, 2021:

- To approve charging international institutional members the same fee as domestic institutional members, which is \$100. Previously, MAC charged higher dues to international institutional members to offset the cost of mailing the newsletter and *Archival Issues* (\$110 for Canada/Mexico and \$120 for any other country). Because both publications are now only available electronically, Council approved making the fees the same as domestic.

MAC 2022 Candidate Slate Approved by MAC Council

Vice President:

- Jennifer Audsley-Moore,
National Archives at Denver, Colorado
- Benn Joseph,
Northwestern University, Illinois

Treasurer:

- Jerice Barrios,
North American Province of the Cenacle, Illinois
- Lindy Smith,
University of Missouri–Kansas City, Missouri

Council:

- Becky Dampitz,
Decatur Free Library, Illinois
- Lindsay Hiltunen,
Michigan Tech, Michigan
- Rebecca Kuske,
University of Wisconsin–Stout, Wisconsin
- Laurinda Weisse,
University of Nebraska at Kearney, Nebraska

Nominations:

- Mikala Narlock,
University of Notre Dame, Indiana
- Amber Watts,
Fort Hays State University, Kansas
- Michael Seminara,
University of South Dakota, South Dakota
- Austin Justice,
University of Southern Mississippi Libraries, Mississippi

Submitted by Mary Ellen Ducey, MAC Nominating Committee Chair.

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Scholarships and Awards Seeking Nominations and Applications

Each year, MAC recognizes leaders in archives, offers scholarships for current students, and provides funding opportunities for first-time attendees to the MAC Annual Meeting. Consider nominating someone you know or applying for one of the awards that follow. Additional information about these and other opportunities is available online at www.midwestarchives.org/awards.

Presidents' Award

The MAC Presidents' Award was established in 1986 as a means for MAC to recognize significant contributions to the archival profession by individuals, institutions, and organizations not directly involved in archival work but knowledgeable about its purpose and value. A committee comprising the three most recent past presidents of MAC chooses recipients based on nominations submitted by committees in each of the 13 states in the MAC region. Each state committee may put forward only one nomination per year, but as many as three awards may be presented each year. Recipients are invited to attend the Members' Meeting held at MAC's Annual Meeting to receive their awards. To nominate someone, please complete the nomination form on the MAC website and address it to the appropriate state chair no later than January 31. Full contact information for the state chairs can be found on the MAC website under the "Awards" drop-down menu or at <http://www.midwestarchives.org/presidents-award>, along with a list of the award's past recipients.

Distinguished Service Award

MAC's Distinguished Service Award recognizes the otherwise unsung contributions of our MAC friends and colleagues. Please take a moment to think of all the people who have been quietly contributing their time and talents to MAC: the members who serve on committees, those who are ready to fill in as last-minute workshop leaders, those who happily work the registration table when they learn that someone has just canceled, or those who can whip up a quick article for the newsletter when you need to fill that last quarter-page. Now take a few minutes to put into words why MAC should recognize at least one of those people, and submit your description via the MAC Distinguished Service Award nomination form, which is available on the website at <https://www.midwestarchives.org/assets/documents/dsaform.pdf>. For more information, please visit the MAC website under the "Awards" drop-down menu or at <https://www.midwestarchives.org/distinguished-service-award>.

MAC Emeritus Member Award

Each year, the MAC Membership Committee solicits nominations from the MAC membership for candidates for the status of Emeritus Member. Nominees must be retired from archival work and have been a MAC member for a minimum of 10, not necessarily consecutive, years. More important, nominees must have made significant and substantial contributions to MAC during their archival careers. The Emeritus Membership Award and special membership status of Emeritus Member were created to recognize those who have contributed to the success, growth, and visibility of MAC through committee work, programming, outreach, and governance. The award aims to recognize those who work behind the scenes for MAC, as well as those who have served in an elected office. To nominate someone, download the application and instructions at https://www.midwestarchives.org/assets/documents/emeritus_form2.pdf, and send the completed form to Greg Bailey at gtbailey@iastate.edu. The deadline for nominations is January 31. Additional information is available on the MAC website under the “Awards” drop-down menu or at <https://www.midwestarchives.org/emeritus-award>.

Louisa Bowen Memorial Scholarship

The Midwest Archives Conference is soliciting applications for its annual Louisa Bowen Memorial Scholarship for Graduate Students in Archival Administration. The scholarship is designed to provide financial assistance to a resident or full-time student in the MAC region pursuing graduate education in archival administration. One award, comprising a \$750 scholarship and a one-year membership to MAC, will be presented. To be eligible for a scholarship, the applicant must meet the following requirements:

1. Applicants must be residents of, or full-time students residing in, one of the following states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, or Wisconsin.
2. Applicants must be currently enrolled in, or accepted into, a graduate, multicourse program in archival administration. If the program is not listed in the SAA Directory of Archival Education, <http://www2.archivists.org/dae>, the applicant must provide proof of the multicourse standard by submitting copies of course descriptions from the institution’s current departmental catalog.
3. Applicants must have a grade-point average of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in their academic programs.

Complete application information is available on the MAC website under the “Awards” drop-down menu or at <https://www.midwestarchives.org/bowen>.

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Archie Motley Memorial Scholarship

MAC is soliciting applications for the 2022 Archie Motley Memorial Scholarship for Students of Color (<http://www.midwestarchives.org/motley>). The scholarship is designed to provide financial assistance to students of color pursuing graduate education in archival administration and to encourage ethnic diversification of the MAC membership and of the archival profession as a whole. Two \$750 scholarships, accompanied by one-year memberships to MAC, will be awarded. To be eligible for a scholarship, the applicant must be of African, Native American, Asian or Pacific Islander, or Latinx descent; must be a student currently enrolled in or accepted to a graduate, multicourse program in archival administration; and must have a grade point average of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in their academic program. If the program is not listed in the SAA Directory of Archival Education, <http://www2.archivists.org/dae>, the applicant must provide proof of the multicourse standard by submitting copies of course descriptions from the institution's current departmental catalog. Applications are due March 1, 2022. Applications and full details are available on the MAC website under the "Awards" drop-down menu or at <https://www.midwestarchives.org/motley>.

Mark A. Greene Award for First-Time Meeting Attendees

Thinking of attending your first MAC meeting this spring? Would you like some financial assistance? This scholarship can provide that help. Applications are due March 1. This early deadline enables the successful applicant(s) to receive the scholarship committee's decision in time to make travel plans for the spring Annual Meeting. The Mark A. Greene Award provides a one-time travel stipend of up to \$500, or two \$250 stipends, to graduate students or practicing archivists who have not previously attended a MAC meeting. The award may be used to cover registration, travel, lodging, workshop fees, and any other meeting expenses. MAC membership is not required, nor must applicants reside in the MAC region. The award is named for Mark A. Greene (1958–2017), past president of the Society of American Archivists and the Midwest Archives Conference, and mentor to many. He was the director of the American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming from 2002 until 2015. Prior, he was archivist at Carleton College, curator of manuscripts at the Minnesota Historical Society, and head of Research Center Programs at The Henry Ford. His contributions to the archival profession, including influential literature, are significant and enduring. Applications for the scholarship may be downloaded from the MAC website at <http://midwestarchives.org>. See "Mark A. Greene Award" under "Awards." Applications must include an essay of no more than 500 words and one letter of support. Applications and supporting documentation may be submitted either electronically or by postal mail and must be received or postmarked by March 1. Electronic submissions are preferred. Please send all submission information to:

Vicki Cooper
Special Collections and University Archives
Nunn Drive, SL 106B
Northern Kentucky University
Highland Heights, Ky 41099
859-572-5742
cooperv2@nku.edu

The award will be announced at the Annual Meeting. Award winner(s) are also expected to write an essay for the *MAC Newsletter* on their experiences at the meeting and its importance to their professional development.

MAC Fall Symposium Recap

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we weren't able to gather in person, but it couldn't stop us from gathering on Zoom to talk about "Local Collections in the Digital Age." Ninety-seven registrants from across the Midwest, the United States, and even one from Greece signed up to explore how technology has affected what and how we both collect and share our local history collections.



DAY 1

“Community Partnerships: Sharing Expertise to Promote Access and Preservation”

Andrea J. Copeland, PhD, Indiana University, explored the idea of participatory heritage in the plenary talk. She defined the concept as engagement with culture outside of heritage institutions that focuses on content over processes and policies, and shares expertise and authority with the community rather than relying on credentials and hierarchies. Copeland used the Virtual Bethel Archive, a multi-institution project she led to document Bethel AME, a historic Black church in Indianapolis that closed, as a real-world example of participatory heritage. The project included recording oral histories, digitizing church records for congregation access before they were donated to a repository, and 3-D scanning of the sanctuary and translating it into a virtual reality environment. She emphasized patience in developing relationships and the importance of

building trust with institutions and individuals who have been traditionally excluded or overlooked by most cultural heritage organizations.

Andrea J. Copeland



Lessons Learned Capacity Building, Creating Connections

- Continue to diversify the heritage/memory/information fields
- Can't leave things to chance – need framework for connectivity and inclusivity
- Be prepared to invest a significant amount of time in building relationships
- Do your homework and learn deeply about the communities with you wish to work
- Build connections back to your organization not from it
- Connect with elders and opinion leaders within a given community
- Bring something to the table
- Involve students, volunteers, community members, media in spreading the message about your organization/projects
- Be flexible when moving from one community to the next
- Institutions can be inflexible and prefer “dead things”
- Respect intangible as well as tangible heritage

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Some Concepts

- **Wayback Machine**
 - Searchable public archive of website dating back more than 2 decades
- **Community Webs Program**
 - Cohort of (mostly) public libraries supported by the Internet Archive
- **Archive-It**
 - The software provided by Internet Archive that we use to manage web archiving activity
- **WARC File**
 - International standard file format for web archives



David LaCrone

“Web Archiving for Local Collections”

David LaCrone, Kansas City Public Library, discussed his experiences in archiving local websites in the Kansas City area. The Community Webs program and Archive-It are good resources for people interested in getting involved in this work. KCPL uses a rubric for evaluating sites for possible inclusion in its project based on how well the sites fit their project goals. LaCrone also shared tips for advocacy, both internally and within the larger community; sustainability; and promotion.

“History Harvest How-To”

Stephen Lane, Indianapolis Public Library, provided an overview of the successful “Scan-a-thons” he organized as part of an NEH Common Heritage Grant to capture the everyday experience of Black Americans in Indianapolis. He covered logistics such as staffing, scanning kits, and file naming. He emphasized the importance of connecting with high-profile members of the community or organizations to help foster participation and interest.



Stephen Lane

The Process

- Have a training guide for staff
- Train staff across branches who are interested
- Have enough kits available for staff to host their own scan-a-thon
- Create a team of people who can train other staff or supervise the scan-a-thon events

Plan a Successful Scan-A-Thon Event

- 1 Great participants**
 Invite a diverse group of participants to the event. Invite staff, volunteers, and community members who have brought and get the community engaged.
- 2 Scan items**
 Use the scanner and laptop provided to the kit to scan items, starting with the signed permission form. The scanned items should be saved in a folder and formatted such as images, files, audio, video, documents, etc. Save two copies of each scanned item: one to the scanning kit USB and one to a USB for the participant.
- 3 Record information**
 Use the provided spreadsheet to record any information the participant can provide about each item being scanned. Collect information such as the names of people pictured, locations, dates, creators, etc.
- 4 Finish**
 Give a digital copy of the signed permission form to the participant. Give them the hard copy of the permission form to be returned to Digital Projects. Thank the participant and give them their copy of the scan on their designated USB.

“More than a Moment: Ethical Approaches to Archival Work”

Dr. Anthony LaBat and Sandy Rodriguez, University of Missouri–Kansas City, shared their experiences in creating a new digital exhibit that challenged biases in a former exhibit on the same topic; their colleague Lindy Smith moderated the discussion. They shared background on the project then touched on the importance of doing this kind of work, how and why they took a different approach, the ongoing nature of the work and changing receptiveness, and using position and power to make space for critical feedback. Rodriguez and LaBat emphasized the importance of making antiracist and anti-oppressive practices part of daily work and approaching this work with empathy, agency, and humility.

DAY 2

“Go Tell It Online: Digital History Projects”

Jason Roe and Katie Sowder, Kansas City Public Library, presented on a variety of local history digital projects they’ve been involved in over the past few years as well as some works in progress. They touched on platform selection and organization, the value of collaboration and partnerships, reconsidering institutional habits, staffing, and the importance of paying participants for their contributions.



Katie Sowder



Jason Roe



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“Podcasting 101 for Local History”

Suzanne Hogan, KCUR Public Radio, discussed what makes podcasts unique as accessible and “intimate” media and the nuts and bolts of producing a podcast such as methods of recording, mixing, publishing and sharing, and fostering engagement. She also suggested considerations for starting a podcast and guiding questions such as who is your audience? what do you hope to accomplish? and is a podcast the best medium? Her tips for successful storytelling included finding the compelling or meaningful, keeping the audience interested with a surprise or a journey, and highlighting the humanity in interviewees. Hogan also encouraged attendees to pitch their story ideas to existing podcasters and to realize the expertise they can offer.

“Taking It to the Streets with Digital Interactives”

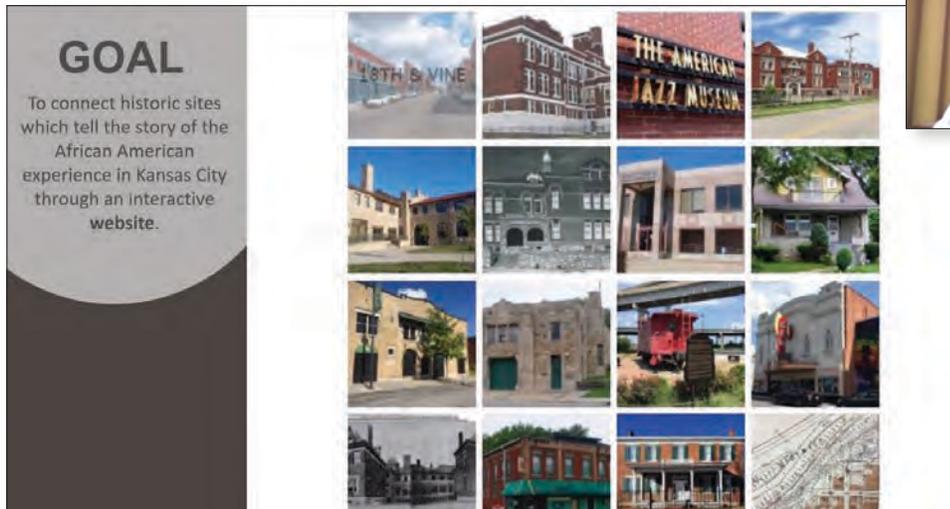
Dr. Carmaletta M. Williams, PhD, Black Archives of Mid-America, and Bradley Wolf, City of Kansas

City, Missouri, shared their experiences in creating a virtual African American Heritage Trail of sites in Kansas City, Missouri. They highlighted some of the difficulties that come along with a project like this, the importance of getting out of silos, finding a balance between passion and profession, and resiliency. As with nearly all of the presentations, they focused on the importance of community contributions, involvement, and feedback. Future plans for the project include adding more content and expanding the scope to be more regional.

A common theme that emerged throughout the Symposium was the importance of developing authentic community relationships, sharing authority and expertise with local stakeholders as we do our work, soliciting and heeding feedback, and planning for sustainability. We hope all attendees received new ideas to apply to their own work.



Bradley Wolf



Thank you to everyone who made this event a great success. Our generous sponsors UMKC University Libraries, the Kansas City Area Archivists, the Heritage League of Greater Kansas City, Heugh-Edmondson Conservation Services LLC, and recap sponsor, committee, and anonymous donors made it possible to keep registration cost low and to offer live

captioning. Current and former members of Council as well as Public Information Officer Kyna Herzinger, Webmaster Kate Dietrick, and former Development Coordinator Ida Mangum provided much-appreciated support. And, finally, a special thank you to Vice President Michelle Sweetser whose patience, good counsel, and mad Zoom skills were invaluable.



Carmaletta M. Williams

News from the Midwest

Assistant Editors: Alexandra Bisio, University of Oregon, and Lois Hamill, Northern Kentucky University. Please submit News from the Midwest items for Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Nebraska, North Dakota, and Ohio to Alexandra at bisio@uoregon.edu and items from Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, South Dakota, and Wisconsin to Lois at hamilll1@nku.edu. Submissions must be 150 words or less. Images are welcome!

ILLINOIS

Illinois State University

Milner Library at Illinois State University is pleased to announce the online exhibition *Agency Through Otherness: Portraits of Performers in Circus Route Books 1875–1925* (<https://scalar.usc.edu/works/circus-route-books-project/index>). The digital exhibit explores the diverse identities of circus performers and features essays, images, interactive timelines, and map data visualizations of circus routes integrated with Native lands, historical railroads, and population data. Research on highlighted performers also leveraged identity management principles with Library of Congress Name Authority Records and Wikidata that created linked data for optimal discoverability. The project represents the final segment in the multiyear Step Right Up: Digitizing Over 100 Years of Circus Route Books (<https://library.illinoisstate.edu/collections/circus-route-books>) CLIR grant collaboration with the Ringling Archives and Circus World Museum. The project team members are Angela Yon, Elizabeth Harman, Liz Hartman, and Mariah Wahl, with contributors Rebecca Fitzsimmons and Eric Willey.



An interactive timeline in the digital exhibit features circus performers in historical context to illustrate the confines and space in which they lived.

Principia College

The Principia Archives is excited to share one of its new digital collections. The Morgan Family Photograph Collection was recently published on the Principia Digital Collections site (<https://principia.contentdm.oclc.org>) to showcase the photographic history of Principia's founder, Mary Kimball Morgan, and her family, including her husband, William E. Morgan Sr., and sons, Frederic E. Morgan and William E. Morgan Jr. This collection spans the decades from the mid-1800s to the 1970s. The Morgan family spent their lives unselfishly serving the Principia campuses and were vibrant members of St. Louis and southern Illinois communities. Principia is a dual campus institution founded in 1898 with educational and spiritual values grounded in Christian Science, serving students from preschool age through students seeking college degrees. Principia College is an undergraduate liberal arts college in Elsah, Illinois, and Principia School is located in St. Louis, Missouri.



Mary Kimball Morgan and sons, photographed by Takuma Kajiwara. Morgan Family Photograph Collection, Principia Archives, Principia College.

University of Illinois, Chicago

The Adrian Scheltes papers are now available for research. Adrian Scheltes was the supervisor of counsel and guidance for the blind at the Illinois Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, where he assisted blind people in learning professional skills to enter the workforce. He lost his sight at the age of 21, which motivated him to seek a career in public service assisting other visually impaired people. These papers contain black-and-white photographs, newspaper clippings, and letters from the late 1940s through the 1950s. The photographs document blind people working in a variety of jobs, including a florist, a disc jockey, switchboard operators, and assembly line workers. A few photographs show Scheltes at work as well. The letters are from employers of Scheltes's clients with updates about how they are faring in their work. The Scheltes papers are available at the Library of the Health Sciences—Chicago Special Collections (see finding aid at <https://uic.cuadra.com/star/findingaids/MSSCHE21.xml>).

IOWA

University of Iowa

The Iowa Women's Archives (IWA) has a new Spanish translation of its popular pop-up exhibit, *Migration Is Beautiful. La Migración Es Bella* builds on the archives' *Migration Is Beautiful* website (<https://www.lib.uiowa.edu/studio/project/migration-is-beautiful>) and illustrates the history of Latino/a/x communities in Iowa from the 1910s to the 1970s using images and quotes from IWA collections. It was translated by University of Iowa associate professors

of Spanish and Portuguese, Pilar Marcé and Julia Oliver-Rajan, and funded by LULAC Council 10 of Davenport, Iowa. It was displayed at the Des Moines Public Library for Latinx Heritage Month and will continue to be available to Iowa organizations.

Iowa State University

The latest exhibit, *A Home Away from Home: The George A. Jackson Black Cultural Center*, curated by University Archivist Greg Bailey, is now available online (<http://iastatedigital.org/scuaexhibits/exhibits/show/bcc/background>). This exhibition, installed in February 2021, honors the 50th anniversary of the Black Cultural Center in 2020, and it is still available for viewing on the first and fourth floors of the Parks Library. Keep an eye out for information on an upcoming exhibition celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Margaret Sloss Center for Women and Gender Equity. In other news, the Iowa State University Library has purchased a film scanner, the Archivist from Lasergraphics, to digitize its 8mm and 16mm films.



Open house at Black Cultural Center. Pictured left to right: Roy Snell (president, BSO), Mrs. Ellen Parks, Norman Thomas (first manager of BCC), W. Robert Parks (ISU president), Amelia Parker (graduate student), Dean William Bell (associate dean of students), Mrs. Harriett Bell. University Photographs Collections, RS 715/G, box 496.

MINNESOTA

St. Catherine University

The gallery at St. Catherine University recently received a major donation from Minnesota artist Bettye Olson which included nearly two hundred paintings and prints, printing plates, artist's sketchbooks, archival records, and more. An influential artist, Olson's prolific career began in the 1950s when she challenged gender norms as a working artist, wife, and mother. Olson is an abstract expressionist who draws inspiration from the natural world, working primarily in acrylic, oil, and watercolor to create dynamic and boldly colored works. She taught at the University of Minnesota and in 1964 cofounded the West Lake Gallery in Minneapolis with a group of women artists. Now 98 years old, Olson resides in St. Paul where she continues to paint regularly. A selection of Bettye Olson's paintings is now on view in the St. Catherine University Library. Additional artwork and the artist's archival materials are available to view upon request in the Visual Resources Library.



Red Hills, painting by Bettye Olson (1990), recently acquired by St. Catherine University's Fine Art Collection

MISSOURI

Missouri Historical Society

Thanks to the support of the Institute of Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) Museums for America grant program, the Missouri Historical Society launched the three-year project Seeing 1940s St. Louis: The Sievers Studio Collection in late 2018. The project's mission was to fully process, rehouse, and selectively digitize the Sievers Studio Collection's Series 4 photographic materials and open the series for public access and use. The collection itself contains the surviving work of Sievers Studio, a commercial photography studio active in St. Louis from 1917 to 1989. Series 4 encompasses the studio's work in the 1940s, showing firsthand daily life in 1940s St. Louis and fully embodying studio founder Isaac Sievers's motto "I photograph anything." The project ended in November 2021, unlocking over 76 linear feet of materials to the public eye. See <https://mohistory.org/collections/item/P0403> for more details about the collection, its available series, and its digitized images.



Women employees handling bombshells in a Niedringhaus Metal Products Company war plant at 5739 Natural Bridge Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri. Photo by Sievers Studio, January 13, 1943. Missouri Historical Society Collections.

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

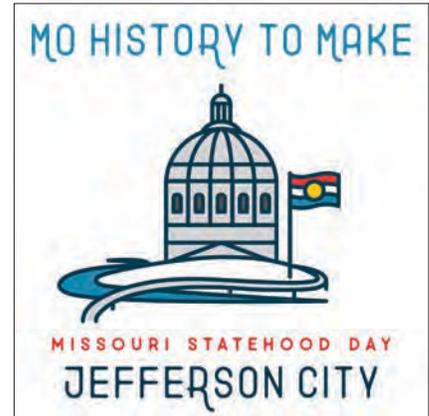
Missouri Historical Society

Missouri Statehood Day, August 10, 2021, marked the important milestone of 200 years since Missouri became the 24th state to enter the Union. More than two hundred events took place to commemorate Missouri's bicentennial year. In 2013, the Missouri General Assembly tapped the State Historical Society of Missouri to be the official organizer. Years of planning led to this momentous year as staff carried out virtual and in-person events and projects. The Missouri Bicentennial Quilt, with selected quilt blocks from each county, is touring the state, showcasing the cultural and geographic diversities of each region. Photography contests, book talks, folk art,

exhibits, storytelling, oral history recordings, and Missouri music took center stage at festivals throughout the year. Missouri Statehood Day included an old-fashioned ice cream social that took place in 198 venues with the official commemoration at the Missouri State Capitol and a Naturalization Ceremony to welcome new Missourians.



Bicentennial quilt. State Historical Society of Missouri.



Missouri Statehood Day logo. Courtesy of Allie B. Hollycross.

Washington University in St. Louis

On August 19, 2021, HBO Max premiered the documentary special *Eyes on the Prize: Hallowed Ground*. The new program is directed by Sophia

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Nahli Allison, who previously made the Academy Award–nominated short *A Love Song for Latasha*. *Hallowed Ground* is a celebration and update of the groundbreaking civil rights documentary series *Eyes on the Prize*, which was originally broadcast nationally as two seasons in 1987 and 1990 on PBS. The new special uses clips from a variety of full-length interviews from *Eyes on the Prize*, which are stored at the Washington University Libraries as part of the Henry Hampton/Blackside Inc. collection (<https://library.wustl.edu/spec/henry-hampton-collection>). Over the last decade, the libraries have preserved and digitized all of the interviews thanks to grants from the Mellon Foundation, the National Historical Publications and Records

Commission, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Learn more and view footage from the interviews at library.wustl.edu.



Hallowed Ground director *Sophia Nahli Allison* and executive producer/ interviewee *Patrisse Cullors*.

NEBRASKA

University of Nebraska at Omaha

The University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) Libraries' Archives and Special Collections partnered with the Episcopal Diocese of Nebraska to digitize and share its earliest history with the public. The newspapers now available from UNO include *The Guardian* (vol. 1, no. 1 January 1873–vol. 2, no. 12 December 1874) and *The Diocese of Nebraska* (vol. 1, no. 1, 1889–vol. 9, no. 3, 1897). *The Guardian* was the first Episcopal newspaper in Nebraska, and the *Diocese of Nebraska* was a monthly newsletter initiated by Bishop George Worthington. All digital material is available from UNO Libraries at

(Continued on page 18)

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NEWS FROM THE MIDWEST—Continued
Alexandra Bisio and Lois Hamill, Assistant Editors

(Continued from page 17)

<https://repository.unomaha.edu>. All analog newspapers and other archival collections are available to the public in the volunteer-run archives of the Episcopal Diocese of Nebraska.

NORTH DAKOTA

University of North Dakota

Thanks to a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and in partnership with Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish (NHS) College in New Town, North Dakota, the Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections at the University of North Dakota (UND) will continue to digitize archival materials related to the Indigenous peoples of the region. The project, Strengthening & Preserving the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation's Humanities Infrastructure, recently was awarded nearly \$500,000 from the NEH. The funding will be split 40/60, with NHS College receiving the 60 percent share. Documents from the archival collections of US senator William Langer and US representative Usher Burdick related to the construction of the Garrison Dam and other

issues of importance to the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation will be digitized and made available on the UND Scholarly Commons (<https://commons.und.edu>).

SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota State Historical Society

More South Dakota towns are now represented in the digitized historical newspaper collections on Chronicling America. *The Miller Press* (1909–1924) and *The Reporter and Farmer* (1888–1913) of Webster were recently added. Eighty-two different South Dakota newspapers are now available online, representing 40 towns and 36 counties. They can be viewed by visiting the Chronicling America website at <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/newspapers/south%20dakota>. In 2018, the State Historical Society-Archives was awarded a third round of grant funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities to continue digitizing historical newspapers as part of Chronicling America, a Library of Congress initiative to develop an online database of select historical

newspapers from around the United States. Due to slowdowns with vendors during the pandemic, the project was extended into 2021. As part of the grant, the State Historical Society-Archives has digitized approximately one hundred rolls of microfilmed newspapers predating 1924 over the last three years.

REGIONAL

Denison University and Illinois State University

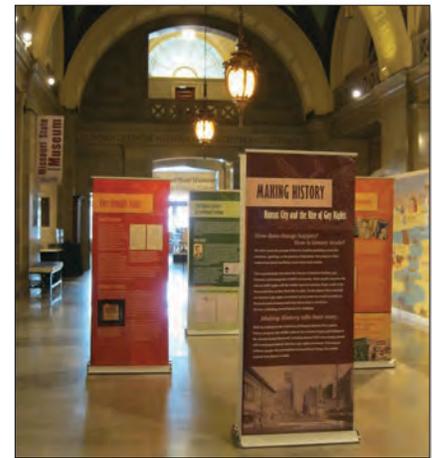
Sasha Kim Griffin (Denison University) and April K. Anderson-Zorn (Illinois State University) were both storytellers in the Finding Aid to My Soul event hosted by SAA and the Committee on Public Awareness. They were part of a group of five storytellers from across the country who all shared true stories about their funny, heartfelt, and surprising encounters in the archives. It was hosted by two-time Moth GrandSLAM winner (and former Moth director of education) Micaela Blei. Recordings of the stories will be made available in the future via SAA.

Making History: Kansas City and the Rise of Gay Rights

The exhibit *Making History: Kansas City and the Rise of Gay Rights* was created by a University of Missouri–Kansas City (UMKC) public history class in 2016–17. Students used archival materials in the Gay and Lesbian Archive of Mid-America (GLAMA) (<https://library.umkc.edu/GLAMA>) and interviewed local activists to describe American homophile activism in the 1950s and 1960s, including Kansas City’s pivotal role in helping to launch America’s gay rights movement. The students won a national award from the National Council on Public History for their efforts, and the project also received honors from the Midwestern History Association. As part of the project, a touring version was created, and it has traveled to public libraries, museums, and historical societies throughout Kansas and Missouri. In September of 2021, *Making History* was installed at the Missouri State Museum, located in the Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City. After receiving complaints about the exhibit’s content from legislative staff and legislators, leaders of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR)—the

department that oversees Missouri State Museum—decided to remove the exhibit after only four days. The removal of the exhibit was covered by many local and national news outlets, including the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Missouri Independent*, the *Advocate*, and Fox 2. Owing to the media outcry, the DNR quickly relocated the exhibit to the Lohman Building, part of the Jefferson Landing State Historic Site. This new location was far less accessible and visible than the Capitol. A number of professional organizations issued statements in support of the exhibit and calling for Missouri governor Michael L. Parson to move it back to its original location. Statements came from the American Alliance of Museums, the Missouri Association for Museums and Archives, the National Council on Public History, the American Historical Association, and the National Coalition Against Censorship. At the time of this writing, the exhibit continues to be on display at the Lohman Building. However, the controversy has generated significant interest

across the state from a variety of organizations, and UMKC received private funding to fabricate another traveling exhibit to meet the demand for requests to host the exhibit. We anticipate that *Making History* will be on display throughout Missouri for most of 2022, and others interested in the exhibit can visit the digital version (<https://info.umkc.edu/makinghistory/about-this-project>).



Photograph of the exhibit Making History: Kansas City and the Rise of Gay Rights at the Missouri State Museum before it was removed. Credit: University of Missouri–Kansas City University Libraries.

Midwest Archives Conference Statement in Support of LGBTQ+ History and the Exhibit *Making History: Kansas City and the Rise of Gay Rights*

The Midwest Archives Conference unequivocally condemns the removal of the *Making History: Kansas City and the Rise of Gay Rights* exhibit from the Missouri State Capitol rotunda. Removing this exhibit erases the history of Missouri’s LGBTQ+ community by censoring and excluding LGBTQ+ history from the mainstream historical narrative. MAC supports and respects student scholarship, Missouri’s LGBTQ+ community, and the accurate telling of the state’s history.

As archivists, we work with historically relevant documents. We see evidence each day of blatant discrimination against marginalized groups, including the intentional erasure of these communities’ cultures resulting in noticeable gaps in the historical record. We strongly condemn any attempts to hide this history or pretend it never happened. Rather, we choose to shine light on our past, as these students did, so that we may avoid making the same mistakes again. Our LGBTQ+ community has been fighting for fair treatment for decades and its members deserve to be recognized as primary players in our nation’s past and present.

We call on Governor Michael L. Parson to reinstall the exhibit in the Capitol Rotunda. The story of Missouri’s marginalized citizens should be front and center to all visitors to the building, as was originally intended.

Archival Resources on the Web

Assistant Editor: Lauren White, University of Michigan. Contact Lauren at laurenashleywhite@gmail.com if you would like to guest author a column or have a good idea to share.

Chicago Public Library Publishes Five New Digital Collections on Black History

By Johanna Russ and Beverly Cook, Chicago Public Library Archives and Special Collections

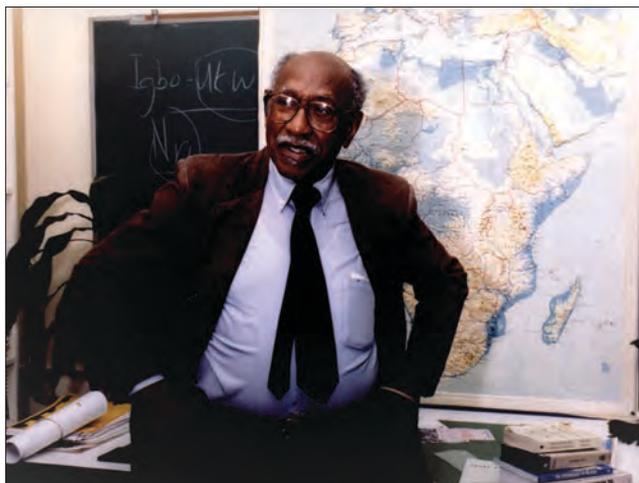
Chicago Public Library's Archives and Special Collections Division is pleased to announce the publication of five new digital collections related to Black history in 2021 (<https://www.chipublic.org/digital-collections>).

Timuel D. Black Jr. Digital Collection

<https://www.chipublic.org/timuel-d-black-jr-digital-collection>

The world lost a great oral history griot and humanitarian on October 13, 2021. Tim was just two months shy of reaching 103 years young. We will miss his passion, his empathy, his knowledge, and his willingness to be a leader and teacher for social justice.

A true Renaissance man, Timuel D. Black Jr. was a gifted educator, activist, historian, and citizen of Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood and the globe. His vast knowledge, not just of history, but also of Black life and politics in Chicago, means he routinely spoke at gatherings both large and small. This digital collection contains speeches that span nearly four decades from the 1960s to the 1990s. Topics range from education, civil rights, racial discrimination, and segregation to Chicago politics and voting rights.



Timuel Black at Loop College (now Harold Washington College), early 1980s

Alongside his speeches, we present letters written by Black to his brother, Walter Black, while each was

serving in the armed forces during World War II. Black began his army career in 1943 with the 308th Quartermaster Railhead Company. The company was a “forward supply unit” that aided in the D-Day Invasion of Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge. On display are the beginnings of Black’s unrelenting commitment to Black civil rights and an equal and just society for all.

The original versions of these speeches and letters, as well as other correspondence and materials, are housed in the Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection at Woodson Regional Library. The Timuel Black Jr. Papers comprise 336 linear feet and document Chicago history from the early 20th century to the 21st century, as well as the groundwork for effective community organizing.

Chicago Department of Urban Renewal Photographic Negatives Digital Collection

<https://www.chipublic.org/chicago-department-of-urban-renewal-records-photographic-negatives-digital-collection>

“Urban renewal” was the name given to the widespread and controversial practice of tearing down older residences and buildings to replace them with newer development in cities around the United States from the 1950s to the 1970s. While citizens occasionally benefited from these changes, they were often displaced due to the changing landscapes. Communities of color were especially hard hit by urban renewal, or, as James Baldwin called it, “Negro Removal.”

The nearly 16,000 photographic negatives in this digital collection illustrate urban renewal in Chicago in its positive, negative, and mundane lights. Captured are properties before they were torn down or rehabilitated—both exteriors and interiors—as well as new construction in progress and completed. New development resulted in shopping centers and high-rise housing, university and medical campus expansions, public art installations, and rehabilitated homes. The images document most parts of Chicago, and they also show the people who lived in the neighborhoods, the public officials who spearheaded the projects, and much more.



Sidewalk construction, West Polk Street, undated. Chicago Department of Urban Renewal Records.

The Special Collections Unit at Harold Washington Library Center holds the Chicago Department of Urban Renewal Records, 41 linear feet that include additional images, documents, and publications not visible in the digital collection. The nearly 16,000 photographic negatives were difficult to access due to their format. This digital collection was made possible through generous funding from the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation.

Harold Washington: Selected Speeches Digital Collection

<https://www.chipublib.org/harold-washington-speeches-digital-collection>

Harold Washington was the first Black mayor of Chicago, elected in 1983. Born in Chicago in 1922, Washington served in the military during World War II before completing a law degree at Northwestern University. His first elected office was as an Illinois state representative in 1965. He went on to serve in the Illinois State Senate and the U.S. Congress before becoming mayor of Chicago. Washington died November 25, 1987, just a few months into his second term as mayor.

Harold Washington was a gifted orator and spoke at many public and private events, especially during his mayoral administration, 1983–1987. While audio recordings of his speeches are scarce, many of the original scripts survive. Mayor Washington and his press office carefully crafted his speeches to convey his political goals to his audience and to drum up support.

Washington used his speeches to explain to the press and public what was going on in City Council and to bring attention to his administration's achievements. Washington spoke at many important events, such as the annual State of the City address, the US Conference of Mayors, neighborhood forums, and high school and college commencements.

Topics covered are wide ranging, including city budgets, antigang initiatives, Black history, racial discrimination, economics, housing, and transportation. While most of the speeches focus on issues related to Chicago or Illinois, this collection also contains a number of speeches delivered to audiences across the country as Washington campaigned for the Democratic nominees in the 1984 presidential election.

This digital collection allows for full-text searching of 285 transcripts, making these speeches more accessible than ever before. The original speech scripts in this digital collection, as well as other speech scripts and related records, are housed in the Special Collections Unit at Harold Washington Library Center.

George Cleveland Hall Branch Digital Collection

<https://www.chipublib.org/george-cleveland-hall-branch-digital-collection>

The George Cleveland Hall Branch Archives contains materials related to the operation of Chicago Public Library's Hall Branch, opened in 1932. The branch is named after prominent Black physician, activist, and leader Dr. George Cleveland Hall. The Hall Branch Archives contains annual reports, branch bulletins, programs, flyers, and memos from 1932 through the 1970s. The majority of objects displayed were created during the tenure of branch head Vivian G. Harsh. Harsh is well remembered, not just as CPL's first Black branch head, but for her dedication to social outreach and the study of history and literature.

During the 1930s and 1940s, Hall Branch became a magnet for Chicago's Black writers, artists, scholars, and the general public. Harsh launched the Book Review and Lecture Forum, a semimonthly event designed to bring library patrons together with speakers on topics in Black history, literature, and current events. Harsh cultivated an impressive constellation of Black presenters, including Richard Wright, Langston

(Continued on page 22)

ARCHIVAL RESOURCES ON THE WEB—Continued
Lauren White, Assistant Editor

(Continued from page 21)

Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Arna Bontemps, Gwendolyn Brooks, Margaret Walker, Horace Cayton, William Attaway, Alain Locke, and St. Clair Drake.

The Chicago Public Library George Cleveland Hall Branch Archives are housed in the Vivian G. Harsh Collection of Afro-American History and Literature at Woodson Regional Library. This digital collection contains over 147 items that highlight the development and administration of the George Cleveland Hall Branch of the Chicago Public Library and the birth of the Black Chicago Renaissance. This digital collection is made possible by a generous Illinois History-Digital Imaging Grant (awarded in 2018) from the Illinois State Library, Office of the Illinois Secretary of State.

Illinois Writers Project: “Negro in Illinois” Digital Collection

<https://www.chipublib.org/illinois-writers-project-negro-in-illinois-digital-collection>

The Illinois Writers Project: “Negro in Illinois” Papers contain research notes, transcripts, oral histories, and original manuscripts intended to present a history of Black Americans in Illinois from roughly the late 18th century to the early 20th century.

As part of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal, the Illinois Writers Project, within the Works Progress Administration, created a special division with more than a hundred researchers tasked with documenting the Black experience in Illinois from 1779 to 1942. Poet Arna Bontemps and writer Jack Conroy supervised the study. Among the notables who participated were Richard Wright, Fenton Johnson, Kitty Chapelle, and Robert Lucas. These authors became leading figures in the Black Chicago Renaissance.

Topics included enslavement of Black people, abolition, religion, politics, sports, social life, music, theater, and art. Destined to be published in book form with the title *The Negro in Illinois*, the research ended when the government canceled the project in 1942. Chicago Public Library’s first Black branch head, Vivian G. Harsh, agreed to house a large portion of the research in her “Special Negro Collection” at CPL’s George Cleveland Hall Branch.

The Illinois Writers Project: “Negro in Illinois” Papers are housed in the Vivian G. Harsh Collection of

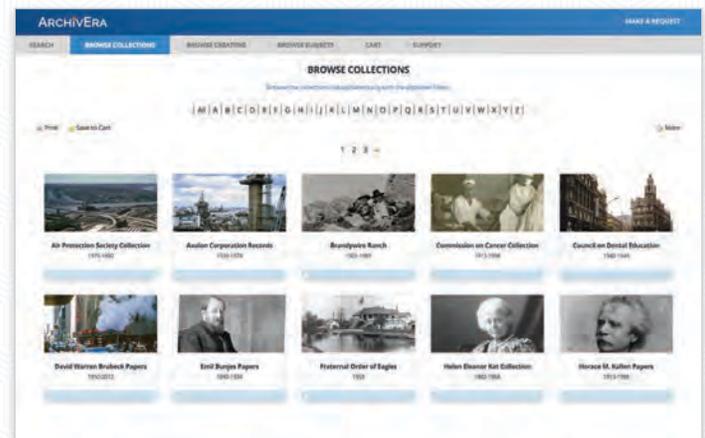
Afro-American History and Literature at Woodson Regional Library. This digital collection is made possible by a generous Illinois History-Digital Imaging Grant (awarded in 2018) from the Illinois State Library, Office of the Illinois Secretary of State.

Want to Know More?

Contact us with questions at Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature, harshcollection@chipublib.org, 312-745-2080, Special Collections and Preservation Unit, specoll@chipublib.org, 312-747-4884.



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Up-and-Comers

Assistant Editor: Meredith Lowe, University of Wisconsin–Madison. Contact Meredith at mclowe@wisc.edu if you would like to guest author a column or have a good idea to share.

“They Say in Harlan County, There Are No Neutrals There”: The US Coal and Coke Company Photograph Album and the Preservation of Appalachian History

By Emma Johansen, Collections Assistant, The Filson Historical Society

*earth works
thick brown mud
clinging pulling
a body down
hear wounded earth cry
bequeath to me
the hoe the hope
ancestral rights
to turn the ground over
to shovel and sift
until history
rewritten resurrected
returns to its rightful owners*
—bell hooks, “Appalachian Elegy: Poetry and Place”

bell hooks (1952–2021), a celebrated author, professor, and activist from Hopkinsville, Kentucky, uses the terrain of Appalachia and the long history of Appalachian labor as a means of connecting with the past, of remembering her ancestors, and of staking claim to a diverse, complex Appalachia that exists today and has existed for centuries. Her portraits of Appalachia—bursting with sweeping, unmoving mountains and grieving ghosts in dirt roads—showcase the intimate, nuanced bond hooks has with her Kentucky roots. In her poems, hooks also dives into the weight of history: the legacy of white colonization, the enslavement of Africans, the genocide of Indigenous peoples, and the labor exploitation of coal miners. Appalachia is a place where history lies on top of more history; layers and layers of ghosts pile on top of each other like rings on a tree or the height of a mountain.

Today, Appalachia is miscategorized as a scattered run of ghost towns. Those left standing are assumed to be occupied by unemployed coal miners, backward hicks, and hillbillies. While the decline and outsourcing of coal mining has left many of these communities

economically devastated, there are still rich cultures in these areas—as there have been for centuries. We at the Filson Historical Society in Louisville, Kentucky, can now document and exhibit the intriguing origins of a particular coal mining town through a recently acquired photograph album from Harlan County, Kentucky. This town would foster one of the largest coal mining communities in the state during its prime and would become the epicenter of a labor movement that shook the entire country into action. The history of Appalachia cannot be told without the history of Harlan County, and the history of Harlan County begins with the US Coal and Coke Company Photograph Album.



A worker standing on a coal mining belt, surrounded by the Appalachian Mountains, page 27. Courtesy of The Filson Historical Society.

The Appalachian Mountains are older than dinosaurs. The Appalachian Mountains are older than bones. Millions of years ago, while the continents were still clustered together as Pangea, what would become the Appalachian Mountains was connected to the Scottish Highlands. While the tectonic plates shifted, the fossils of plants decayed and hardened on top of each other. The heat and pressure of this process slowly produced a soft, black rock that would become more useful than diamonds in millions of years' time:

(Continued on page 24)

UP-AND-COMERS—Continued
Meredith Lowe, Assistant Editor

(Continued from page 23)

coal. Many Indigenous peoples and nations settled in the resulting mountains 16,000 years ago, most primarily the Cherokee Nation, but also the Iroquois Nation, the Powhatan Confederacy, and the Shawnee Tribe. There were fewer Indigenous people in the mountains compared to the prairies of Kentucky and Ohio, but the challenging terrain and altitude of the mountains would become a key asset in resisting European colonization. As fur traders and European “explorers” demolished Indigenous settlements looking for a route out west, the African people they enslaved would greatly influence Appalachian culture. The cultural exchange between Indigenous peoples, African peoples, and European colonizers would solidify itself as Scottish Irish and German immigrants began to settle permanently in Appalachia during the late seventeenth century. In a way similar to the American Southwest, the Appalachian Mountains harbored complex social networks among a myriad of cultures.

By the mid-eighteenth century, rural settlements harvested timber for most of their economic export, which was used in manufacturing, building construction, and ship construction. But, as the United States pushed itself to industrialize in competition with European countries, the trees would pale in comparison to what was under their roots. In the Industrial Revolution, coal became the most valuable export from the mountains, and entire towns were built just to sustain families of coal miners. The town of Lynch, Kentucky, was no exception. Lynch, deeply nestled in the valley of Harlan County, Kentucky, was built in the 1910s to 1920s by the US Coal and Coke Company, a subsidiary of US Steel. Lynch was named after Thomas Lynch, the president of the US Coal and Coke Company. It was considered the “Cadillac” of coal mining towns in its prime, as the town was completely self-sufficient with its own bathhouse, hospital, movie theater, and department store. New details of the construction of Lynch and the economic settlement of Harlan County, Kentucky, are revealed through the US Coal and Coke Company Photograph Album. The Filson Historical Society purchased this album through its Historic Acquisitions Fund at auction. There is little to no provenance recorded for this collection, and we have no idea where this album was housed before going to an auction house. There is no information

on the compiler of the album, but it can be argued that its creator was most likely an executive of the US Coal and Coke Company. Photographs included in the album document the construction of key features in Lynch, including company-owned residential homes, a massive coal mining belt, a power plant, and a hotel for visiting company executives. The Lynch Hotel, specifically, is well represented in this album; the fully furnished rooms and massive front balcony overlooking the mountains would have been very attractive to US Coal and Coke executives. One of the largest structures in the town, aside from the hotel, was the company commissary store, topped by a massive electric American flag. Many of these structures are still standing in Lynch today, including the bathhouse and the post office.



The front balcony and staircases to the hotel in Lynch, meant for visiting company executives. In this photograph, the front balcony is under construction, page 32. Courtesy of The Filson Historical Society.

While most of this album records the construction of major operations in Lynch, its real treasure lies within the intimate portraits of its residents. Down the dirt roads and among the small homes built from freshly cut wood, you can find the citizens of Lynch cooking on their back porch, riding on horseback, or even feeding a bear cub. Many residents were recruited to Lynch straight from Ellis Island, leading the Appalachian Mountains to become a mix of immigrating cultures and peoples once again. When flipping through this album, you can see a community take shape in real time; the first lines of manmade trenches and narrow railroads stretch into well-attended schools, homes, and offices.



A resident of Lynch feeding a bear cub outside of a log cabin, page 17. Courtesy of The Filson Historical Society.



Three women talking atop building materials and partly constructed houses, page 16. Courtesy of The Filson Historical Society.

The album ends with scenic views of Niagara Falls, a seemingly random addition that may allude to company executives wanting to implement hydroelectric power production in Lynch. The album ends in 1920, but the town of Lynch only grew over the years, reaching its prime in the 1930s and 1940s. This era would fortify Lynch as a site of radical unionizing and labor organizing among the working class in America, and the homes, schools, and businesses seen in this album would foster a community of trailblazers fighting for workers' rights across the country.



A man, presumably an executive from the US Coal and Coke Company, standing on a ledge at Niagara Falls, page 43. Courtesy of The Filson Historical Society.

(Continued on page 26)



An album page with four photographs documenting residential homes in Lynch from a variety of angles. The top left photograph includes a woman cooking on her back porch, page 21. Courtesy of The Filson Historical Society.

(Continued from page 25)



Three visitors overlooking Niagara Falls from a scenic viewpoint, page 44. Courtesy of The Filson Historical Society.

By the 1940s, Lynch had grown to a population of about 10,000, and the residents of Harlan County had solidified into a unified community that fought back

against unfair wages and dangerous working conditions. The Harlan County War, also known as “Bloody Harlan,” was a series of bombings, strikes, and police raids that terrorized labor activists from 1931 to 1939. In 1931, in response to the 1929 stock market crash and other financial losses, the Harlan County Coal Operators’ Association slashed coal miners’ wages by 10 percent to cut costs. Workers in Harlan were already impoverished, and any workers attempting to unionize or strike against the US Coal and Coke Company were often fired and evicted from their homes. These conditions pushed the community to organize alongside the United Mine Workers of America (UWM) and the National Miners’ Union (NMU). With these national organizations representing the community, the story of Harlan could now be heard far from Appalachia. The organizing and activism during the Harlan County War, specifically in Lynch, formed a backbone for union initiatives and social justice movements for years to come.

As Harlan County was a powder keg of the labor union movement, popular culture had spread the events of “Bloody Harlan” across the country and solidified Lynch as a staple in a number of civil rights movements. The protest song, “Which Side Are You On?,” popularized by Pete Seeger, was written by Florence Reece of Harlan. Reece wrote the song in 1931, when she and her husband, Sam, were union organizers for the United Mine Workers of America. Sam Reece was terrorized by Sheriff J. H. Blair and his union-busting policemen, and he fled the town for his safety while the police illegally rooted through the Reece home and harassed the family. The lyrics of the song directly reference Appalachia: “They say in Harlan County / There are no neutrals there. / You’ll either be a union man / or a thug for J. H. Blair.” Variations of the song have been sung at labor, environmental, and civil rights protests for decades. Lynch was also the subject of an award-winning 1976 documentary, *HARLAN COUNTY, U.S.A.*, which covered the aftermath of the Harlan County Wars and the continued economic oppression people in Harlan face at the hands of coal companies. Furthermore, Dr. William H. Turner, scholar and sociologist of Affrilachian (African and Appalachian) studies, recently published a memoir on growing up Black in Lynch, titled *The Harlan Renaissance: Stories of Black Life in Appalachian Coal Towns*. The decline of coal after World War II made

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A group of residents photographed on a front porch with a horse, page 1. Courtesy of The Filson Historical Society.

way for automation, pushing many immigrants and Black people out of Appalachia to find work in other areas of the South and Midwest. Today, the population of Lynch is just over five hundred.

As we have fully digitized this album, we hope to make this collection and the origins of Lynch more accessible to historians, archivists, and students in Appalachia first and foremost, then to scholars in the South and Midwest. The coal mined in Lynch, Harlan County, Kentucky, no doubt fueled the nation. The availability and preservation of this collection are crucial to recognizing that most people who lived during the early days in Lynch were first-generation, working-class immigrants who established a happy, tight-knit community in the Appalachian Mountains. This album can be used to combat the classist, essentialist stereotypes of Appalachia and Kentucky. Eastern Kentucky has been a place of radical labor politics for decades, and Lynch is not an empty, desolate ghost town. Many in Lynch still experience systemic poverty, especially at the hands of the coal companies that continue to exploit their labor. Though the community of Lynch is small, its people are proud of their

Appalachian roots and continue to resist wage cuts in remembrance of the fighters before them.



Emma Johansen is collections assistant at the Filson Historical Society. They recently graduated from the University of Louisville with their bachelor's in history. They specialize in digital humanities, archival work as an activist tool for social justice, and LGBT history in Kentucky.

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UP-AND-COMERS—Continued
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Assistant Editor: Greg Bailey, Iowa State University. The MAC Membership Committee invites members to share positions, appointments, and honors in the People and Posts column. Please send items to Greg at gtbailey@iastate.edu. Submissions must be 150 words or less. Images are welcome!

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Posts

Erin Passehl Stoddart was named head of University Archives and Historical Collections at Michigan State University. She comes from the University of Oregon, where she served as interim associate vice provost and university librarian for collection services and strategic projects and grants development librarian. She has also served as head of Special Collections and Archives at the University of Idaho and in archival positions at Western Oregon University and Boise State University. A Midwest native, she has a master of science in information with a specialization in archives and records management from the University of Michigan and a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. She is active in the Society of American Archivists as cochair of the Committee on Research, Data, and Assessment (CORDA). As a past president of Northwest Archivists, she looks forward to joining the MAC community.

Anu Kasarabada is the archivist and oral historian for the Honorable John G. Heyburn II Initiative for Excellence in the Federal Judiciary. She has been promoted to a newly created tenure-track position, titled the Honorable John G. Heyburn II Initiative Chair. The initiative is a nonpartisan endeavor through which the University of Kentucky Libraries preserves and provides access to judicial archival collections and oral histories.

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