



Robert W. WOODRUFF LIBRARY Atlanta University Center

Clark Atlanta University • Interdenominational Theological Center • Morehouse College • Spelman College

Frequently Asked Questions: The Archives & Special Collections Department at Woodruff Library

Q: What is the relationship between Morehouse College and the Robert W. Woodruff Library (RWWL) of the Atlanta University Center?

A: The Robert W. Woodruff Library is the official and only library operating to serve the information needs of the students and faculty of Clark Atlanta University, the Interdenominational Theological Center, Morehouse College and Spelman College. Serving a combined student body of nearly 10,000, the Library and its four member institutions represent one of the nation's largest and most unique consortiums of institutions of higher learning.

Q: Is the Woodruff Library Archives & Special Collections Department experienced in handling significant collections?

A: The Robert W. Woodruff Library has a long and strong history of successfully maintaining and administering valuable historical collections and artifacts. Now in its 81st year, the Archives & Special Collections unit was created in 1925 at Atlanta University. When the Atlanta University Center consortium was established in 1982, the separate and special collections from each school were combined and located in RWWL.

RWWL Archives & Special Collections materials are regularly referenced in articles, books, exhibits, films, Web sites and other scholarly works and used daily by students, faculty, authors, journalists, curators and other researchers nationally and internationally.

Archives & Special Collections holdings include:

- Atlanta University Center History—Yearbooks, catalogs, reports, photographs, publications and administrative files documenting administrators, faculty and academic programs of present and past Atlanta University Center schools (Atlanta University, Clark College, Clark Atlanta University, Interdenominational Theological Center, Morehouse College, Morris Brown College and Spelman College,
- Atlanta Urban League Papers—Administrative files of this social service agency for community development, health care, employment and housing opportunities
- Clarence A. Bacote (1906-1981) Papers— Personal and professional papers of Atlanta University History Professor and civic leader in organizations such as Atlanta Branch of the NAACP, Atlanta Negro Voters League, Georgia State

Advisory Committee to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, and Fulton County Democratic Party

- John Brown (1800-1859) Collection – Letters by and about this American abolitionist who led the raid on the federal armory at Harpers Ferry, W.Va., in 1859
- Countee Cullen/Harold Jackman Memorial Collection – Documentation on African American contributions and achievements in the arts including letters, writings, photographs, and programs of such luminaries as James Baldwin, Countee Cullen, Owen Dodson, W.E. B. DuBois, Katherine Dunham, Langston Hughes, Rose McClendon, Paul Robeson and Leigh Whipper
- John Henrik Clarke (1915-1998) Africana Collection – Personal library of Africana historian and scholar that features numerous autographed books on African history, civil rights, Black Nationalism, Pan-Africanism and African independence movements
- Hoyt Fuller (1923-1981) Papers – Writings and correspondence of Fuller, writer, editor, and activists who helped define the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s and 1970s and launched the concept of the “Black Aesthetic”
- C. Eric Lincoln (1924-2000) Papers – Personal and professional papers and research files of Lincoln, educator, scholar and author of *The Black Muslim in America* and *The Black Church in the African American Experience*
- Maynard Jackson (1938-2003) Papers—Administrative files of Atlanta Vice Mayor and three-term Atlanta Mayor
- Walter Rodney (1942-1980) Papers – Writings, correspondence and teaching materials of Pan-Africanist historian, educator, political activist and author of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*
- Henry Slaughter (1871-1958) Collection and Library – African Americana documents, photographs and books of the early 18th through mid-20th century acquired by Slaughter, noted Black bibliophile and collector
- Southern Education Foundation Papers – Administrative files of the SEF that was established to increase educational opportunities for African Americans and other disadvantaged citizens in the South
- Southern Regional Council Papers—Administrative files of this civil rights organization for improvement of economic, civic, and racial conditions in the South
- Voter Education Project Papers —Administrative files of this national project based in Atlanta to educate African Americans and other disenfranchised people about voting rights

Highlights among the collections are:

- Hundreds of books, including several autographed by Angela Davis, Marcus Garvey, Coretta Scott and Martin Luther King, Jr., Zora Neale Hurston and Booker T. Washington
- Postcards of Malcolm X during his pilgrimage to Mecca revealing his transition to El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz
- 1988 Seoul Olympic Torch presented to Mayor Maynard Jackson in 1990
- Benjamin Banneker’s almanacs published in 1792 and 1793
- Civil War sword of Horace Bumstead, Officer in U.S. Colored Troops, 43rd Regiment (Bumstead served as second president of Atlanta University)

Q: How large is the Woodruff Library Archives & Special Collections Department?

A: The department has storage facilities that house more than 7,400 linear feet of archival material, as well as a quiet and secure reading room for research and study, and office and work space used by archivists and curators to process collections.

Q: What archival expertise does the Woodruff Library have at its disposal?

A: Six archival professionals—two archivists, two curators and two technical assistants—are employed within the RWWL Archives & Special Collections Department. These highly-trained staff members are charged with the cataloging and care of more than 1 million historical documents housed within the department. In addition, staff assist both on-site and virtual library users with location of historical documents for research and study.

Staff credentials:

- Karen L. Jefferson Head of Archives & Special Collections
 - Certification from the Academy of Certified Archivists
 - One of only 154 Fellows chosen from among the 4,000 members of the Society of American Archivists (SAA); one of only six (6) African American Fellows
 - More than 25 years of archival experience
 - Specialization in African American Studies
 - Former program officer for the National Endowment for the Humanities
- Meredith Evans, Ph.D., Curator of Printed Materials holds:
 - Master's degrees in history and library and information science
 - Doctoral degree from University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill in library and information science
- Andrea Jackson, Curator of Archives & Manuscripts
 - Master's degree in history with a certification in historical editing and archival management
- Stacy Swazy Jones, Processing Archivist and Reference Coordinator holds:
 - Master's degree in library and information science

Staff professional association memberships include:

- Academy of Certified Archivists
- Society of American Archivists
- Society of Georgia Archivists
- American Library Association
- Association of College and Research Libraries
- Black Caucus of the American Library Association
- National Council of Public History

Q: What will be the Woodruff Library's role in housing the Morehouse College Martin Luther King Jr. Collection?

A: By agreement with Morehouse College, RWWL serves as “custodian” of the Morehouse College Martin Luther King Jr. Collection, housing and overseeing the security and preservation of the Collection. The Library's Archives & Special Collections Department staff will

inventory, preserve and prepare the Collection for scholarly access and secure storage. Woodruff Library is working closely with Brenda Banks, Consulting Chief Archivist of the Collection hired by Morehouse College upon recommendation of the RWWL CEO & Director, and with a local advisory committee of librarians and archivists from other institutions such as:

- The University of Georgia Libraries
- The Atlanta History Center
- Auburn Avenue Research Library on African-American Culture and History
- Georgia State Archives
- Georgia State University
- SOLINET (Southeastern Library Network)
- ARCHE (Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education)

For additional information regarding the Archives & Special Collections Department of the Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center, visit: <http://www.auctr.edu/collections/archives.html>. To arrange media interviews, contact Adrian B. Carver, RWWL Communications Manager, at 404-978-2114 or acarver@auctr.edu.

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