

2009

## Annual Report, 2008-2009

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Libraries. Special Collections Department

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## Looking Back: Highlights

The Special Collections Department enjoyed a remarkably successful year in 2008-2009. The department sponsored or assisted in sponsoring six successful programs. *Index Arkansas* not only obtained a grant to expand its coverage, it also added newspaper citations to the online index. Many important manuscript collections and books were acquired, and processing was completed on two large nationally significant collections. A project to digitize J. William Fulbright speeches is near completion, as is the creation of a new manuscript processing manual. The Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History unveiled a redesigned web site and was the recipient of \$650,000 in discretionary funding from the legislature.

## Manuscripts Unit

Sixty manuscript collections, totaling 433 linear feet, were added to the Department's holdings, bringing the number of collections to 1824. Thirty-four manuscript collections were processed, totaling 999 linear feet. The department added 2,217 books to its holdings.



*W.H. Furbush portrait of John Jones, ca. 1864*

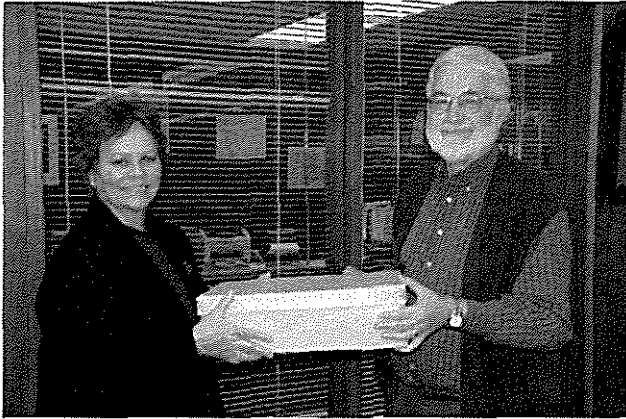
The department made a number of significant acquisitions over the past year, including the Jerry Russell Civil War book collection, the W.H. Furbush photographs, two Whittington Family collections, the papers of former Miss America Donna Axum, the Tulip, Arkansas general store ledgers, and the papers of Ralph Hyman and Arthur Bradley.

The Jerry Russell book collection includes nearly 3,000 Civil War titles. Russell founded the Civil War Roundtable movement and the Heritage PAC, the only political action committee devoted to Civil War battlefield presentations. A University of Arkansas alumnus and journalist, he made his name in political consulting and is credited with bringing jingles to political advertising in Arkansas. The book collection, which comprises both mainstream and limited press run titles, is one of the most extensive Civil War collections in the area.

Special Collections acquired 10 photographs attributed to African American photographer W. H. Furbush, who operated photography businesses in Ohio and Arkansas during the 1860s and 1870s. Furbush led an interesting life, which included a stint in the Forty-Second Colored Infantry during the Civil War; immigration to Liberia in 1866 on an American Colonization Society ship; election to the Arkansas General Assembly in 1872; winning the only known victory under Arkansas's 1873 Civil Rights Act in a lawsuit against a Little Rock saloon; and a six-year stint as the first sheriff of Lee County, a county he was instrumental in establishing. The images are portraits of Civil War soldiers.

Ralph Hyman was the first openly gay Arkansan to run for a statewide political office. He was defeated in the primary by Mark Pryor for a seat in the Arkansas House of Representatives. Hyman was one of the founders of the Weekend Theater in Little Rock, which was organized in 1993. Hyman currently serves as the theater's artistic director.

One of the great manuscript collections from early Arkansas has found a home in the Special Collections Department. Hiram Whittington was a mere lad when he arrived in territorial Little Rock in 1824. Despite his youth, he wrote richly descriptive letters back home to family in Massachusetts. Special Collections acquired this important collection of letters written between Hiram Whittington and his brother Granville Whittington during the period of 1824 to 1834. "Nothing else in the surviving literature of early Arkansas is comparable to the Whittington letters," said John L. Ferguson in 1997 during his term as Arkansas's State Historian.



*Representing the Whittington descendants, Ellen Elder presented the Whittington materials to Tom W. Dillard.*

Hiram Whittington, a printer by trade, wrote the letters to his brother Granville, who eventually relocated from Massachusetts to Mount Ida, Arkansas. Granville, a book binder, bound the letters sometime before the Civil War, making a pivotal move toward their preservation. During the demolition of Granville's Mount Ida home in the early 20th century, the bound letters were found in the attic and retained by his descendants.



*Pamphlet from the Billy James Hargis Papers, MC 1412, Special Collections Department. Hargis directed the Council of Christian Churches' Bibles by Balloons project, which launched scriptures tied to balloons into Communist countries.*

A second collection, the Hiram Whittington Farm Journals, documents farm life in Montgomery County during the period of 1888 to 1911. This Hiram Whittington was the son of Granville Whittington. These collections document a period of Arkansas history from the territorial period through the early 20th century and shed light on an important Arkansas family. Whittington descendant Ellen Elders graciously donated the collections on behalf of the Whittington family.

Processing was completed on two large and nationally significant collections: the Fay Jones Collection and the Billy James Hargis Collection. The opening of the Fay Jones Collection coincided with the renaming and dedication of the University's Fay Jones School of Architecture. Hargis was a conservative Tulsa minister whose work helped lay the foundation for the Religious Right political movement. The openings of both the Billy James Hargis and Fay Jones collections garnered considerable publicity.

### **Special Collections Research Services Unit**

Research Services served 3,099 researchers, a slight increase from 2007-2008. The number of patrons served by mail was 716. However, the unit saw a 58% increase in ready reference questions, which numbered 208. Staff conducted 982 research consultations. Researchers used 8,233 items from our collections.

Research Services saw a continuing trend in the increasing requests for duplication of materials. Staff made 37,596 photocopies for patrons (a 14.8% increase over last year) and prepared 1,999 digital scans for patrons. These average 3,133 photocopies and 167 scans per month. Patrons may also arrange to use their own flatbed scanners and/or digital cameras to duplicate materials in the department. Staff helped patrons scan or photograph 1,999 items.

Instructional sessions and follow-up consultations with students from those classes were provided for 20 courses, totaling 253 undergraduates and 59 graduate students. New presentations and handouts were developed for courses in Honors History Methods, Medieval Spanish Literature, Documentary Photography, Architecture, and History of Higher Education.

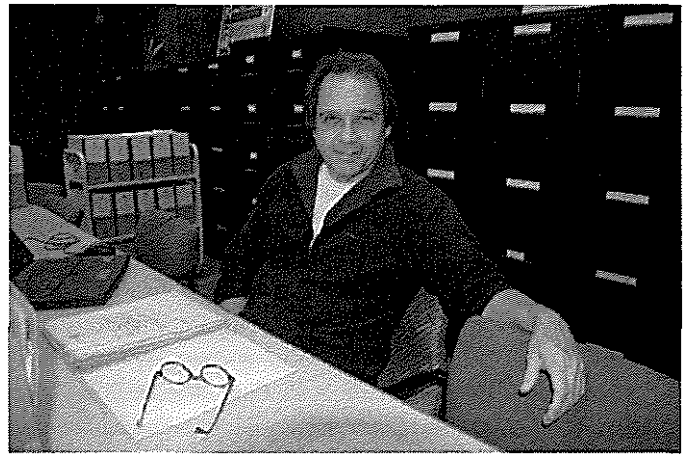
Research Services participated in a regional digital initiative, "Community & Conflict: The Impact of the Civil War in the Ozarks." Twelve other institutions participated in the project, and the resulting web site is hosted at the Springfield Greene County Library District in Springfield, Missouri (<http://www.ozarkscivilwar.org/>). Research Services digitized 95 items from three manuscript collections: Minos Miller Letters, Rebecca Stirman Davidson Papers, and Sarah Jane Smith Collection. The materials may be viewed at <http://www.ozarkscivilwar.org/category/contributing-institution/university-of-arkansas-fayetteville-special-collections>.

Materials from the department were cited in 24 books; 3 theses and dissertations; 2 papers and presentations; 2 chapters in books; 18 journal and periodical articles; 6 Web sites; 8 public events, 4 films, videos, etc., 3 exhibits outside the library, 2 exhibits in Mullins Library (the Walton Reading Room), and 2 exhibits in the department.

University students, faculty, staff, and alumni comprised 43% of the patrons served; 29% were from businesses, media, government agencies, libraries, museums, etc.; and 28% were from the general public.

In addition to 616 faculty, students, staff, and alumni from this University, Research Services assisted a wide variety of researchers from other institutions, businesses, agencies, and the general public, as listed below:

Category	In-state	Out-of-State	Total
international universities and organizations	-	-	23
faculty members and students from other colleges & universities	16	83	99
government agencies	13	8	21
publishers, media, and video producers	5	21	26
businesses including architects, attorneys, environmental engineers, photographers, public relations, restoration specialists, etc.	3	22	25
museums, libraries, historical societies, other organizations	19	18	37



*Architect Hicks Stone conducting research on his father, Edward Durell Stone, in Special Collections, 2009.*

New York architect Hicks Stone conducted research in the Special Collections Department for several months working on a book about his father, internationally known architect Edward Durell Stone. The senior Stone, a native of Fayetteville, moved to New York as a young man but had a lifelong relationship with Arkansas and the University. Edward Durell Stone's papers are held in Special Collections. Hicks Stone's book will be published by Rizzoli; the working title is *Edward Durell Stone: Man and Architect*.

Other visiting researchers included Norifumi Miyokawa, a doctoral student in higher education at Pennsylvania State University, who conducted research in Special Collections for several weeks. He examined the papers of the Association of International Educators (NAFSA), an agency which provides services to foreign students and scholars on U.S. campuses and to U.S. students abroad.

#### **Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History**

The David and Barbara Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual history launched a new version of the Center's web site. The layout is designed to be more user-friendly. New features include streaming audio and video clips, photographs and transcripts from the Center's archive.

The Center received \$650,000 in state legislative discretionary funding for construction, equipment, improvements, maintenance, and operating expenses. This occurred through the efforts of Representative Lindsley Smith, Senator Sue Madison, and several other legislators. These funds reflect the widespread interest of Arkansans in the Pryor Center's mission.

Pryor Center staff conducted 17 in-depth video interviews (4-8 hours each) with important Arkansans, including journalist Ernie Dumas, Arkansas Supreme Court Justice Robert Brown, former Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt, and entrepreneur Doyle Rogers. Fourteen one-hour interviews were conducted in connection with the Sheridan Garrison "Arkansas Entrepreneurs" project. The Center recorded 20 one-hour interviews associated with the Washington Regional Medical Center Eagle Awards. Seven events were recorded, including a Roy Reed lecture and book signing, the Tyson Foods 50th anniversary event, and a program of the Political Animals Club of Little Rock. The Pryor Center received 27 donated videos, including footage from the University of Arkansas sociology department's Veterans Oral History Project. AETN donated 17 boxes of film, videotape and audiotape, as well as equipment for film to video transfer.

An agreement has been signed between Allbritton Communications Company's ABC television affiliate KATV and the Pryor Center to preserve and digitize KATV's vast video library. With more than 26,000 hours of news stories covering more than fifty years of news gathering efforts, the video library represents a substantial portion of Arkansas's history over the past half-century.

The KATV News Collection contains some of Arkansas's greatest moments, such as the election of President William J. Clinton. It also documents some of Arkansas's worst moments in history, such as the 1980 Titan II missile explosion in Damascus, Arkansas, the most highly publicized disaster in the state's history.

"We are thrilled that we can preserve this important historical record by partnering with The David and Barbara Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History at the University of Arkansas," KATV's President and General Manager Dale Nicholson said. "Making this material available to the public is truly a gift to anyone who is passionate about Arkansas and its history."

### ***Index Arkansas***

*Index Arkansas*, an online index of Arkansas publications sponsored by the Special Collections Department, had a record number of searches in 2008-2009. Index searches totaled 23,622, representing more than a 50% increase over the previous year.

During the 2004-2005 year when *Index Arkansas* was brought online, researchers conducted 8,640 searches. In

subsequent years, index use has grown; the total number of searches conducted reached 68,896 by 2008-2009.

Additional citations have been entered into the database since its online debut. The database now contains 91,000 citations from Arkansas-related biographical and historical books, Arkansas periodicals, county historical journals, as well as statewide and regional newspapers.

Due to a \$58,500 grant from the Happy Hollow Foundation, over the next two years *Index Arkansas* will be adding 14,000 more citations covering Arkansas-related publications from 1986 forward.

### **Programming and Outreach**

The Department commemorated American Archives Month by sponsoring a series of three lectures by Arkansas fiction writers. American Archives Month, a collaborative effort by professional organizations to raise awareness of the value of archivists and archival materials, is celebrated each October. The series of programs, entitled *Mysteries, Mistresses & Murder*, featured novelist and short story writer Laura Parker Castoro of Pine Bluff, novelist and nature writer Radine Trees Nehring of Benton County, and Kevin Brockmeier, a Little Rock writer of short stories and novels.

On October 8, Castoro talked about her writing career, which began in the late 1970s. Castoro has written 38 books and is the recipient of many writing awards, including induction into the Arkansas Writers' Hall of Fame in 2005.

The theme of the second Archives Month event on October 22 was the natural beauty of the Ozarks. The program featured both an Arkansas writer and a clip from a new documentary film. Larry Foley, University of Arkansas journalism professor and documentary filmmaker, previewed his new film, *The Buffalo Flows*, about the Buffalo River. Radine Trees Nehring spoke about her career writing books, news and feature articles about the Ozarks. Her most recent mystery, *A River to Die For*, featured the Buffalo River and its archeological treasures.

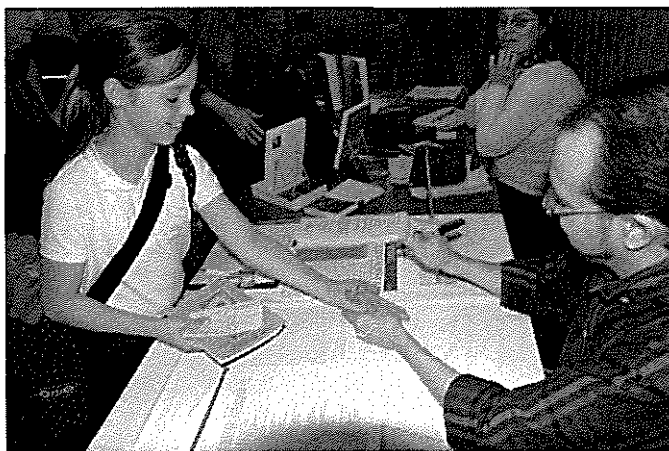
The Archives Month series concluded with a program by Kevin Brockmeier on October 29. Brockmeier is an award-winning writer of novels and short stories for both children and adults. Before a sizable audience including a group of fifth graders from the St. Joseph Catholic School, Brockmeier read from two of his books and answered questions from the enthusiastic children.



Special Collections embarked on a partnership with the University of Arkansas Press and other academic departments which resulted in the Department hosting two author lectures during the spring semester of 2009. In the first program, author and historian Grif Stockley gave a lecture on "Jim Crow in the Natural State: A Look at White Supremacy in Arkansas History" on February 25 to a standing-room only crowd at the School of Law, which co-sponsored the event.

The second program by journalist Roy Reed, titled "The Life and Death of the Oldest Newspaper West of the Mississippi," examined the history of the *Arkansas Gazette*. Reed's recent book, *Looking Back at the Arkansas Gazette: An Oral History*, was based on an oral history project undertaken by Reed for the Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History, a unit of Special Collections. These oral histories are held by Special Collections and available online through the Pryor Center web site. Another ongoing Pryor Center oral history project, led by Jerry McConnell, examines the history of the *Arkansas Democrat*. This project is nearly complete. McConnell is compiling a book associated with this project, which will complement the Roy Reed book about the *Gazette*.

Special Collections hosted a reception and script reading of the play *Vinegar Pie and Chicken Bread* by A.E. Edwards. The play was adapted from the book of the same name by Margaret Bolsterli, based on the diary of a late 19th century Southeastern Arkansas woman. Staged by the local group Theater Squared, the play was part of the *Arkansas New Play Fest* funded by the Department of Arkansas Heritage to celebrate Arkansas Heritage Month. Special Collections hosted the event in our reading room.



**Little Rock Author Kevin Brockmeier autographs the arm of a student from St. Joseph Catholic School at one of the three Archives Month author lectures.**

The Department published two issues of its newsletter, *The Arkansian*, a twice yearly Arkansas history publication launched in 2007. *The Arkansian* features Special Collections news, significant collections, upcoming events, notable books, interesting researchers, historic photographs, and an Arkansas history quiz. The newsletter has generated much interest and positive publicity for the Department.

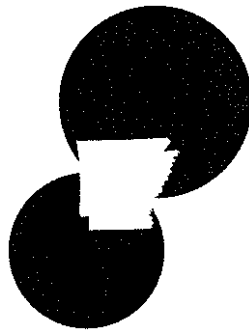
Special Collections sponsors the Arkansas History Discussion group (AR-HIST), an online listserv devoted to Arkansas history topics, announcements, news, and events. Traffic on AR-HIST has steadily increased. The listserv generates much discussion among Arkansas history buffs, both professional and amateur, and it serves as an excellent avenue for public relations development.

### Looking to the Future

The Department is planning a project to digitize and preserve the nationally significant Mary Parler Folk Song collection. Also in the planning stage is a digital asset management project, in which the Department will identify ways of managing digital files more efficiently. Digital assets comprise much of our work in Special Collections, including computer files connected with digitization projects, databases, finding aids, Encoded Archival Description, patron scans, etc. The Department continues to develop Encoded Archival Description (EAD), with hopes that a number of EAD finding aids will be posted online within the next year. A complementary goal is the conversion of all finding aids to digital formats.

Processing of the John Paul Hammerschmidt Papers is drawing to a close; the Department hopes to open that collection within the next year. The Dale Bumpers Papers processing project was recently launched and should be in full swing by the end of the year. The department is seeking funding for another priority, the Geleve Grice photograph collection. Consisting of more than 70,000 images, the Grice Photograph Collection is among the largest African American photograph collections in the nation.

The year 2008-2009 has been an exciting time for Special Collections. We look for even greater accomplishments next year, and every Arkansian is invited to join us as we work to preserve the heritage of our "small Southern state."



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