Community Archiving and and Avery 101

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Agenda

Introduction and Goals  3
Records Management/Creating an Archive  4
Maintaining An Archive  12
Avery Research Center  17
Summary  28
Introduction and Goals

- Understand what archives are
- Understand what how to create an archive
- Understand options for donating to an archive
- Learn about the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture and its collections
Archives are NOT Storage

Records Management
Defining ARCHIVES, LIBRARIES, & MUSEUMS

**Archives**
- A repository of records
- Mission to collect, organize, preserve and provide access to non-current documents

**Libraries**
- A collection of creative and informational sources such as books and other materials selected, organized, and maintained for use in study, research, or leisure

**Museums**
- An institution dedicated to preserving and displaying collections of physical artifacts and specimens that have value within a particular context. Exhibits are created to facilitate study and enjoyment of these physical collections.
Without the items we preserve interpreting the Black Experience would be difficult
Creating an Archive
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phases</th>
<th>Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify Need</td>
<td>Why are you starting an archive?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission and Scope</td>
<td>What will you be collecting?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Survey</td>
<td>Are there other places documenting this?</td>
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<td>(state of the state)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collection Survey</td>
<td>What do you currently have, what condition is in, where is it, who has it?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weeding</td>
<td>Discarding what does not fit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finding Space</td>
<td>Where will you store it?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collection Gaps</td>
<td>What is missing?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy for Documentation</td>
<td>How are you going to locate these item?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fill in gaps</td>
<td>Do the work to fill in gaps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Describing what you have and creating access points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access and Outreach</td>
<td>Who will have access to materials? And how are you letting people know it exists?</td>
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</table>
01 Start with what you currently have

02 Look for upcoming big events
   • Reunion
   • Anniversaries
   • Founders' Day
   • Holidays

03 Do a call out in local news outlets

04 Do life histories with family members
Accessioning/Acquiring

- the materials physically and officially transferred to a repository as a unit at a single time
- to take intellectual and physical custody of materials, often under legal or policy authority
Acquisitions

Donation
- Deed of Gifts
- Copyright
- Permissions
- Restrictions

Purchase
12 Types of Items to Collect

Textiles (i.e., wedding dress, christening gown, cap and gown, quilts, uniforms, etc.)

Manuscripts/Documents (i.e., correspondence, vital records, deeds, estate records, etc.)

Paintings (i.e., childhood paintings, as well as paintings purchased)

Newspapers (i.e., clippings that mention wedding announcement, obituaries, etc.)

Music (i.e., mixtapes, vinyl records)

Oral histories that you conducted, or others did

Photographs (i.e., vacation photos, big/major, candid and portrait, etc.)

Videos (i.e., home movies)

Artifacts (i.e., sewing machines, cars, trophies, magnets, badges, etc.)

Published materials (i.e., books, magazines, pamphlets, yearbooks, etc.)

Maps and Blueprints (i.e., childhood home, of land)
Life histories vs oral histories

Start with the oldest living relatives
- Can be one on one or a group one

Do an intergenerational interview if you have an opportunity

Permission forms-important especially if you wanted to donate it to an archive

StoryCorps
- Phone App
- Listing of questions for specific groups of people [https://storycorps.org/participate/great-questions/](https://storycorps.org/participate/great-questions/)
- You can keep the interview private or you can have it shared and archived online

Equipment
- Recorder: Personal Digital or use phone (Note: uses a lot of storage)
- Storage: hard drive or online (Google, Amazon, Dropbox)
Maintaining An Archive
Archival Program

- Storage
  - Environment
  - Supplies
  - Digital Space

- Staffing
  - Paid
  - Volunteers

- Funding
  - Dues
  - Budget Line

- Access and Outreach
  - Closed vs Open
  - Digital Access

- Describe Documents/Records
  - Names
  - Locations
  - Scope and Content

- Documentation and Donations
  - Who
  - When
  - What
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do’s and Don’ts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do’s</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Label people names in photographs and provide the data and location of the occasion</td>
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<td>- Approach your collection not as a single unit, but as a clump-organize like things together (i.e. by year, by type of material, etc.)</td>
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<td>- Not everything needs to be kept</td>
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<td>- Place records in an area that is low temp, low humidity, and away from water sources</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Don’ts</strong></td>
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<td>- Use pen to label photographs on the back of the image</td>
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<td>- Laminate objects, if you plan to use for display frame them</td>
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Invest in Your Treasures

- White cotton gloves
- Powder-free vinyl or nitrile gloves
- Mild liquid detergent
- Paper towels or soft rags
- Archival and adhesive-free photo albums or archival photograph envelopes
- Archival acid-free tissue paper
- PDB moth balls; metal footlocker or galvanized closed canister
- Plastic storage bins
- Pest traps so you will know if insects are present
- Dehumidifier
- Vacuum cleaner with brush nozzle and adjustable suction
Archival Supply Companies

- Gaylord Archival Products
- University Products
- Hollinger Metal Products
Providing Access to Collections

- Permanent.org
- Airtable
- Perservica
- Website (i.e. WordPress)
- Omeka
- Word Document/PDFs
- Cloud Storage (Google Drive, Dropbox, etc.)
- Mukurtu (MOOK-oo-too)
- ArchivesSpace
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<tr>
<th>20</th>
<th><strong>Selected Funding Sources</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Digital Preservation</strong></td>
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<td>- <em>Preservica</em></td>
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<td><strong>Collections Care/Programming</strong></td>
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<td>- Humanities Councils</td>
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<td>- South Carolina Dept. of Archives and History</td>
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<td><strong>Planning Grants</strong></td>
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<td>- National Endowment for the Humanities-Preservation Assistance Grants</td>
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<td>- National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>General (not archive specific)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Regional Non-profits</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Corporate Grants</td>
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Donating Collections

Pre-Work

• Do research on institution you are interested in
  • Does your material fit the collection policy/mission of the archives?

• Develop a written inventory of your collection/archives/papers (formats, types, dates, etc.)

• See if there are any legal issues to consider

• Review their website and social media
  • Can you donate funds for the processing of the collection?
  • Do you expect to continually add materials to the archive?
  • How are they funded?

Reach Out

• Visit the archives and met the staff/faculty/director

• Let them know that you are interested in donating

• Provide the inventory you have created

• Provide any images or photos you have

• If you have artifacts dimensions are important

• Ask questions
  • Do they have the space to store and maintain the collection?
  • Do they have the staff to arrange, describe, and provide access to collection?
  • What are their access policies?
  • What are their priorities in the coming year(s)?
  • What safety and security measures do they take?
## Donating Collections

### Accessioning/Transfer of Materials
- Paperwork/Deed of Gifts
- Box up materials or electronically send over photos
- Archivists may visit your house/location of materials to see the records
- You may mail or drop off the materials

### After Donation (Archive Side-Processing)
- Review physical materials against inventory
- There may be a weeding process
- Arrange collection based on how it came in or may create a new order
- Re-folder documents and do some preservation on needed items
- Create a finding aid which outlines the final structure of the collection
- Potentially digitize materials (optional)
- Provide access to collection to public
- May ask the donor for information and identification of people/dates

### After Donation (Donor Side)
- Stay involved with the archive
- Tell people about the collection
- Donate funds to support the processing and preservation
- Review the finding aid
• Do not just think about African American archives/libraries/museums, but also about denomination archives
• You may not be able to donate all the materials to one archive, it may be spread out
• Archives/Archivists cannot appraise collections, there are separate professionals that are certified appraisers
• The process for donating collections can take a while
• You can make plans to donate
• You do not have to donate items at one time, there can be a schedule set up between the organization and the archive
The mission of the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture is to collect, preserve, and promote the unique history and culture of the African diaspora, with emphasis on Charleston and the South Carolina Lowcountry. Avery’s archival collections, museum exhibitions, and public programming reflect these diverse populations as well as the wider African Diaspora.
Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture Team
Avery Overview

Beginning
- Opened in 1990
- First Director: Dr. Myrtle Glascoe
- Early collections: Jenkins Orphanage, Esau Jenkins, Guy and Candie Carawan, Sweetgrass Baskets

Materials
- Textiles
- Manuscripts/Documents
- Paintings
- Newspapers
- Audiovisual (music, oral histories, photograph, and videos)
- Born-digital files
- Artifacts
- Tertiary and Secondary Sources (journals, books, etc.)
- Maps
- Blueprints

Numbers
- Collection date range, 1800-2019; Bulk collections, 1930-2000
- Collections: 4000 linear feet
- 3 floors
- 7 staff members
- 3 Graduate Assistants
- 3 Student workers
## Some family and community collections @ Avery

### Family collections

- Lecque papers (AMN 1115, 1941-1990, 1997, 1 archival box)
- Craft and Crum papers (AMN 1102, 1780-2007, 11 archival boxes)
- Graves family (AMN 1081, 1884-2004, 14 archival boxes)

### Community/Individual collections

- Carr family papers (AMN 1073, 1671-2009, 3 archival boxes)
- Seashore Farmers’ Lodge 767 collection (AMN 1150, 1906-2018, undated, 2 archival boxes)
Archiving is important for an organization's legacy and taking small steps to organize and document does not have to be daunting, there are people and resources available to help.

Think collaboratively. You do not have to go alone!
Resources

- **Assistance**
  - Directory of Archival Associations [https://www2.archivists.org/assoc-orgs/directory](https://www2.archivists.org/assoc-orgs/directory)
  - Charleston Archives, Libraries, and Museums (CALM)

- **Donating Collections**
  - How to Donate Your Genealogy Research So It Doesn't Get Thrown Out [https://familyfreemagazine.com/libraries-archives/donate-genealogy-research/](https://familyfreemagazine.com/libraries-archives/donate-genealogy-research/)
  - Society of American Archivists [https://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/services/files/donating-personal-papers.pdf](https://www2.archivists.org/publications/brochures/donating-orgrecs) and [https://www2.archivists.org/publications/brochures/donating-orgrecs](https://www2.archivists.org/publications/brochures/donating-orgrecs)
  - University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill [https://library.unc.edu/preservation/donating-your-materials/](https://library.unc.edu/preservation/donating-your-materials/)

- **Archival Process**
  - Avery FAQ Page: [https://answers.library.cofc.edu/avery/faq/343575](https://answers.library.cofc.edu/avery/faq/343575)

- **Professional Development**
  - PreserveThis (online courses on archiving) [https://preservethis.org/courses](https://preservethis.org/courses)
  - Northeast Document Conservation Center
  - Connecting to Collections Care