

Annual Report to the Advisory Board
Albert Gore Research Center
Dr. Lisa Pruitt, Director
FY 2001—2002

Collections

Acquisitions

Due to space limitations, the Gore Center has not actively solicited new collections. We have, however, received a few small collections and a few accretions to existing collections.

Kate and Jonnie Gore Collection, 1870s—1920s (1 linear foot). Donated by Alice Snead of Alpharetta, Georgia. Kate and Jonnie Gore were sisters who attended Middle Tennessee Normal School in the early 1920s. (Alice Snead is Kate's daughter.) Collection includes two scrapbooks documenting MTN; 9 family photographs, ca. 1870s—1920s; Bedford County Central School commencement program, 1922; Moore County High School commencement programs, 1915 and 1919; typescript family history; pillow made from 19th-century woven coverlet; Carol Strickler, *American Woven Coverlets*, Loveland, CO: Interweave Press, 1987. [The coverlet is intimately tied to the family history.]

Bob Womack Papers, 1960s—1990s (15 linear feet). Donated by Dr. Womack, MTSU Professor. Research files related to the Tennessee Walking Horse, the Civil War, and evolution. Transfer necessitated by collapse of ceiling in Jones Hall.

Charity Circle Archive, 1910s—1970s (3 linear feet). Transferred from Linebaugh Public Library at the Circle's request. Records of a local women's charitable organization.

Aaron Weise Collection, 1890s—1930s (1 linear foot). Donated by Peggy Leftwich of Albuquerque, NM. Aaron Weise was a successful businessman and prominent member of Nashville's Jewish community in the early 20th century. In 1913, he married Leah Goldstein of Murfreesboro, whose father owned Goldstein's department store. The collection includes a scrapbook detailing Weise's business and professional career along with his efforts to mount charity minstrel shows. He also was one of the first military aviators; another scrapbook documents his military training and service in WWI. In addition to the two scrapbooks, the collection includes more than 40 letters and 70 photographs. One letter, signed "E.E.&B." (Ethel, Esther, and Bertha) was written in 1983 and contains the Licker sisters' recollections of Aaron Weise. Leah Goldstein Weise was a cousin of the Lickers. The Gore Center also holds a collection of letters and photographs documenting the three sisters and their family, so the two collections are quite complementary.

Ionie Sanders Scrapbook, mid-1930s. Donated by Beverly Cole of Nashville. Ionie Sanders was a student at the Tennessee College for Women in the mid-1930s. This scrapbook documents her activities as a student and includes such novelties as a menu from the Red Rose café and a poster of the Glee Club posed in front of an American Airlines plane on which they were departing for a singing tour.

Lamar Baker Political Memorabilia Collection, 1960s—1970s (3 linear feet). Transferred to the Gore Center from the Tennessee State Museum. Lamar Baker served as a state representative in 1967-68, and state Senator in 1969-70. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1971-1975 and served as a delegate to the state Republican Convention from 1964-1972 and the Republican National Convention in 1972. This collection contains photographs and memorabilia documenting Baker's political career and the history of the Republican Party in Tennessee in the 1960s and 1970s.

Processing

Photographs: Graduate Assistant Holly Barnett, with undergraduate students workers assisting, processed 1500 photographs from the Warden Equestrian Collection, as well as several hundred other photographs from various collections. We are approximately 90% up to date on processing photographs.

Albert Gore, Sr., Senate Collection. Under the supervision of Executive Aide Betty Rowland, undergraduate student workers continued a long-term project to replace 15,000 original folders with acid-free, archival folders. Approximately 75% complete.

Jim Cooper Papers: Graduate Assistant Rich Hutchins completed the transfer of this collection to archival boxes and completed an inventory of the collection (250 boxes or 375 linear feet).

Gillespie Aviation Collection. An Academic Service Scholarship student organized this collection under the supervision of the Director. Still requires re-housing using archival materials and requires a written guide to the collection.

Andy Womack Collection. An Academic Service Scholarship student organized this collection and created a database of correspondents.

James Moore King Papers. An Academic Service Scholarship student completed the process of encapsulating all of the documents in this collection, the Gore Center's oldest (late 18th, early 19th century).

County Chancery Court Records Project. The Gore Center is assisting the Rutherford County Archives in a project to flatten and folder bundles of early 20th-century chancery court documents. We set up a humidification chamber in the Gore Center's lab and two undergraduate student workers were assigned to the project. County Archives Graduate Assistants John Lodl and Van Zbinden supervised.

Middle Tennessee Oral History Project

The Gore Center was accepted as a partner in the Library of Congress American Folklife Center Veterans History Project. We received some excellent publicity regarding the project in the local press and copies of some of the supplemental materials that we have collected (such as photographs) were displayed in an exhibit at the Library of Congress in May.

During this fiscal year, we more than doubled the number of oral histories in our collections, from 50 to 124. Among those interviewed were at least two dozen veterans of World War II, as well as local political and business figures. In addition, Dr. Rebecca Conard's "Introduction to Public History" class worked with the Gore Center on a project to interview alumni of the Civilian Conservation Corps, one of FDR's New Deal programs. Those students conducted ten interviews with CCC alumni from all over Middle Tennessee.

Three undergraduate student assistants transcribed interviews. One, a senior journalism major, is reviewing and editing transcripts. A graduate student in English also edited transcripts in August 2001 and in May and June 2002.

Reference Service

The Gore Center served 437 researchers, 78% of them undergraduates.

Outreach and Public Programs

Academy for Teachers of the Gifted (July 2001). Fifty teachers of the gifted visited the Gore Center in small groups for brief presentations. Four of the teachers returned with a group of 12 middle school students to spend an hour in the Gore Center working on a project.

Tennessee Legislative Conference (September 2001). The Gore Center cooperated with the VPAA's office in putting on the Tennessee Legislative Conference on September 8. John Siegenthaler moderated a morning and an afternoon panel, each focused on the theme "Coming of Age of the Tennessee Legislature." Participants included former governors Winfield Dunn and Ned McWherter, former state senator Anna Belle Clement O'Brien, and Congressmen Bill Jenkins and Bart Gordon. The Conference was originally conceived as a "kick-off" for a Gore Center project to document the state's legislative history. While some oral histories have been

conducted, however, space constraints at this time limit our ability actively to collect state legislators' papers.

For the conference, Gore Center staff and graduate assistants prepared a six-panel exhibit on the legislative career of former state representative John Bragg. The Director researched and wrote the text for a commemorative legislative biography of Bragg.

Tennessee Archives Week (October 2001) As a part of Tennessee Archives Week, the Society of Tennessee Archivists sponsored a Family Heritage Day at the Tennessee State Museum on Sunday, October 7. The Gore Center set up a portable exhibit and distributed literature to visitors.

Monroe Harding Children's Home (November 2001) I met with the staff of the Monroe Harding Children's Home in Nashville at their request. In an effort to assist them in organizing their historical records, I spent a day surveying their records storage area. The staff members who requested assistance originally, however, subsequently resigned. The project has since been on hold. They were supposed to have received funds from the Frist Foundation for a summer intern, to whom I had offered to provide guidance, but I never heard back from them. I will continue to pursue this project in the Fall of 2002, if the staff at Monroe Harding still wants assistance.

National Women's History Month (March 2002). As a part National Women's History Month at MTSU, Gore Center graduate assistants assembled an exhibit highlighting women's history collections housed in the Gore Center. Receipts, letters, and photographs delved into the lives of nineteenth century women. A panel on the "Women Warriors of World War II" documented the women who learned to be aviation instructors at Gillespie Airfield in Nashville as well as women who served in the WACS, WAVES, and on the home front. A timeline following the advances of women at MTSU made up three panels of the exhibit. Local women's organizations such as the Charity Circle, Craddock Study Club, and Frances Bohannon Music Club were featured on a panel. Longtime Tennessean "Horse Sense" writer Margaret Lindsley Warden's life was also documented.

The exhibit was open to the campus and general public. Girl Scout leader Kory Wells brought Troop 2799 from the Pittard Campus School to view the exhibit. The girls had a wonderful time learning about women's history and playing an interactive game to answer questions about various parts of the exhibit.

Financial Matters

In Fall 2001, the Gore Center received a budget increase in recurring dollars amounting to \$5000 per year. In this fiscal year, the money was used to cover graduate student workers in the summer and to purchase and upgrade software. In subsequent years, we anticipate setting aside part of the funds for an annual graduate summer internship, part for recurring maintenance and

upgrades of computer equipment and software, and a portion for printing and distributing brochures and newsletters.

We also received royalties in the amount of \$289.21 for our pictorial history of MTSU. That amount was for the period June 1 – December 31, 2001. We deposited the funds into our Foundation account.

Albert Gore, Sr., Biography Project

Dr. Tony Badger, the Gore Biographer, spent a week in residence in December and a week in April. (His first trip was scheduled for September and had to be cancelled due to 9/11). Michael Martin continues to work on the project as the full-time research assistant. He is in contact with Dr. Badger several times a week. Dr. Badger is preparing a paper on Albert Gore, Sr., and internationalism. Michael Martin will read the paper at the fall meeting of the Tennessee Conference of Historians.

Rutherford County Archives

Graduate Assistants John Lodl and Van Zbinden staffed the Rutherford County Archives this year. They continued an ongoing project to flatten, folder, and inventory the Chancery Court's permanent, non-current records. They also made indexes of county vital records books available on the Archives web site. That project resulted in a significant increase in research inquiries. To help deal with the Chancery Court project, the indexing of vital records, and the research inquiries, they recruited and trained seven volunteers (community members, students, and two Latter Day Saints missionaries). Both GAs attended the State Library and Archives 2001 Tennessee Archives Institute and visited other county archives. Based on what they learned they wrote an extensive report on the facilities needs of the County Archives, which I reviewed and submitted to the County Executive. In December, County Executive Nancy Allen, Clerk and Master of the Court John Bratcher, Lodl, Zbinden, and I met to discuss privacy law matters related to sealed adoption records in the Chancery Court files housed in the County Archives. Under Mr. Bratcher's supervision, the GAs developed a policy statement and a procedure for handling requests that involve adoption records. The GAs also located and assessed the condition of records housed in the basement of several county buildings on the square, prepared two local history exhibits for Linebaugh Library, and prepared a training manual for future graduate assistants.

Having finished everything but his masters' thesis, John Lodl has accepted a permanent, full-time position as an Archivist with the Georgia State Archives in Atlanta. His two years of experience in the Rutherford County Archives as a graduate assistant were a major factor in their hiring decision.

Van Zbinden will serve as a County Archives graduate assistant in 2002/03 for a second year. He has been joined by Karen Newton, who replaces John Lodl. Karen is a 2002 graduate of Judson College in Alabama. She is entering MTSU's graduate program in Public History and is interested in a career in archives. In addition to her history major, she has an undergraduate minor in web design.

Grant Applications

The Director submitted a grant proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities in the Fall of 2001, requesting funds for a project to catalog the Gore Center's collections and create a searchable database for the web site. The proposal was not funded, but the reviewers recommended resubmission. The proposal has been revised and is being submitted for the NEH's July 1, 2002, deadline.

Also in the Fall of 2001, the Director applied to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission to have the Gore Center and the County Archives jointly serve as host institution for the "Fellowship in Advanced Archival Administration." The Gore Center was one of seven institutions applying to host the fellowship. The award went to the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati (an institution with fourteen professional staff and a multi-million dollar budget). The NHPRC was intrigued by the Gore Center's cooperative relationship with the County Archives, however, and invited us to submit a grant proposal for a model demonstration project. Mike Meier, an NHPRC program director, will be working with me to develop a new proposal for the October 1, 2002, submission deadline.

Teaching

In Fall 2001, I taught History 3010: The Historian's Craft. In Spring 2002, I taught a graduate seminar in Jacksonian America. In addition to working extensively with Rebecca Conard's Introduction to Public History class, I spoke twice to Ellen Garrison's archival administration class.

Research

My paper proposal to the program committee for the Fall 2002 meeting of the Southern Historical Association has been accepted. My topic is the development of state-funded services for "crippled children" in Tennessee between the 1920s and the 1960s. Also, based on a previously submitted prospectus, Mercer University Press invited me to submit my completed book manuscript. In addition to my current research projects related to health policy, I am writing two encyclopedia essays for John Vile's latest project, Great American Judges.

Professional Development and Service Activities

Conferences and Workshops

September 15 Tennessee Conference of Historians, presentation on TN Legislative History, MTSU

September 29 Oral History Workshop, MTSU

November 8-9 Society of TN Archivists, Franklin

November 15-18 Southern Historical Association, New Orleans

April 25-28 American Association for the History of Medicine, Kansas City

Committee Service

History Department Seminars and Symposia Committee

History Department Scholarships and Awards Committee

History Department Research & Library Committee

Faculty Budget Advisory Committee

President's Committee on Services to Students with Disabilities

Goals, FY 2001-2002

Items highlighted in blue were accomplished.

Research

- Complete book manuscript and submit to Mercer University Press for review.
- Participate in the TN Conference of Historians meeting on campus in October
- Submit a conference paper proposal to the American Association for the History of Medicine (April meeting) [proposal not accepted, but did attend conference]

Teaching

- Teach the Historian's Craft in the Fall and a graduate seminar in Jacksonian America in the Spring

Grant Writing

- Complete an NHPRC application for a grant for the County Archives. [Not funded but invited to re-submit]
- Complete an NEH grant application for Gore Center. [Done but not funded; resubmitted for July 1, 2002 deadline] – not on original list of goals
- Investigate funding possibilities for the TN Legislative History Project, the Middle Tennessee Oral History Project, and our community outreach efforts through the following private

foundations: Sony, John Deere, Earhart, Wilbur, PPG Industries, Metropolitan Life, and the Samuel Freeman Charitable Trust. If initial inquiries receive a positive response, complete grant application process.

Collections Management

- Refolder 1000 files in the Gore Papers
- Complete the preservation of the James Moore King papers
- Complete the scanning and database entry for all photographs [about 90% complete]
- Process the Jim Cummings Collection

Public Service

- Further develop the TN Legislative History Project; prepare exhibit on TN political history for kick-off conference [also wrote text for tribute to John Bragg]
- Develop a program and exhibit celebrating local women's history for Women's History Month (March). [also brought a speaker to campus – Arleen Tuchman, VU, spoke on women and the medical profession in the 19th century]