

Annual Report to the Advisory Board
Albert Gore Research Center
Dr. Lisa Pruitt, Director
FY 2003—2004

Acquisitions

The Gore Center continues to limit acquisitions due to space constraints.

On October 26, 2003, Sheryl and Don Jones of Arvada, Colorado, donated eight historic photographs of Murfreesboro dating from the 1860s and 1870s. The Tennessee State Library and Archives performed conservation work on the photographs and the album containing them and produced a set of slides and negatives. The photographs may be viewed on the Gore Center's website.

In October 2003, Judy Gattis Smith of Richmond, Virginia (native of Murfreesboro), donated a small collection of memorabilia that belonged to her mother and father.

In October and November 2003, the Homer Pittard Campus School transferred twenty-four scrapbooks, dating from the 1930s to the 1980s, along with several hundred photographs and a small number of other documents.

In November 2003 and March 2004, the Woman's Club of Murfreesboro added material to their existing collection at the Gore Center, primarily minutes from 1916 to 1919 and 1940 to 1969.

On March 10, 2004, Diana Lehman of Newark, Ohio, sent to the Gore Center a collection of approximately 100 early twentieth-century photographs with "Murfreesboro, Tennessee" stamped on most of them. The photographs are primarily individual and family portraits of a family named Pate. Additional research will be required. Ms. Lehman found the photographs in a dumpster in Newark.

Also in March 2004, John Rutledge of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, donated a small collection of letters and a memoir of Louisa Daniel Rutledge, sister of Jack Daniel of whiskey fame. The manuscripts date from the 1890s to the 1910s and document Louisa's later years as an elderly widow forced to move from one relative's house to another.

In May 2004, the Board of Directors of the Oaklands Association voted to place their scrapbooks and minutes at the Gore Center. These records document the restoration of Oaklands Mansion and its development as a historic site and tourist attraction.

In May 2004, Susan Bragg donated nearly 2000 slides documenting John Bragg's official visits for the state of Tennessee to China and Japan, as well as additional political memorabilia from his career. She also donated several Tennessee Blue Books and other reference books and a nearly complete collection of the Tennessee Historical Quarterly.

In June 2004, Ida Read donated approximately 1.5 linear feet of material related to the Frances Bohannon Music Club and Tennessee College for Women.

Collection Management

Graduate Assistant Kevin Cason managed our photograph collections in 2003/04. Kevin fully processed sixteen photograph collections and added photographs to another six collections. (Processing a photograph collection involves assigning the images to collections, numbering and digitizing each image, and housing the original in archival sleeves and boxes). He entered keywords for several thousand University photographs into the photograph database and created a spreadsheet to track the processing of photograph collections. Kevin also processed and prepared guides for the Alexander, Gillespie, McFarland, and Weise collections and created web guides to Gore Center resources on the Civil War and on Jefferson Springs.

Graduate Assistant Heather Bailey processed and created finding aids for the Gulliford, Hooker, Pittard, Hayes, Pickard, and Rattle & Snap collections. She created a new and improved accessions database for tracking collections added to the Gore Center and recording the work that the collections need – processing, document conservation, and guides. She also supervised document conservation work and the processing of collections by undergraduate student workers. Undergraduate students finished conserving the Homer Pittard Campus School scrapbooks and made substantial progress on the James Moore King and John Bragg collections. Finally, Heather created a web-based guide to Gore Center resources documenting the history of Sam Davis and the Sam Davis Home in Smyrna.

Technology

We continue to improve upon the searchable online databases of our collections. We continue to create keyword access to the photograph database and have set up and begun entering records into a database for archival and manuscript collections.

The Gore Center purchased a major upgrade and additional site licenses for the Inmagic cataloging software. I negotiated a price \$3000 for the software, which was being offered to existing customers for \$5750 (Retail price = @\$7500). Student assistant David Mabry installed the upgrade. We also were able to replace our three oldest computers, two of them with financial assistance from the Dean.

Student Assistants Jeff Rogers and David Mabry rebuilt the Gore Center's website so that it would work better and be easier to maintain. David Mabry also developed an impressive Microsoft Access database for our oral history collections.

Researchers

The Gore Center served 709 researchers during 2003-2004, 70% of them undergraduates. This reflects the priority that the Center has placed on supporting the university's primary mission of

undergraduate education.

This year's researcher numbers show a marked rebound from last year. My Annual Report for FY 2002/03 indicated our awareness of the declining numbers as well as a diagnosis of the problem. In short, we determined that, in the past, the students of two professors had supplied the bulk of the Gore Center's researchers. With the departure of Andrew Gulliford and the subsequent retirement of Emily Messier, the number of researchers declined. We decided to take a more proactive approach to encourage faculty and students to use the Center's rich resources. Last summer, we developed and distributed to History Department faculty course packets that suggested creative ways to incorporate primary research at the Gore Center into student assignments. Dr. Greta Rensenbrink assigned projects to her students with excellent results. Furthermore, Dr. Margaret Ordoubadian heard my presentation at the St. Marks "Adventures in Learning" program and decided to have her Honors writing students use the Gore Center. It appears that our outreach efforts have been having the desired effect, so we will continue those efforts in the future. In addition, our relocation to Todd should boost our visibility and our accessibility to students.

Outreach and Public Relations

Improving outreach and public relations was a major goal of the Gore Center this year.

Applebee's. In August 2003, the Gore Center provided digitized copies of a wide variety of MTSU memorabilia for display at the new Rutherford Boulevard Applebee's Restaurant.

Old-Timers Day, La Vergne. On September 20, I set up and staffed a display on the Gore Center & the oral history project at Old-Timers Day in La Vergne.

Founders' Day, September 2003. The Gore Center helped the Homer Pittard Campus School celebrate its 75th Anniversary in its present building. We worked with Development Office consultant Susan Gear to prepare a photographic exhibit tracing the school's history. The exhibit opened in the lobby of Campus School on Founders' Day, August 28, and remained in place for most of the school year. In addition, we have been working with Campus School Librarian Joan Mann to preserve the school's scrapbooks and photographs, which date back to the 1930s and total about 15 linear feet of material. Sarah Murphy, a graduate student in the Public History Program, worked with us over the summer to mount the exhibit and to digitize all of the scrapbooks and albums. The digitized images were burned onto CDs and a set was presented to the Campus School Library.

Adventures in Learning. On September 29, I addressed the "Adventures in Learning" program at St. Mark's United Methodist Church. I presented a slide show highlighting the Gore Center's work and collections.

MTSU Homecoming. We placed a 4-panel photographic exhibit at the Alumni Center for Homecoming on October 9 and 10.

Heritage Festival, October 25, 2003. I served on the steering committee for the community-wide Heritage Festival that marked the 200th anniversary of Rutherford County on October 25, 2003. The Gore Center mounted an exhibit entitled "Business Builds a Community: The Large and Small of Commerce in Rutherford County." Portions of that exhibit were moved to the third floor landing of the Courthouse for the festival. [A web version of the exhibit is available on our website at <http://janus.mtsu.edu>. Click on "Exhibits" and then "Heritage Festival."]

Rutherford County Bicentennial DVD, Navigation Advertising. The Gore Center provided substantial support to Navigation Advertising for their production of a documentary DVD on Rutherford County's history. The DVD was released in December, 2003.

Murfreesboro Magazine and Nashville Lifestyles/MurfreesboroMagazine. I contributed four photograph features for the "Rutherford Remembers" column of the Magazine. (Murfreesboro Magazine ceased separate publication and became part of Nashville Lifestyles with the February/March 2004 issue).

WMOT. I prepared several 5-minute radio features on local history and veterans history during the Fall semester of 2003. Each program featured excerpts from the Gore Center's oral history project.

"Military Women in World War II," National Women's History Month event, March 8, 2004. The Gore Center, with support from Women's History Month and the History Department, sponsored a public forum featuring women veterans of World War II who have participated in our veterans' oral history project. Keynote speaker was Vickie Riggan of Nashville, who donated her collection of research materials on women in World War II to the Gore Center in November 2002. Approximately 50 students and community members attended the program.

National World War II Memorial Dedication Day, May 28, 2004. The Gore Center, with financial backing from President Sidney McPhee, assisted Commander Y. T. Vaughn of American Legion Post #177 with the local observance of the dedication of the new memorial in Washington, D.C. Over two hundred people attended the event at Patterson Park. Each veteran in attendance received a personalized Certificate of Recognition for service in World War II. Additional certificates were prepared for residents of the Veterans Home with Mr. Vaughn delivering them. The Gore Center prepared a master list of veterans, arranged and paid for the printing of the certificates, paid for the printing of programs for the event, and prepared a table-top display featuring the Veterans Oral History Project.

High School outreach: Graduate Assistant Heather Bailey conducted workshops on using primary sources for AP US History classes at both Oakland and Blackman High Schools. She also visited the new Siegel High School and talked to the Librarian about having the school start its own archive.

Middle Tennessee Oral History Project

Gore Center staff completed 60 oral history interviews, bringing the total since the project was

inaugurated in 2000 to 268. Combined with oral histories completed earlier, our total holdings are approaching 500 interviews. Our most recent topical focus has been the World War II home front. Student workers are involved on a continual basis in transcribing interviews. Pictured is Mr. Aaron Wade, 90-yr-old World War II veteran, interviewed June 23, 2004.

Rutherford County Archives

The County Archives hosted an open house as part of the Rutherford County Bicentennial Heritage Festival on October 25, 2003.

Gore Center student workers assisted the County Archives in a very large project to clean and prepare Chancery Court loose records for microfilming. The project was successfully completed.

The Rutherford County Archives Committee, established by action of the County Commission and of which I am chair, has worked intensively to secure funding for a County Archives facility. On October 9, the Budget & Finance Committee voted to place the project under the direction of the Public Building Authority and appropriate \$150,000 for architectural and engineering studies of the old Health Department Building. Subsequently, the Commission set aside \$1.4 million for the project. The PBA hired Hastings and Associates to develop a program plan for the Archives and to oversee extensive study and testing of the building. The firm has concluded that the building is in sound condition, but that its size and weight-bearing capacity are not adequate to the needs of the Archives. A new recommendation has been made to build a facility on Rice Road on property that is being vacated by the Rutherford County School Board. The matter is still pending.

Rutherford County Archives Graduate Assistants Van Zbinden and Jennifer Allen have both completed their terms of service, Van after 3 years and Jennifer after 1 year. Both were exemplary employees and garnered much praise for the County Archives. New Graduate Assistants Kevin Cason and Jeff Sellers take over as of July 1.

Albert Gore, Sr., Biography Project

Progress continues on the project to produce a scholarly biography of the late Senator Albert Gore, Sr. Dr. Anthony Badger, Paul Mellon Professor of American History and Master of Clare College, Cambridge University, was in residence September 12-20 and March 30 through April 3. Dr. Badger and his former research assistant, Michael Martin, prepared a paper on the 1970 political campaign that Dr. Martin presented at the Tennessee Conference of Historians on September 27. Other panelists included Dr. Kyle Longley of Arizona State University, author of another biography of Gore, Tennessean political reporter and commentator Larry Daughtrey, and former Senator and Ambassador to China James Sasser. Dr. Michael Martin left us in August to assume a new position as Assistant Professor of History at the University of Louisiana Lafayette. Dr. Sean Smith, who recently completed his Ph.D. in History at Vanderbilt University, has continued to provide part-time research assistance to Dr. Badger. The Samuel Fleming Foundation transferred an additional \$12,500 to the project.

Teaching

During the Fall and Spring Semesters, I taught History 3010. With the permission of Dean McDaniel and Dr. Thaddeus Smith, I taught the History of Medicine at Vanderbilt as an adjunct during the spring semester, while Dr. Arleen Tuchman was on leave.

Research

I completed my book manuscript and submitted it to Mercer University Press in September 2003. Publication is scheduled for March 2005. Title: "A Looking-Glass for Ladies": American Protestant Women and the Orient in the Nineteenth Century.

Departmental Service

I have had significant involvement with the PhD program proposal committee for the History Department.

Professional Development

I attended the Tennessee Conference of Historians in October 2003 and the annual meeting of the American Association for the History of Medicine in April 2004.