

**Annual Report to the Advisory Board**  
**Albert Gore Research Center**  
**Dr. Lisa Pruitt, Director**  
**FY 2006—2007**

**Acquisitions**

The Gore Center accessioned 35 collections (or in some cases individual items). The most substantial is the large Rutherford County Historical Society collection, which not only contains the records of the Society itself, but also a great deal of "vertical file" type information on local history. An interesting collection of memorabilia, particularly scrapbooks related to legendary Coach Bubber Murphy, came into the possession of the Gore Center as a result of the Blue Raider Hall of Fame project. In addition, TDOT completed their oral history of the building of the interstate highway system in Tennessee and has made us the repository for the interviews and transcripts.

**Collection Management**

Gore Center graduate assistants and staff fully processed nine collections and made major improvements to the housing or organization of three other very large collections. In addition, approximately 1500 photographs were added to the Photograph Collection and. Keywords for approximately 3000 photographs were added to the to online searchable database.

**Technology**

The RAM (readable memory) on six of nine computers was upgraded so that the computers would work more efficiently, particularly when working with high resolution photographs, large sound files, and even larger video files.

**Emergency Preparedness**

The Gore Center created a new Emergency Preparedness plan, purchased some supplies that would be required in the event of a water emergency [the most likely event, given all the pipes that run through the space], and purchased a weather alert radio. Betty Rowland serves as the "building runner" for this floor.

**Researchers**

The Gore Center hosted twelve MTSU classes during the year and staff responded to 467 research requests, an 18% increase over the previous year. As in past years, our primary user group continued to be MTSU undergraduates, with the second most common type of researcher being community members. The Gore Center thus supports two of the primary missions of the University – undergraduate education and public service.

## **Outreach and Public Relations**

- Fall 2006 – Provided substantial support to the consultant who developed content for the Blue Raider Hall of Fame exhibits. We provided research support and digitized over 1000 items, although most were not used in the final result.
- September 2006 – Homecoming; table top exhibit for Alumni Center
- September 13, 2006 – MTSU History presentation for New Employee Orientation
- November 9, 2006 – Public lecture by Dr. Tony Badger, Cambridge University
- January 1, 2007 – Spoke to the quarterly meeting of the Colonial Dames
- March 14, 2007 -- MTSU History presentation for New Employee Orientation
- March 14, 2007 – Oakland High School AP US History class spent the day at the Gore Center for instruction in primary source analysis to prepare for the AP exam. Half the class spent the morning in the Gore Center, while the other half had a campus tour, a lecture by Amy Staples, and a presentation by the Honors College ; then the two halves switched places for the afternoon.
- Ongoing – entered into the Volunteer Voices Tennessee Digital Archive project; selection of material began during the spring term. The statewide project is headquartered at UT Knoxville and funded by a grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services.

## **Middle Tennessee Oral History Project**

The Gore Center maintained its six-year-old partnership with Library of Congress Veterans History Project by registering 25 new oral history interviews.

## **Narrating Katrina Through Oral History**

The project was substantially completed, with 53 interviews on file. The Gore Center signed on as a partner with the Hurricane Digital Memory Bank at George Mason University. Fifty of the interviews are now available as complete sound files at <http://hurricanearchive.org>. Three interviewees placed restrictions on their interviews. Those interviews are permanently archived with the HDMB, but are not accessible on the website.

## **Rutherford County Archives**

The ribbon cutting for the new Rutherford County Archive facility took place on August 24, 2006. I chaired the committee that worked with the architects and designers, serving as the primary "go to" person regarding the design of the facility, with significant input from community members Ernie Johns and Susan Daniel. Dr. Ellen Garrison served as a resource person for the project. At County Mayor Nancy Allen's request, I served on the search committee for the first full-time, permanent County Archivist. John Lodl, an MA from MTSU and one of my first County Archive graduate assistants, was hired. The Gore Center's relationship with the County Archive has fundamentally changed as a result of the new facility

and archivist. The County is no longer dependent on the Gore Center director for the operation of its archive program. On Mayor Allen's strong recommendation, however, the Commission decided to continue funding the two graduate assistantships that have now been offered for nearly a decade. Because the University's relationship with the County Archive is one now primarily based upon the educational opportunity for the graduate assistants rather than total dependence on the Gore Center, the liaison responsibility has been transferred to Dr. Ellen Garrison, who has primary responsibility for training archivists in the Public History Program.

The Gore Center will continue to cooperate with the County Archive on special projects and on matters of joint concern. For example, we recommended to John Lodl that he and his graduate students mount an exhibit marking the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tennessee's child safety seat law, which was initiated by the late Dr. Robert Sanders, longtime director of the Rutherford County Health Department. The Gore Center provided research support and materials for the exhibit, while County Archive graduate assistants Janine Hunter and Amy Lundell developed the content and mounted the exhibit. The County Archive hosted an open house and reception for the exhibit on April 20. On a matter of joint concern, John Lodl and I met in May with Patty Metcalf, Reference Librarian at Linebaugh Public Library regarding Linebaugh's small collection of rare books and photographs of local interest housed in a locked closet off the genealogy reading room. Because Linebaugh does not have a secure special collections area in which to house and provide supervised access to the materials, John, Patty, and I prepared a proposal for Linebaugh Library Director Laurel Best to present to the Board. The Board approved the proposal in its June meeting. As a result, items in the storage area in Linebaugh will be transferred to either the Gore Center or the County Archives as appropriate.

### **Gore Biography Project**

On November 9, 2006, Dr. Tony Badger presented a public lecture on "Albert Gore, Sr., and the Interstate Highway Act" to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the creation of the interstate highway system. (Gore co-authored the enabling legislation). Co-sponsors were the Distinguished Lecture Fund, the College of Liberal Arts, the Business & Economic Research Center, and the Departments of History, Political Science, and Concrete Management. An audience of well over 200 filled the State Farm Lecture Hall.

Dr. Badger is completing the biography manuscript while on leave from his position as Master of Clare College, Cambridge University. Several university presses have expressed interest in publishing the book.

### **Research, Teaching, Service**

I presented a 45-minute paper, followed by a 45-minute discussion, on October 25 for Vanderbilt's Center for Health, Medicine, and Society. The title of this seminar presentation

based on original historical research was "Historical Perspectives on Definitions of Disability." On October 26, I did a presentation for the Society of Tennessee Archivists on online exhibits. On March 21, I presented on "The Nuts and Bolts of Archives" for the Tennessee Association of Museums. In spring 2007, I applied for and was accepted into the University's CARS grant development program and have been working on a grant proposal to be submitted to the National Library of Medicine in late September. Towards this end, I made a one-week research visit to the National Library of Medicine in May. In March, I made research visits to the Mississippi Valley Historical Collection and the Campbell Clinic Foundation, both in Memphis. The purpose was to complete the research necessary to turn a conference paper on "The Memphis Crippled Children's Hospital School, 1919-1982" into journal article. The article has been submitted to the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* and is currently under review.

I taught History 4620 "American Medical History" in fall 2006 and History 6620 "Seminar in Jacksonian America" in spring 2007, in addition to my instructional activities as Gore Center Director.

I served on the History Department Graduate Committee and was appointed to the President's Centennial Committee. I also served (and continue to serve) as vice-chair of the Institutional Review Board governing human subjects research.