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# DOCUMENT

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## Temporary Home for County Archives

In the spirit of county/campus cooperation, the Gore Research Center is providing temporary storage for and access to the Rutherford County Archives. The county records, some dating from as early as 1804, have been housed in the county courthouse since 1982. It was in that year that MTSU history professor Jim Neal directed their transfer from an earthen pit under the county court clerk's office to the State Library and Archives where they were fumigated prior to their deposit in the courthouse. MTSU archives students helped arrange the truckloads of books and documents so that researchers and county officials could gain access to the information in them. While the records were in the Courthouse, MTSU history alumnus Earl Pleasant opened the archives two afternoons a week while Neal responded to calls for access on other days and on nights and weekends.

The archives arrived at the Gore Center in late November. Since then tourists have searched them for genealogical information, lawyers and local residents have researched in them to prepare for court appearances, and more than 250 MTSU students have used them for class research assignments. Other students have used these records to practice basic preservation techniques they were learning in their archives course.

The Rutherford County Archives will return to the courthouse when renovations there are complete.



### From the Director

With this issue of *Document*, the Gore Research Center marks the end of its first full academic year of operation. And what a year it has been! During the last twelve months, our holdings have more than doubled and now measure nearly two thousand linear feet. More than fifteen hundred persons, mostly MTSU students, have used these materials in the preparation of class assignments, research papers, theses, books, and articles. Researchers from Harvard to Arizona and from Knoxville to New Zealand have visited Murfreesboro for the expressed purpose of conducting research in Center collections. The Center has also responded to mail and telephone inquiries and, more recently, has begun receiving E-mail requests for information.

This spring we opened a preservation laboratory. Job one was to clean, deacidify, and encapsulate a Bradley Academy document for the Center for Historic Preservation. Scores of fragile old manuscripts have since been treated to extend their years of research access.

For 1995-96 we anticipate establishing an even more dramatic record. Numbers of collections and numbers of persons using them will continue to increase. Equally important will be the expansion of our mission. The Gore Research Center is now poised to be the hub and catalyst for a public policy research institute which will help deliver MTSU faculty and student research findings to our broader constituency while bringing to the campus expertise to stimulate the development and articulation of the new knowledge Tennesseans will require in the twenty-first century. It will be an exciting year. I can hardly wait to tell you about it!

Jim Neal  
Director, Gore Research Center

*Pauline and Albert Gore signed the Gore Research Center register during their visit to MTSU in April. Senator Gore was on campus for his initiation into the Phi Kappa Phi honor society.*



Caneta Hankins (right), Center for Historic Preservation, works with archives student Christina Hillis in the preservation laboratory.

## Preservation Laboratory Opens

In April, the Gore Research Center began operation of its documents preservation laboratory in room 110 of the Ned McWherter Learning Resources Center. In the laboratory, modeled after that in the Tennessee State Library and Archives, MTSU Public History students learn how to inhibit deterioration of valuable paper and leather artifacts and how to repair books and documents. The specific skills taught include paper and leather cleaning, aqueous and chemical deacidification, mylar encapsulation, mending with Japanese rice paper and handmade pastes, and construction of phase boxes. All students in the Public History program will have the opportunity to learn these techniques as a skills cognate in their degree program, according to Program Director Dr. Andrew Gulliford.

Laboratory services will be available for materials in the Gore Research Center, the Center for Popular Music, the Center for Historic Preservation, and other campus programs responsible for preserving paper and leather artifacts.

## "Mr. Jim" Materials Exhibited

During January and February, the Gore Research Center exhibited materials pertaining to the career of "Mr. Jim" Cummings, long-time legislator from Woodbury, Tennessee. The exhibit focused on Cummings' service to constituents, his relationships to national political figures, and his leadership in the Tennessee General Assembly. Among the manuscripts displayed were communications from presidential aspirants John Kennedy, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Edwin Muskie, and Estes Kefauver.

One of the most interesting items was a small paper phonograph record of a message from New York Governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt to selected delegates to the 1932 National Democratic Convention. Visitors to the exhibit could play an audio cassette dubbed from the paper disk by sound archivist Bruce Nemerov of the MTSU Center for Popular Music. On another tape, visitors heard the voice of "Mr. Jim" as he delivered a light-hearted address to the Tennessee General Assembly during a special session convened to honor him.

Gore Center Graduate Assistant Jay Smith prepared the exhibit.

## Staff News

Gore Research Center Director **Jim Neal** recently participated in the Congressional Papers Conference in Portland, Maine, attending sessions on issues affecting the administration of Congressional collections. While in Maine, he traveled to Skowhegan to visit the Margaret Chase Smith Library. Senator Smith's congressional career (House 1940-49, Senate 1949-73) roughly paralleled that of Senator Gore (House 1939-53, Senate 1953-71).

The tour of the Smith repository and a visit with its director, Dr. Gregory Gallant, yielded many ideas which could be incorporated into the construction and operation of a larger Gore Research Center presently under consideration. He similarly benefited from a visit to the Richard B. Russell Library at the University of Georgia where Dr. Sheryl Vogt and her staff offered much valuable advice pertaining to Congressional papers.

In April, Neal visited Memphis to present a paper at the Spring 1995 meeting of Tennessee Archivists. In a session entitled "What to Do When the Subpoena Arrives," he discussed Tennessee public records legislation and its impact on archival practice.

**Jay Smith**, a Public History graduate assistant assigned to the Gore Research Center, traveled to Philadelphia in April to present "Interpreting History at Little Big Horn and Wounded Knee" at the national conference of the American Culture Association. Last October he discussed "Management of Information and Collections at the National Park Service" at the annual meeting of the Tennessee Conference of Historians, hosted by the Middle Tennessee State University Department of History. Smith, who has completed his Master of Arts course work and comprehensive examinations, left the Center in May to take a position as an historical interpreter at the TVA Land-Between-the-Lakes "Homeplace-1850" historic site.

**Regina Forsythe**, who has worked as a part-time volunteer at the Center for two years, continues her outstanding work with the Q.M. Smith Collection. Generous gifts from relatives of former MTSU President Smith have made it possible to employ Regina as a full-time staff member for the summer of 1995. In addition to completing work on the Smith Papers, Regina will initiate a Q.M. Smith oral history project.

Four students in the spring semester archives class completed historical manuscripts projects at off-campus sites. **Barbara Harper** worked with regents papers at the Hermitage; **Blossom Merryman** arranged manuscript collections at the community museum in Tullahoma; **Nancy Bassett** worked with Williamson County records; and **Kathryn Bennett** processed a manuscript collection at the Nashville Metropolitan Government Archives. The remaining students in the class—**Emily Defrees**, **Amie Geremia**, **Christina Hillis**, **Charles Hogue**, **John Coverdale**, and **Kenneth Middleton**—worked with various Gore Research Center and Rutherford County Archives materials.

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## Accessions and Openings

In March, the Gore Research Center received additions to two of its most important collections. John and Miriam Hawkins donated scores of photographs, documents, and political memorabilia for the **Jim Cummings Collection**. Mrs. Hawkins, a resident of Woodbury, Tennessee, is "Mr. Jim's" niece. Nancy Smith Moss, daughter of former MTSU President (1938-1958) **Q.M. Smith**, contributed valuable additions to the Gore Center's collection of her father's papers. In addition to his tenure as president, in 1911 Smith was a student in the first class to matriculate at Middle Tennessee Normal School as MTSU was then known. Among the many items brought by Ms. Moss are a program for the first commencement (1912) and a group photograph of the student body and staff of that same year. More information about the Cummings and Smith collections and the recent additions to them will appear in the next issue of *Document*. The Smith collection is featured in the spring issue of the *MTSU Magazine*.

The Gore Center has received a large collection of books pertaining to recent U.S. political history and foreign relations from long-time MTSU history professor **Newell Moore**. Moore, who retired from MTSU in June after 40 years of service, is said to have done more to assure the solvency of Murfreesboro booksellers than any other person on the faculty. His collection will be the core of a reading library to be established in his name and will provide quick reference for persons working with the Center's congressional collections.

Other recent accessions include personal papers contributed by retired professors **T. Earl Hinton** (Music) and **Ernest Hooper** (History), papers of the **Professorial Caucus** contributed by professor King Jamison (Mathematical Sciences), and letters, poetry, and memorabilia of **Joe Nunley**, long-time member of the MTSU family. An ad-hoc committee of friends and family of the late alumni director created the Joe Nunley Collection which is on an accelerated processing schedule in anticipation of publication.

**The Community Collection** has been established to receive small but valuable accumulations of material that help document the history of Murfreesboro and neighboring communities. The first accession into the collection was an April 1995 gift of 19th-century and early 20th-century Murfreesboro post cards and other small printed items.

The Congressional papers of **Jim Cooper** were delivered to the Gore Research Center in December and will be the subject of an in-depth article in the next issue of *Document*.

The Center will open access to the **Walter King Hoover Collection** in August. Surveyed by history graduate student Tara Mitchell (M.A. 1995) the thirty-seven linear feet of materials consist of items collected by Mr. Hoover to document the history of the northern part of Rutherford County, especially Smyrna. Mr. Hoover, a long-time Smyrna businessman and civic leader, is the author of the 559-page *History of the Town of Smyrna, Tennessee*, published in 1968.

## Walter King Hoover Collection

(Each issue of *Document* features an overview of one or more of the major collections in the Albert Gore Research Center. The *Albert Gore Senate Collection* was published in Issue #1, Summer 1994.)

### Scope and Content (Summarized)

The Walter King Hoover Collection documents the history of Smyrna, Tennessee, and neighboring communities from the late 19th century to the mid 1970s. The arrangement of the collection is by and large faithful to the order established by Mr. Hoover in the preparation of his *History of Smyrna* published in 1968. The thirteen series are generally based on institutions and/or subjects addressed in that book with particular emphasis on schools, churches, families, business, and the Percy Priest Lake and Sewart Air Force Base projects.

The collection fills approximately thirty-seven linear feet of shelves and consists of many types of materials. The collection will be of particular value to persons interested in genealogy, local history, and public policy research. The materials in the collection were deeded to the Gore Research Center by the Trustees of the Sam Davis Home in Smyrna, Tennessee, on November 27, 1994.

Walter King Hoover has been a prominent Smyrna businessman and civic leader for many years.

### Series descriptions

#### **Schools - 67 folders in 5 document boxes and 56 yearbooks**

Many well-identified photographs of late 19th-century and early 20th-century schools in the Smyrna area including Peru School, Seminary School, and Smyrna Fitting School. This series is especially strong in the documentation of the history of Smyrna High School although subjects in more recent photographs are less well identified. Items of particular interest and/or volume include long runs of school newspapers and yearbooks, graduation invitations, newspaper clippings, and information about the Smyrna High School 1961 state championship girls basketball team. Yearbooks in this series include those from Smyrna High School (1947-1948, 1950-1956, 1961-1963, 1968-1972, 1974-1989), Thurman Francis Junior High School (1974 and 1978), Tennessee College for Women (1915, 1917, 1927, 1928, 1941), Nashville College for Young Ladies (1899), Soule College for Young Ladies (1910), Rockvale High School (1955), Central High School, Murfreesboro (1923, 1924, 1952), Kittrell High School (1925), and MTSU (1934, 1937, 1962).

#### **Churches - 184 folders in 18 document boxes**

Church histories, publications, photographs, bulletins, and clippings pertaining to many Smyrna and neighboring churches. There are long runs of church bulletins from the Smyrna Church of Christ, Highland Heights Church of Christ, First Baptist Smyrna, and Smyrna Methodist Church.

#### **Clubs and Fraternities - 61 folders in 5 document boxes**

Photographs, clippings, histories, and papers pertaining to Smyrna organizations of which the Masons, the Lion's Club, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Sons of the American Revolution are most prominent.

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## Walter King Hoover Collection *continued*

### **Shows and Fairs - 7 folders in one document box**

Papers and photographs concerning various events of which fairs, circuses, and, especially, horse shows are most prominent. This series overlaps somewhat the previous series as local clubs and fraternities often were the sponsors of the shows and fairs.

### **Communities - 49 folders in 5 document boxes**

Papers, photographs, and clippings pertaining to Smyrna, La Vergne, Jefferson, Rutherford County, Middle Tennessee State University, and mills along the Stones River. Many materials document municipal services such as fire, police, water, and electricity. This series overlaps somewhat the Federal Projects and the Business series which follow.

### **Federal Projects - 13 folders in 3 document boxes**

Clippings, maps, photographs, and papers which mark the development of Percy Priest Lake and Sewart Air Force Base. This series contains much information about property owners displaced by construction of Percy Priest Lake.

### **Business 67 folders in 7 document boxes and 3 boxes of ledgers, account books, and registers**

Papers, photographs, and record books pertaining to railroads, services (including mills, plants, and factories), retail (clothing, grocery, and various other), banks, and professional/trade (physicians, dentists, attorneys, and real estate). This series overlaps the Clubs and Fraternities series above and the Physicians series below.

### **Physicians - 28 folders in one document box**

Two folders contain material from the Smyrna Medical Society which is also a sub-series in the Clubs and Fraternities series. The other folders contain papers and photographs of various Smyrna physicians.

### **Sam Davis - 38 folders in 3 document boxes plus numerous framed and oversize items**

Materials concerning the "Boy Hero of the Confederacy" and activities which resulted in the preservation of his home as a shrine. The series includes photographs of and clippings about the house and the Davis family as well as plays, songs, poems, and other items memorializing Sam Davis.

### **Individuals and Families - 60 folders in 6 document boxes**

Mainly photographs of Smyrna residents from the beginning of the 20th century through the 1970s. Family names most prominently represented are Edmondson, Keeble, Foster, Warren, Cannon, Gillespie, Weakley, Pinson, Jarrett, Smith, Hager, Gregory, Epps, Davis, and Aldrich. The series also contains a photocopy of the A.W. Page diaries (1876-1888), a collection of printed death notices from the 1880s through the 1920s, local political memorabilia, and correspondence.

### **Hoover - 5 folders in one document box**

Primarily materials pertaining to the writing, printing, publication, and sale of Walter King Hoover's *History of the Town of Smyrna, Tenn.*

### **Municipal Projects**

Blueprints for Smyrna water and sewage projects, 1936-1960.