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News - Digital Library of Georgia

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Digital Library of Georgia

Digital Library of Georgia Awards Eight Georgia Cultural Heritage Institutions Across the State Competitive Digitization Service Grants.

Eight institutions (and nine projects) are recipients of the eighth set of service grants awarded in a program intended to broaden partner participation in the Digital Library of Georgia (DLG). The DLG solicited proposals for historic digitization projects in a statewide call, and applicants submitted proposals for projects with a cost of up to \$7,500.00. DLG staff will provide free digitization, metadata, and hosting services so that more of Georgia's diverse history can be found online for free. The Georgia Historical Records Advisory Council (GHRAC) presented this subgranting program with the 2018 Award for Excellence in Archival Program Development by a State Institution.

Preference in the selection process was given to proposals from institutions that had not yet collaborated with the DLG. The Archives of the Society of Mary, Province of the USA, the 6th Cavalry Museum, the Georgia B. Williams Nursing Home, and the Midway Museum are all new partners for the DLG.

The selected collections document all corners of the state and life from the 1700s to the 1996 Olympics. There's something for everyone: family researchers will find plantation, funeral home, county government, and nursing home records; arts enthusiasts will learn of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra's growth from its founding in 1945 to the mid-1980s; those interested in protest and politics can study community resistance to the 1996 Olympics, view the effects of segregation policies in urban planning, and encounter the changing face of Atlanta and Savannah's public spaces in the

1950s. The materials document the state's African American, Roman Catholic, and military communities.

The recipients and their projects include:

Georgia State University Special Collections and Archives (Music and Broadcasting Collections)

Digitization of 24 scrapbooks from the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) Collection dating from 1945 to 1985 that include newspaper clippings of concert previews, reviews, and highlights of guest performers, composers, and conductors, as well as photographs, advertising materials, and organizational records such as memos and correspondence. The bulk of the ASO scrapbooks are from the 1950s–1960s and document the arrival of Music Director Robert Shaw in the late 1960s and the effects of the Civil Rights Movement on the orchestra.

Georgia State University Special Collections and Archives (Women's Collections)

Digitization of audiovisual items from the Carol Brown Papers, 1993–2012 (bulk 1993–1994) focusing on pro- and anti- LGBTQ+ activities in traditionally conservative Cobb County and the campaign to move 1996 Olympic events out of the county. Further, in a time of daily protest, the collection illustrates the power of creative, peaceful protest.

City of Savannah Municipal Archives

Digitization of the selections from Park and Tree Commission minutes from 1896 to 1920 that reflect the intersections of urban planning and civil rights, trends in landscape design, development of Savannah's cemeteries (both African American and White, since Savannah had segregated cemeteries), and details such as

the use of convict labor in city infrastructure projects. These records offer insider perspectives into the decision-making process related to these Jim Crow-era policies that are not often found in government records.

Greater Clarks Hill Regional Library System

Digitization of the Rees Funeral Home Funeral Records and the Lincoln County Courthouse Records. The Rees Funeral Home Funeral Records document funeral arrangements and obituaries for Lincoln County residents from 1940 until 1960. The Courthouse records consist of Lincoln County legal records dating back to the 1700s.

Archives of the Society of Mary, Province of the United States

Digitization of films and slides dating from 1938 to 1979 and drawn from Marist College educator Reverend Michael Kerwick's films and from the papers of Marist educator Reverend Vincent Brennan. The materials document the Marist School community in Atlanta and, more broadly, Roman Catholics in Georgia.

6th Cavalry Museum

Digitization of a collection of holiday menus created for the 6th Cavalry troops at Fort Oglethorpe from 1925 to 1940. The holiday dinner menus offer a glimpse of food and culinary traditions, military life through troop rosters, and highlights of each year's troop activities.

Georgia B. Williams Nursing Home

Digitization of the Georgia B. Williams Nursing Home Archives documents the first maternity shelter where "only" African American women were allowed, by local Mitchell County doctors, to receive midwife delivery for their newborns. Materials in the collection include registers of the mothers and babies born between 1949 and 1971.

Midway Museum

Digitization of the Julia King Collection, composed of original land grants/deeds, plantation documents, indentures, estate documents, photos, and letters connected with the Roswell King family's Liberty County plantation and the county itself from the late 1700s through the middle of the 20th century. The collection will be of particular interest to those doing family research on the enslaved in Liberty County.

Georgia Historical Society

Description of architectural drawings from the Savannah-based woman landscape architect Clermont Lee. Lee is best known for her work designing gardens and parks for historical landmarks throughout Georgia. The drawings are from 1940 through the mid-1980s and include projects in and around Savannah, as well as several throughout Georgia and the larger Southeast.

Materials Belonging to Historic Saint Paul's Church, Augusta, Georgia's Oldest Congregation Freely Available Online

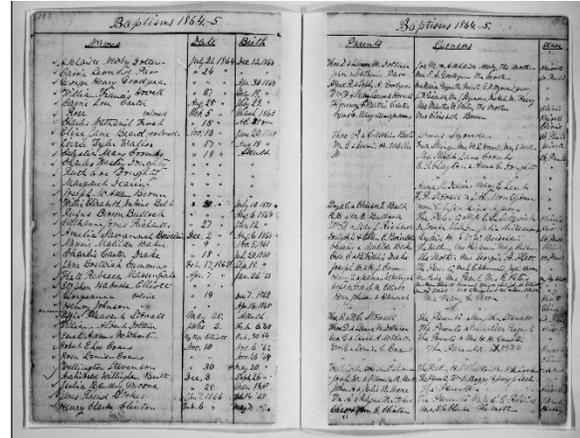
The Digital Library of Georgia has just released a collection of archival documents belonging to Saint Paul's Church, the oldest church and institution in the city of Augusta and one of the oldest in Georgia. The St. Paul's Church of Augusta Collection is available at https://dlg.usg.edu/collection/spcag_spcagc.

Susan Yarborough, chair of the St. Paul's Church history committee, outlined the church's presence in Augusta: "Founded in 1750, St. Paul's has a triple life as an active congregation, as a physical space encompassing buildings and a graveyard, and as a historic parish of the Episcopal Church. The oldest identified grave in its graveyard dates to 1783. Past parishioners of

Saint Paul’s church include a signer of the US Constitution, five governors of Georgia, six Confederate generals, the namesakes of several Georgia counties, two founding faculty of the Medical College of Georgia, several Augusta mayors, and an owner and an editor of *The Augusta Chronicle* newspaper.”

Significant among the church’s materials are:

- The church’s vestry minutes for the years 1855–1923 encompass the period including the Civil War and Reconstruction, World War I, and the church’s destruction by fire in March 1916. The minutes record names of ministers and vestry members; costs for the building and upkeep of the church and its furnishings; salaries of ministers, organists, and sextons; pew rents; donations to charitable institutions; insurance policies; arrangements for special church services; eulogies to people important to the parish; and the efforts to rebuild the church after the fire.
- With alphabetical indexes, three parish registers span the years 1820–1937, including records of marriages, baptisms, confirmations, communications, and burials, with a churchyard map, texts of grave markers, and statistics concerning the rites performed. The parish register from 1820–1868 records marriages, baptisms, confirmations, and burials for roughly 220 enslaved persons, beginning in 1823 and ending in 1865. The enslaved persons denoted in these records were largely house servants, often mixed race, who lived on close terms with their owners. In some cases, the actual houses in which these enslaved persons served their owners still exist, and the addresses are listed in extant city directories of the time.



Yarborough added that “the marriage records of these enslaved persons indicate names of the groom, bride, slave owners, minister, and date and location of the ceremony. These enslaved persons’ baptismal records indicate names of infant, mother, father (occasional), slave owner, minister, and baptismal sponsors (mother, slave owner or proxy, or other enslaved persons). Of particular note are multiple births recorded to enslaved mothers.”

Yarborough concluded that “information from such entries combined with Richmond County and surrounding counties’ slave inventories, appraisement, and sale records 1785–1865, probate records, and newspaper accounts of slave sales and freedom seekers can assist in tracing pre-Emancipation lines of kinship.”

There are many more materials, including marriage registers, historical extracts, print histories, articles, clippings, booklets, calling cards, and correspondence that account for the church’s early history, church conventions, centennial celebrations, and burials.

Erick D. Montgomery, the executive director of Historic Augusta, Incorporated, who has regularly touched upon these materials in his work, noted that “having these historical materials available through digitization online will make valuable records available to anyone interested in the history of Georgia, Augusta, religion, societal trends, enslaved and free African Americans, genealogical connections, and countless other topics unforeseen.”

Essential Local History Materials for Lee County, Georgia Available Freely Online

The [Lee County Library Local History Collection](#) contains essential historic print items belonging to the Lee County Library in Leesburg, Georgia, dating from 1784–2000. Among the materials are local and regional Baptist and Methodist church histories, histories of the historic towns of Smithville and Starkville, Lee County oral histories, and documentation of the Great Flood of 1994 caused by Tropical Storm Alberto that caused significant damage in Southwest Georgia.

Bobbie Yandell, director of archives at the Thronateeska Heritage Center in Albany, Georgia, noted that “the church histories, as well as the histories of Smithville and Starkville, provide important information to early life in Lee County. These resources describe the roots of the county as well as the citizens that resided in it. The materials concerning the Flood of 1994 display how our communities came together in a time of disaster. They show what our community is capable of when a collective effort to come together is made. It is important that future generations are able to revisit these histories in order to both honor and remember what has been achieved by those who came before us.”

Yandell continued: “Lee County has a rich local history which mostly resides in physical materials. The fear of degradation is a threatening reality for the collection. With assistance from the Digital Library of Georgia,

digital preservation allows these materials to be used for generations to come. In my efforts, I have found that small towns frequently suffer from their histories disappearing or being forgotten. It gives me hope that methods such as digitization exist so that rural histories may persist and be remembered.”

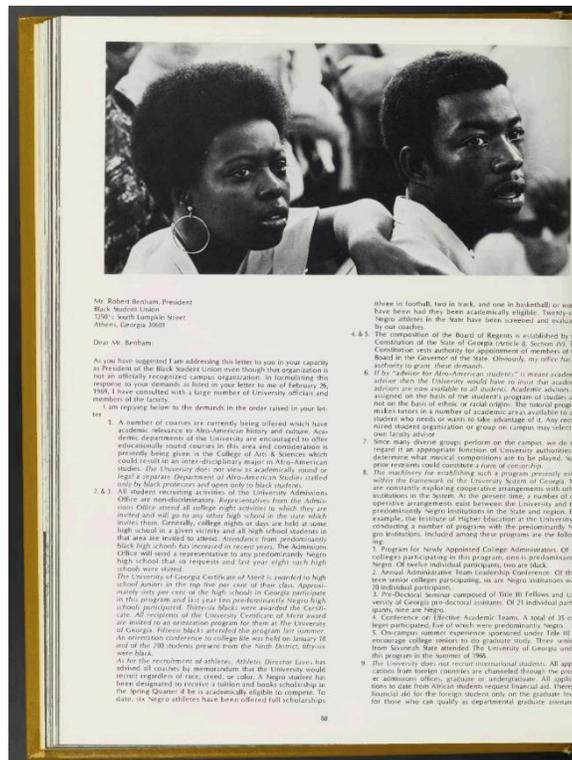
Pandora Yearbooks Documenting Pivotal Years in the University of Georgia’s History Available Freely Online

The *Pandora*, the University of Georgia’s (UGA) yearbook, has been published nearly every year since 1886, serving as a rich source of

institutional and social history that has traced the growth and development of the country’s first state-chartered university. Through a partnership between the Hargrett Library, University Archives, and the Digital Library of Georgia, yearbooks that document campus life, students and faculty, clubs, and other events from 1965 to 1974 have been digitized, allowing free online access to *Pandoras* that document the years following desegregation and the first social movements for black students, women’s

liberation, gay liberation, and campus free speech as they manifested themselves on the UGA campus. These editions are now available at https://dlg.usg.edu/collection/dlg_pandora.

“The *Pandora* is a record created by and for students, and it naturally presents their perspective first and foremost. Not all of their views reflect our institutional values today. Still, a number of students depicted in the *Pandora*



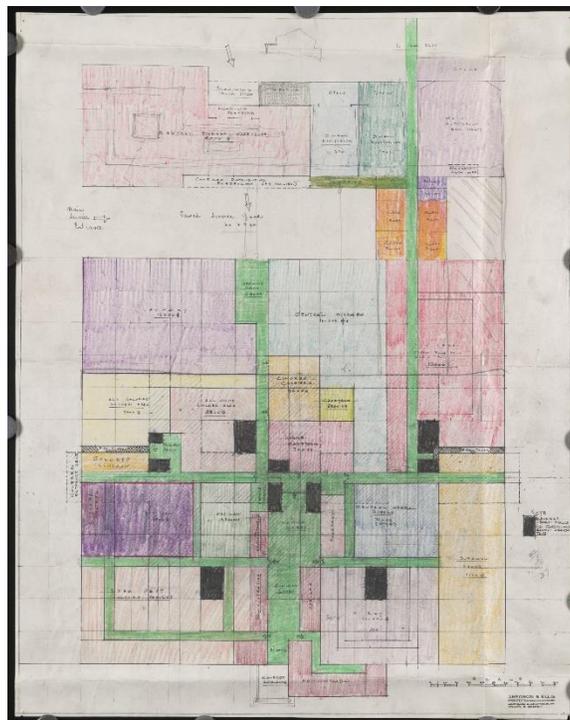
at this time were striving to create a more inclusive and conscientious campus, as evidenced by their writings, photos, artwork, and images of protests. The yearbooks are a crucial document for capturing the early days of student dissent and activism that continues on campus to this day," said Steve Armour, university archivist at the Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library, one of three special collections units of the UGA Libraries.

College yearbooks can help people interested in genealogy research or sports history. They also play a role in documenting the history of UGA and, by extension, the state of Georgia and higher education in a broader sense. The project to digitize the 1965–1975 *Pandoras* expands the virtual collection of materials, including the first 50 years of publication, allowing alumni, other UGA community members, or anyone with interest to explore more than decades of UGA's history online.

Larry Dendy, a UGA alumnus who worked in UGA's Office of Public Affairs for 37 years (1972–2009) and wrote the book *Through the Arch: An Illustrated Guide to the University of Georgia*, published by UGA Press in 2013, noted that the time period was marked by university milestones as well as national trends. "The decade of 1965–1975 was a critical period as the university dealt not only with national social and political upheavals but also with many major campus issues including enrollment increases, advances in research and academic quality, physical plant expansion, newfound athletic successes, and changing student attitudes and more," he said. "These

and many more challenges and changes of this decade are documented by students themselves through their photos and narratives in *Pandoras*. Their perspective—whimsical, irreverent, ironic but often incisive—opens a revealing lens into the mood and mentality of college campuses in this time."

Architectural Records Documenting Segregated Health Care Facilities in Baldwin, Richmond, Treutlen, Ware, and Wayne Counties in Georgia Available Online.



In partnership with Kennesaw State University's Department of Museums, Archives & Rare Books, the Digital Library of Georgia has just added a collection of oversized technical drawings from the Gregson and Ellis Architectural Drawings Collection that document the experiences of "living and receiving medical and mental health care in the mid-20th century segregated South," according to Helen Thomas, the outreach archivist at Kennesaw State University Archives.

The collection, available at https://dlg.usg.edu/collection/gki_gead, features facilities located across Baldwin, Richmond, Treutlen, Ware, and Wayne counties in Georgia.

Thomas, who works regularly with these materials, added that "architectural records demonstrate not only trends in construction and design, but also reflect the society in which the buildings exist...The materials we proposed to digitize depict public facilities, from small rural hospitals to large medical complexes,

representing the medical services available to all Georgians regardless of their level of income.

She concluded: "Since each set of drawings shows public facilities built in Georgia before the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, these drawings demonstrate how buildings were constructed to segregate not only by the facility but also within facilities. While some of the drawings in this collection reveal separate buildings constructed for the same purpose, but each restricted to White or African American citizens (such as separate psychiatric buildings in the Milledgeville complex for White and African American patients), some show how individual buildings were segregated. An example of the latter is the Augusta State Hospital, which shows separate entrances, waiting areas, restrooms, cafeterias, pharmacies, pediatric wings, and locker rooms for White and African American patients and employees."

Barbara Berney, Ph.D., MPH, used the Gregson and Ellis materials in her documentary *Power to Heal: Medicare and the Civil Rights Revolution*, and said: "This documentary examines the history of inequality in Americans' access to health care, and specifically how Medicare was used to desegregate thousands of hospitals across the country. As a scholar of public health and the US health care system, I was inspired to produce the film by hearing eyewitness accounts from physicians, nurses, and government staffers involved in the integration effort and those who struggled to provide health services in rural areas lacking the most basic medical care. The Gregson and Ellis collection provided context for these firsthand accounts by illustrating the physical space in which these health care professionals were working...In addition to providing multiple examples of public hospitals of this era, these drawings show that the public medical facilities available to African Americans were not only separate but could also be limited in size and capabilities."

"We Endure" Oral History Collection Documents Stories, Struggles of Cairo, Georgia's African American Community

Georgia Public Library Service has digitized over 80 oral history interviews held by the Roddenbery Memorial Library in Cairo, Georgia, and recorded during the early 1980s with African American residents of that area. The collection, *They Endure: A Chronicle of Courage*, also includes 50 digitized slides depicting local African American churches and cemeteries in Grady County. Digitized collection materials are available online through the Digital Library of Georgia and Soundcloud.

The interviews were originally recorded on cassette tapes and cover a wide breadth of topics including rural agriculture, the local economy, education, midwifery, traditional medicine, and church life in Cairo. In one interview, Mrs. Susie Scott discussed her role as a church historian and shared information on the historical beginnings of her congregation, located near Whigham, Georgia: "During the latter days of slavery, [enslaved worshippers] would just meet out there, somewhere where they thought they could be safe, you know ... our church first began as a brush arbor in Piney Grove community. ...This land was purchased December 20, 1878, and the first church was a log church ... And I have a letter from that day from a lady I got that information from, and her grandmother named the church Ebenezer."

The interviews were recorded between 1981–1982 by Dr. Robert Hall and Frank Roebuck as a part of a grant from the Georgia Humanities. The project emphasized community participation and interviewees were encouraged to submit copies of family photographs, documents, and collectables to Roddenbery Memorial Library.

Each of the interviewees brought forth their personal memories and recollections about life in Grady County during the early 20th century. In another interview, Ms. Pinkie Norwood

Simmons reflected on her career as a midwife: “So, I delivered one baby after another, sometimes five babies in 24 hours ... that was the most I delivered in one day.” Roebuck asked how many babies she delivered in her career, to which Ms. Simmons replied, “500 was the last count, but I’ve delivered a few since then.”

Interviewees include prominent community figures, educators, domestic workers, church officials, and farmers. While each of these stories is different, together they portray the

community’s resilience and endurance through social support networks.

“I am so excited to have these voices heard again,” said Janet Boudet, director of the Roddenbery Memorial Library. “Most of the interviewees have been deceased for 15 to 35 years now. The release of these recordings is a wonderful opportunity to hear how a specific generation and group of community members endured hardships of their own.”