Digitizing Riley House: Collaborating to bring a Museum’s Archives Online

Society of Florida Archivists Annual Meeting
Tuesday, May 11, 2023
Hope Evans, Caroline Haight, Torrio Osborne, Neissa Philamon, and Krystal Thomas
John G. Riley Center & Museum of African American History and Culture

- Who is John G. Riley?
- What is the Riley House?
Who is John G. Riley?

- Born in 1857
- Businessman, Community Leader, Family Man, Educator
- House was built in 1890
What is the John G. Riley Center & Museum?

- At the core of our mission: Outreach, education, and advocacy
- Our Founder, Althemese Barnes
- Celebrates Mr. Riley’s life, which was one of triumph of achievement and elegant living
- More than a museum
  - Research Center
  - Families and communities across Tallahassee and Leon County
TCC Riley Museum Archive

- Acquire special collections, otherwise forgotten; Local focus.
- Cultivate critical and analytical skill-sets in examining primary and secondary sources
- Preserve collective memory
- Share legacy of resilience, faith and integrity
- Educate youth, community sector stakeholders
Archive activity

TCC Riley Archive
2005-20018

Visitors #

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<th>Summer</th>
<th>Fall</th>
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Archive Use

- **Student visits**
  - 775 approx. over 10 year period
  - 25-30 visits /semester
  - Primarily history students, secondarily sociology, anthropology, english and art.
  - High interest in Harpers Weekly, Thelma Gorham, JN Crooms, Leon Co Schools collections with issue interest in Slavery, Jim Crow, Smokey Hollow late 19th century black women pioneers and plantations of Leon County.

- **Visits by Semesters**
  - **Fall** - Typically strong visits. Average range between 25-30 students enrolled in History courses. Although course offerings, the Archive attracts patrons from current faculty.
  - **Spring** - Stronger visits begin in late February/early March around a broad course offerings: Sociology, History, Humanities, Anthropology
  - **Summers** - Less visits; supplemented with family reunion research from community.
Archive

- Faculty engagement
  - Three to four faculty on avg. per semester; less in summer.
  - Proctor, Phipps, Owens, Oliver, Agama, Thompkins
  - Librarians - Regularly engage around primary & secondary sourcing for papers; co-present Librarian instruction

- Collection Management
  - Storage, Process, Catalog, Finding Aids
  - Archival storage, includes secondary texts
  - Listings in Aleph system

- Archive Lib-Guide
  - Complementary link to database and search for primary and secondary resources

- Small Collection
  - Local, hidden, untold culture, legacy of African-American pioneers.
  - Education focus - 1863 to early 1980s.
  - Size: 852 Linear feet
    - Books, manuscripts, papers and limited art.
Academic Discipline linkage

- History & Social Sciences
- Communications & Humanities
- Arts, Education, Business & Technology
# History & Social Sciences

## Collections
- African American Studies
- African American Heritage Trail
- American Missionary Assoc.
- Antebellum South/Slavery
- Black Beaches 1935-1997
- Black Churches
- Civil Rights Collection
- Florida Black History
- Gadsden County Community
- John G. Riley House Museum
- Midwives Collection 1951-1979
- Cemeteries Collection
- First Lincoln High School 1876-1970

## Courses
- AMH 2070 Florida History
- AMH 2091 African American History
- DEP 2004 Human Development
- EDG 2701 Teaching Diverse Populations
- GEO 1400 Intro to Human Geography
- IDS 2194 FL History, People, Politics
- IDS 2310 Methods for Soc. Science
- MAR 1053 Marketing for Non-Profits
- CPO Intro to Comparative Politics
- PLA 2610 Real Estate Law and Property
- SOP 2002 Social Psychology
- REL 2200 Intro to Biblical Studies
## Communication & Humanities

### Collections
- Thelma Gorham Collection
- Emancipation Essays
- Oral Histories
- Phylon Journals
- Ebony/Jet Collection
- Harper's Weekly Collection
- Leon County Schools
- Historic Buildings & Places
- Florida History
- Florida A&M University Collection
- Florida Black Schools
- Geraldine Johnson Collection

### Courses (Applicable to multiple collections)
- AML 2600 African-American Literature
- ARH 2500 Non Western Art History
- ENC 1141 Writing about Literature
- ENC 1102 Argument and persuasion
- FIL 1930 Special Topics in Film
- HUM 2210(30) Humanities I & II
- HUM 2525 American Music : Jazz
- IDS 2900 Multicultural American Society
- IDS Applied Ethics Seminar
- IDS 2194 FL –History, People, Politics
- JOU 2440L Literary Magazine Prod.
- MMC 1000 Survey of Mass Media
- SYG 2230 Race & Minority Relations
Arts, Education & Technology

**Collections**
- TCC Riley Archive
- Dissertation and Theses
- Tallahassee Community Collection
- First Lincoln High School 1876-1970
- John G. Riley Collection
- Thelma Gorham Collection
- Multicultural Collection
- Ebony/Jet Collection
- Florida Black Schools

**Courses**
(Applicable to multiple collections)
- SPC 2600 Public Speaking
- ART 2050 Intro to Art History
- EME 2040 Intro to Educational Technology
- MMC 1000 Survey of Mass Media
- CNT 1000 Intro to Networks & Telecomm
- CGS 1540 Database Concepts
- MGF 1106/1107 Math for Liberal Arts
- LIB 2004 Intro to Internet Research
- ART 1202 C Design I
- ECO 2013 Macro Economics
- CGS 1820 Web Page Authoring
- THE 1000 Intro to the Theatre
- GRA 1131C Multimedia Graphics Design
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<tr>
<th>Collection(s)</th>
<th>Course(s)</th>
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In 2021, IMLS awarded the John G Riley Center and Museum of African American History and Culture a $246,250 Museum Grant for African American History and Culture.
2021: Taking Time to Prep

- The original Project Team was called to order in October 2021
- Outlining the different needs to get in place prior to hiring of Interns
  - Logistics
  - Documentation
  - Workflows
- Outlining ideas of prioritization for digitization
- Exploring Omeka options
2022: Figuring Out How to Actually Do the Work

- Things took a little longer than planned (shocking!) and the planning stage went through April 2022
- Our first cohort of interns started in May 2022
- May 21st was the first workshop held as part of the grant
- Making all the adjustments because what we thought would work did not...

Noah Cole, Neissa Philamon and Daniel Arenas, first intern cohort, with project developer Kiah Asabea
2023: Continuing the Work around (Temporary) Road Blocks

- Complete review of all collections and doing a full prioritization re-work. Being clear we aren’t getting to everything and why
- Adjusting digitization guidelines and expectations
- Omeka Growing Pains
- Adding interns to help with the time deficient
Internship Experience

- Neissa Philemon
  - Undergraduate
  - Pre-medical
  - Public Health

- Items
  - black experiences
  - primary and secondary sources
  - diverse forms of material

- Digitizing
  - familiar with software
  - organization through language
  - time efficiency

- Future
  - culture and the healthcare institution
  - public health
  - telehealth
Caroline's Experience
Thank You!
Questions?