

"ACID-FREE"

The Newsletter of The Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Volume 3, Issue 2

August 2011

New Collections Corner

The new collections listed here appear in the order in which they were received by us.

Alabama Fish and Wildlife Slides — Consists of 724 color slides showing Alabama wildlife and habitats, as well as deforestation, landmarks, landscapes, and pollution. The photographers are unknown and most of the images are not dated.

Donald Burnell Slides — Twenty-one color slides of the Gulf Coast taken around 1975. Most of the images are of Fort Gaines or the U.S.S. *Alabama*.

Toulmin-Davis Family Photos — Thirty early-twentieth-century prints taken by various photographers of members of the Toulmin and Davis families. Family members include Mary Knott Jackson Toulmin, Lillian Toulmin, Clement Davis, and Mary White Norris Davis.

Washington County Survey Book — One survey record book kept by a Taylor Lowenstein employee, who recorded turpentine activities in Washington County. The book includes notes on land owners and appears to be dated to the 1920s.

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Name Change

On May 6, 2011, the University of South Alabama Archives became The Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library. The university announced the name change during a press conference to publicize the acquisition of a collection of historical papers valued at \$3.1 million. The collection, which will be known as the Doy Leale McCall Papers, spans the years 1757 to the 1960s.

Within the McCall Papers are documents about the early days of Alabama statehood that give insight into the formation of the state's political parties. In addition, there is material on the Marquis de Lafayette's 1825 visit to Alabama, as well as a wealth of information about a previously-unknown manufacturing business that rivals those of Daniel Pratt. Some other goodies in the McCall Papers are: letters signed by Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun; the papers of Alabama's third governor, Israel Pickens; 174 pieces of sheet music; plantation documents; Civil War letters and diaries; and approximately 10,000 flyers, circulars, periodicals, broadsides, magazines, newspapers, and playbills. The collection also has many documents related to early Alabama steamboats, as well as hundreds and hundreds of merchant receipts.



Doy Leale McCall Sr.

Some Alabama notables in the collection include William Rufus King and Henry Hitchcock. In addition, the collection includes 188 presidential land grants, 100 of which include authentic presidential signatures.

The McCall Papers remain closed for processing. We hope to have one portion of it open early next year. We'll keep you advised. ☐

New Collections

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This example from the Toulmin-Davis Photo Collection shows three children performing a pretend wedding, one as the minister and the other two as the wedding couple.

Nineteenth-Century Theater Prints — Eight illustrations and lithographs of notable nineteenth-century actors, including Edwin Booth and John S. Clark. ☞

Web Site and Social Media

Hits to our web site (<http://mccalllibrary.southalabama.edu>) have increased by 42 percent in the past year. From July 24, 2010, to July 24 this year almost 4,000 people visited the site and there were more than 16,500 pageviews. Of those 4,000 visitors, almost 72 percent were new. Continuing its lead as the most visited part of the site is our traditional photograph gallery (8,674 views), followed by the panorama gallery (3,041 views), and the past photos of the month page (1,242 views). While people in the United States remain our largest demographic, we have also had visitors from Milan, Italy, Bangalore, India, and Edinburg, Scotland. Our Facebook pages are also doing well. Between our old (for USA Archives) and our new (The McCall Library) pages, we have a total of 495 fans. If you have a Facebook page, please add us to your likes. ☞

"Acid-Free" is a thrice-yearly publication of The Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library. It is primarily published for the benefit of The Friends of The McCall Library but is free to the public.

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FO(A)ML Corner

In light of the magnificent gift recently given to us and the change to our name, the executive board of our Friends group has voted to change the name of the organization from the Friends of the Archives to The Friends of The McCall Library. ☞

... Mr. Marx signed
over a piece of
property ...

Updates

Marx Endowment — In our last issue we told you about a proposal put forth to Julien Marx before his death seeking funds to digitize and preserve our most important photograph collections. Just days before his death on August 26, 2010, Mr. Marx signed over a piece of property whose sale will create the fund to pursue our digitization objective. While this is wonderful news, in today's economy it is likely to take some time before the property is sold. We'll keep you informed.

Hanrahan Trust — To date the \$45,944.53 bequeathed to us on June 8, 2010, by Mark Hanrahn in memory of Robert Bell remains on our balance sheet. ☞

Grant — All requirements for our final National Endowment for the Humanities Grant have been met and the final closeout report is due by the first week in September. In our last issue we told you that we had completed rehousing approximately 15 percent of the Wilber Palmer collection, which is being funded by the NEH grant. As of this writing, we have doubled that to 30 percent. Another two years may be needed to finish the project. ☞

"Which of my photographs is my favorite? The one I'm going to take tomorrow." Imogen Cunningham

Patron Highlight

From the mailbag:

“About twenty-five years ago I met the new publisher of the *Azalea City News* at a cocktail party. I offered him a suggestion for what I thought would be a great addition to his weekly alternative newspaper: Why not take an old photograph of a scene in Mobile and compare it with a current one of the same location? I further suggested that he accompany the two scenes with commentary about the changes that had taken place over the years. The next day I learned that the newspaper staff thought my idea a great one and that they wanted me to write the column. I agreed and called the feature ‘Mobile: Then and Now.’

“Of course the column could not exist without old photos. Since I knew they had files on historic homes and structures, my search initially led me to the city’s Historic Development Commission. To my dismay they had no files on the city’s buildings already lost to ‘progress.’ So I found my way to the USA Archives. [Editor’s note: USA Archives is now The Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library. See page 1 for more about the name change.]

... I am excited about the future of this wonderful facility ...

“The staff was very helpful and I was amazed at box after box filled with photographs of street scenes and individual structures from which to choose. Once I chose a photo, there were shelves of books to assist me in my quest to develop the story of a building and its fate. They also had maps and city directories to help me learn about the location and setting of the building about which I was writing.

“‘Mobile: Then and Now’ became very popular. When the *Azalea City News* shut down, another publication, *The Harbinger*, picked up the column. All the while I used the photos obtained at The McCall Library to start each article. Along the way individuals offered me images from their personal files and I accepted, as long as The McCall Library could have a copy.*

“Today I write ‘Ask McGehee’ for *Mobile Bay Monthly* and I edit an historical newsletter, *Magnolia Messenger*, for the Friends of Magnolia Cemetery. I still visit The McCall Library for both images and ideas for my next story and am excited about the future of this wonderful facility since the addition of the McCall family gift.”

Tom McGehee
Museum Director
Bellingrath Gardens and Home

*We at The McCall Library would like to express our profound gratitude to Tom for his generous donation of images over the years. To date he has added nearly 800 photographs to our extensive collection. We look forward to working with him for many years to come. ☺

Did you know . . .

That we recently supplied Nabushea Productions of Beverly Hills, California, with research materials for a film on Michael Pardue, a Mobile native convicted of murder in 1973. We also sent the Guggenheim Museum in New York material on Mary Fenollosa and contributed several dozen images to the Troy-Pike Johnson Center for the Arts. In addition, we helped one young woman with her wedding reception. She used our images for her placemats. We are constantly amazed at the varied ways in which our photographs are used. ☺

We're on the web!
[Http://mccalllibrary.southalabama.edu](http://mccalllibrary.southalabama.edu)



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