Guide to the Rita Karan Thompson Collection

Descriptive Summary:
Creator: Rita Karan Thompson,
Title: Rita Karan Thompson Collection
Dates: 2007
Quantity: 0.5 feet
Abstract: This collection contains research notes, data sheets, and photocopied excerpts from documents pertaining to the life and background of Satchel Paige and to the history of tradespeople in Mobile. This research was conducted by Rita Karan Thompson during her time as a graduate student at the University of South Alabama. Thompson took on this research under guidance from Dr. Michael Thomason.
Accession: 737-2021

Biographical Note:
Rita Thompson is a former University of South Alabama student who earned her MA in History. Thompson did her assistantships in the Archives under Dr. Michael Thomason. In 2007, Thompson completed one semester of research as a graduate student for the Mobile Historic Development Commission on early builders in Mobile. This research was used to write a short book on Builders of Mobile. The book and databases are accessible on the web at http://www.mobilehd.org/publications_builtcity.html. These were financed by a grant from the Sybil H. Smith Charitable Trust.

Scope and Content:
The Rita Karan Thompson Collection consists of handwritten notes, printouts of spreadsheets, and photocopied documents. These documents are broken up into two series—Thompson’s research on Satchel Paige on behalf of Larry Tye and Thompson’s research on the history of tradespeople in Mobile on behalf of the MHDC.
The Paige material largely revolves around his family history, including details about his
parents and siblings and includes census data, directory information, and information on deaths. Additionally, correspondence between Thompson and Tye is also included, mostly relating to the specific research questions Thompson gathered materials to address, though her specific conclusions are not always included.

The MHDC series consists of a wide selection of information, including census data, directory information, death and burial information, research into the families and origins of various tradespeople, details about specific buildings in Mobile and the parties responsible for their design and construction, and a number of documents contextualizing parts of the city’s history relevant to Thompson’s research both academic and primary. Additionally, several pamphlets likely based on Thompson’s research are included with the materials. While some material is present indicating the basic research direction Thompson undertook, researchers are advised that much of the collection consists of raw materials without commentary.

**Provenance:**
Donated in honor of Professor Michael Thomason by Rita Karan Thompson, 2021.

**Arrangement:**
This collection consists of two series based on the subject matter to which each group of documents pertains. Researchers are advised that owing to the nature of these documents as a scholar’s working notes, little to no processing has occurred below the folder level. The first series relates to Thompson’s research into Satchel Paige and his family. Documents have been divided between Thompson’s correspondence on the subject and her gathered materials. The second series consists of a number of research notes collected regarding the history of professional tradespeople in the city of Mobile in the 19th and 20th centuries and has been subdivided into a number of folders based on subject matter and—who relevant—how the contained information has been organized.

**Access Restrictions:**
This material is open to research.
Usage Restrictions:
The right of access to materials held by The McCall Library does not imply that The McCall Library gives you, the user, the right of publication or the right to quote from materials within this collection. Permission for reprinting, reproduction, or quotation from the (rare) books, manuscripts, prints, or drawings located at The McCall Library must be obtained from the copyright holder of the material you wish to reprint, reproduce, or quote from. The reader/user bears all responsibility for any possible infringement of copyright.

Copyright Notice:
Copyright is retained by the authors of the items in these [papers / records / items], or their descendants, as stipulated by United States copyright law. The user is responsible for adhering to all United States copyright laws.

Preferred Citation:
[Title of Item], Rita Karan Thompson Collection, The Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of South Alabama, Mobile, Alabama.

Sensitive Materials Statement:
Manuscript collections and archival records may contain material(s) of a sensitive or confidential nature that is protected under federal or state rights to privacy. Researchers are advised that the disclosure of certain information pertaining to identifiable living individuals represented in this collection without the consent of those individuals may have legal ramifications (e.g., an invasion of privacy may arise if you publish facts concerning an individual’s private life that could be deemed highly offensive to a reasonable person). The Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library and the University of South Alabama assume no responsibility for the disclosure by researchers of such sensitive or confidential information.
Related Content:
City Directories, Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Census Microfilms, Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Content List:

Box 1

Series I. Satchel Paige, 2 folders

1. Correspondence
2. Research

Series II. Mobile Tradespeople, 17 folders

3. Demographics – By Name
4. Demographics – By Location
5. Demographics – By Origin
6. Demographics – Miscellaneous

Box 2

1. Naturalization
2. Addresses
3. Family Members
4. Photos
5. Death/Burial
6. Biographical Narratives
7. Legal
8. Buildings
9. Advertisements
10. Publications – Specific Buildings
11. Publications – Mobile History
12. Publications – Academic/Southern History
13. Miscellaneous