

Iowa Women's Archives NEWS

Giving Our History a Home: African-American Women in Iowa Project

There's cause to celebrate at the Iowa Women's Archives. Our project to document the lives and experiences of African-American women in Iowa has gotten off to a promising start. Launched with a program, reception, and exhibit at the University of Iowa Libraries last December, the project to collect the personal papers and organizational records of Iowa's African-American women preserves a largely unexplored area of Iowa history.

An advisory board has been appointed to guide project director Kathryn Neal in her efforts, but she also needs your help. There are women throughout the state—both prominent and private—with stories and materials to be saved. Please help us find the letters, diaries, speeches, scrapbooks, audio or video tapes, church bulletins, and other material tucked away in closets and cabinets at home. We also seek the minutes, memoranda, annual reports, and subject files that make up the records of African-American women's organizations.

Besides visiting with possible donors individually, Neal talks to clubs, organizations, and other groups about the project. If you have questions contact Neal at (319) 335-5068 or by e-mail:

kathryn-neal@uiowa.edu

Since the Iowa Women's Archives opened in October 1992, 1374 students, scholars, Elderhostel participants, and others have visited and made use of the collections.



Among the papers received as part of the African-American Women in Iowa Project are those of **Martha Nash, Maude White, B.J. Furgerson, Lois Eichacker, Lileah Harris, Virginia Harper, Marguerite Cothorn, Verda Williams, Dora Mackay,** and the **YWCA of Greater Des Moines Blue Triangle branch.**

Research in the Archives

Two graduate students, including one from University of California, Davis, are currently conducting dissertation research in the archives. One is focusing on the Equal Rights Amendment campaigns in Iowa and the other on the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women.

Thirty-six students from **Mount Pleasant High School** came to use the **Peg Mullen** papers as part of their American History unit on Vietnam.

Fifteen women prominent in the political affairs of their countries toured the IWA while visiting the United States under the auspices of the **Iowa Council for International Understanding** (April 1996).

Here and There in Iowa

Staff members traveled across Iowa this year, seeking donors and giving presentations:

Judge Rosemary Sackett held a buffet supper at her home in **Okoboji** to introduce assistant archivist **Tammy Lau** and curator **Karen Mason** to potential donors in the area (October 1995).

Mason and Lau presented a slide show about the archives and its holdings at the **Senior Center in Sioux City** (October 1995).

Assistant archivist **Kathryn Neal** spoke at the **Rosa Parks Day Celebration** at Iowa State University (February 1996).

Lau and Neal gave a talk entitled "A Patchwork of Voices: Iowa Women and the Iowa Women's Archives" at the **Beyond Rubies Conference** at **Kirkwood Community College** in **Cedar Rapids** (March 1996).

Exhibition

Our next exhibition features **Eve Drewelowe**, a painter who in 1924 became the first person to receive a graduate degree in art from the University of Iowa. **Eve Drewelowe** bequeathed an extensive collection of her paintings and her papers to the University of Iowa. The exhibition is being designed by **Monica DeMott**, who recently completed her MA thesis in the University's School of Art and Art History entitled: "Eve Drewelowe: Transformations Within Her Life and Work."

Recent Accessions

Clonian Club records (Davenport study club founded in 1874)

Dieman-Bennett Dance Theatre of the Hemispheres records (Cedar Rapids)

Constance Frick Irwin papers (author)

Judy Klemesrud papers (*NY TIMES* reporter)

Mary Noble Photograph Collection (turn-of-the-century photographs)

Marian Rees papers (producer of motion pictures made for television)

Rosemary Sackett papers (first woman to serve as chief judge of the Iowa Court of Appeals)

Catherine Williams papers (former deputy commissioner of Iowa Department of Social Services and professional dancer)

Mary Elizabeth Wood papers (first African-American woman to serve as executive director of a metropolitan YWCA)

The Iowa Women's Archives
100 Main Library
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

A conference entitled "The Uses of Suffrage: Women, Politics and Social Change Since 1920" will be held September 27-28, 1996 at the Iowa Memorial Union. The conference will examine the impact and meaning of women's participation in American public life since the ratification of the 19th amendment. The Center for Recent United States History and The University of Iowa are hosting this event. For information, call (319) 335-5068

The Iowa Women's Archives is funded by a permanent endowment and the generosity of individuals and corporate sponsors. Monetary contributions are greatly appreciated. For information call (319) 335-5068.

Transitions

Assistant archivist Kathryn Neal joined the archives in August 1995 to direct a two-year project collecting the papers of African-American women in Iowa.

In July 1996 we bid adieu to Tammy Lau, who finished her two-year appointment as assistant archivist at the IWA. Lau supervised students and volunteers, worked with donors, and directed numerous special projects. On August 26 she began a new position at California State University, Fresno, as Head of Special Collections and University Archivist.

Margaret Richardson, librarian with the University Libraries, joined the IWA staff in December 1995. She will assist in contacting potential donors, coordinating special events, and processing collections.

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