

Digitizing Twentieth Century Civil Rights Collections from the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture in Charleston, South Carolina

Award Number: NAR15-RD-10180-15
NHPRC Final Narrative Report for February 1, 2016 through July 31, 2017

The Project

In late spring of 2015 the College of Charleston was awarded an 18-month, \$81,725 grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) to digitize, describe and make freely accessible online sixteen archival collections (52 linear feet) of materials held by the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture. In May of 2017 the performance objectives were revised to 10 collections and an estimated 40,000 pages of material digitized.

These collections provide insight into the significant role of leaders and organizations from Charleston, South Carolina and the surrounding Lowcountry region in the twentieth century civil rights movement. The original grant proposal and the first interim narrative report for the project “Digitizing Twentieth Century Civil Rights Collections from the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture in Charleston, South Carolina” may be found at <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/research-and-reports>. This is the final narrative report for the grant period of February 1, 2016 through July 31, 2017.

Performance Objectives (revised on 5/23/17)

1. Submit complete reports by the deadlines in the Grant Award Summary.
Completed
2. Acknowledge the National Historical Publications and Records Commission in all print and electronic products that result from grant support.
Completed
3. Amount of cost share meets or exceeds the amount approved by the NHPRC.
Completed
4. Digitize an estimated 40,000 pages from 10 collections.
Completed and Exceeded!
5. Make all digitized material available through the Lowcountry Digital Library, the South Carolina Digital Library, and the Digital Public Library of America.
Completed
6. Revise the EAD finding aids and MARC records for the 10 collections to include links to the digital surrogates.
Completed
7. Create no less than two online exhibitions, featured on the Lowcountry Digital History Initiative (<http://ldhi.library.cofc.edu>), that highlight the project’s digitized materials.
Completed
8. Make announcements about on relevant listservs including the Society of American Archivists, Humanities and Social Sciences On-line (H-Net) and South

Carolina Archival Association (SCAA). Also promote the project via social media, including LCDL's Tumblr, Twitter and Facebook feeds, SCDL's Facebook page, and the DPLA's Tumblr and Twitter feeds.

Completed

9. Speak at two conferences for K- 12 educators, university faculty, and cultural heritage professionals. Also submit a case study for publication in a professional journal.

Completed

As you can see from our above performance objective status statements, we anticipate completing this project with a 100% completion rate of our performance objectives. Please see below for details on the completion of each performance objective.

Performance Objective #1

Submit Complete Reports by The Deadlines In The Grant Award Summary

All reports were submitted on time.

Performance Objective #2

Acknowledge the National Historical Publications and Records Commission in all Print and Electronic Products that Result from Grant Support

All products that result from grant support have acknowledged the NHPRC. Please see a complete list of collections below and assorted posts/publications.

Performance Objective #3

Amount of Cost Share Meets or Exceeds the Amount Approved by the NHPRC

To the best of my knowledge the amount of cost share meets or exceeds the amount approved by the NHPRC. The final financial report, prepared by the College of Charleston's office of research and grants administration will confirm this information.

Performance Objective #4 & #5

Digitize an Estimated 40,000 Pages from 10 Collections

Make all Digitized Material Available Through the Lowcountry Digital Library, the South Carolina Digital Library, and the Digital Public Library of America.

This project resulted in the digitization of 13 collections and 41,228 pages. During the grant period, 12 collections were digitized, described, and made accessible through the Lowcountry Digital Library. The 13th collection was partially digitized and described during the award period and will be accessible online presently. See below for more details on this collection (William "Bill" Saunders Papers).

Total summary statistics for digitization and metadata creation by Mr. Sfirri for the period of February 1, 2016 through July 31, 2017 are listed in the table below.

Digitization/Description Summary Data	2/1/2016– 07/31/17
Number of Collections Digitized	12 or 13, depending on how you want to count it. (13 th collection was in progress when grant period ended)
Total Linear Feet Digitized	36.25
Total Pages Scanned	41,228
Scans/Linear Foot	1,137.3
Total Metadata Records Created	30,848
Hours Creating Metadata	1,167.5

Below is a detailed list of collections digitized and their corresponding collection links.

Collection Title: Anna D. Kelly Papers

Collection Link: <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/anna-d-kelly-papers-1930s-1999>

Collection Title: Bernice V. Robinson Papers

Collection Link: <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/bernice-robinson-papers-1920-1989>

Collection Title: Book Lover's Club Records

Collection Link: <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/book-lovers-club-1927-1969>

Collection Title: Cleveland L. Sellers, Jr. Papers

Collection Link: <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/cleveland-l-sellers-jr-papers-1934-2003>

Collection Title: J. Arthur Brown Papers

Collection Link: <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/j-arthur-brown-papers-1937-1988>

Collection Title: Charleston Branch of the NAACP Records

Collection Link: <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/charleston-branch-national-association-advancement-colored-people-papers-1920-1995>

Collection Title: Esau Jenkins Papers

Collection Link: <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/esau-jenkins-papers-1963-2003>

Collection Title: Eugene C Hunt Papers

Collection Link: <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/eugene-c-hunt-papers-1834-1994>

Collection Title: Isaiah Bennett Papers

Collection Link: <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/isaiah-bennett-papers-ca-1932-2002>

Collection Title: Millicent E. Brown Papers

Collection Link: <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/millicent-e-brown-papers-1949-2003>

Collection Title: Septima Poinsette Clark Papers
Collection Link: <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/septima-p-clark-papers-ca-1910-ca-1990>

Collection Title: YWCA of Greater Charleston, Inc. Records
Collection Link: <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/ywca-greater-charleston-inc-records-1906-2007>

Collection Title: William “Bill” Saunders Papers
Collection Link: Pending. We digitized and described 3,555 pages of material from this collection under the grant award. This is reflected in the summary statistics at the top of this section. After the grant period ended we continued to digitize and describe this collection using our own funding, resulting in an additional 4,808 scans. These numbers are not reflected in the above summary statistics as they were not funded by this grant. The entirety of the collection will go live by November 15, 2017. We felt it appropriate to take the additional time with this collection as it was our 13th collection and we had already exceeded the objective of digitizing and putting online 10 collections.

All collection listed are accessible via the Lowcountry Digital Library. The South Carolina Digital Library harvests all of LCDL’s digitized content every other month. The Digital Public Library of America is scheduled to harvest all of SCDL’s content quarterly, though that schedule historically has varied widely, dependent on factors related to the DPLA. As SCDL and DPLA are entities separate from LCDL, these harvests are outside of our control. However, the data is all there in our OAI feed and is awaiting the next harvest cycle.

As you can see from the above collection homepage links, all digitized collections produced by this award acknowledge the National Historical Publications and Records Commission’s generous support and involvement.

Project Objective #6 Revise the EAD Finding Aids and MARC Records for the 10 Collections to Include Links to the Digital Surrogates.

Collection Title: Anna D. Kelly Papers
Record Link: <http://libcat.cofc.edu/record=b2170980~S1>

Collection Title: Bernice V. Robinson Papers
Record Link: <http://libcat.cofc.edu/record=b1690364~S1>

Collection Title: Book Lover's Club Records
Record Link: <http://libcat.cofc.edu/record=b1274777~S1>

Collection Title: Cleveland L. Sellers, Jr. Papers
Record Link: <http://libcat.cofc.edu/record=b1542008~S1>

Collection Title: J. Arthur Brown Papers

Record Link: <http://libcat.cofc.edu/record=b3030913~S1>

Collection Title: Charleston Branch of the NAACP Records

Record Link: <http://libcat.cofc.edu/record=b2317452~S1>

Collection Title: Esau Jenkins Papers

Record Link: <http://libcat.cofc.edu/record=b1513584~S1>

Collection Title: Eugene C Hunt Papers

Record Link: <http://libcat.cofc.edu/record=b2972977~S1>

Collection Title: Isaiah Bennett Papers

Record Link: <http://libcat.cofc.edu/record=b1895413~S1>

Collection Title: Millicent E. Brown Papers

Record Link: <http://libcat.cofc.edu/record=b1513582~S1>

Collection Title: Septima Poinsette Clark Papers

Record Link: <http://libcat.cofc.edu/record=b1513580~S1>

Collection Title: YWCA of Greater Charleston, Inc. Records

Record Link: <http://libcat.cofc.edu/record=b2122432~S1>

In addition to the 12 linked digital collections available above in our catalog, the digital collection links are also available in the MARC records available in WorldCat and Avery Research Center's digital collections page (<http://avery.cofc.edu/research/archives-and-library/digital-collections/>). The 13th collection digitized (Saunders) will be linked once the collection is online.

Project Objective #7 Create No Less than Two Online Exhibitions, Featured on the Lowcountry Digital History Initiative that Highlight the Project's Digitized Materials.

During the period of February 1, 2016 through July 31, 2017, the project completed performance objective #7 and has now officially published two digital exhibits which feature materials digitized through this grant. Exhibit #1 was completed in May of 2016. Exhibit #2 was officially released to the promoted and released to the public in February of 2017, completing performance objective #7. Details for both exhibits are as follows:

Exhibit One Details

Exhibit Title:

Avery: The Spirit That Would Not Die, 1865-2015

Exhibit Description:

2015 marked the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Avery Normal Institute and the 30th anniversary of the establishment of the [Avery Research Center](#) for African

American History and Culture at the College of Charleston. This online exhibition explores the history of Avery, from its origins as a school for Black Charlestonians starting in 1865, to its current form as a center for promoting the history and culture of the African diaspora, with an emphasis on Charleston and the South Carolina Lowcountry.

Project Partner/Author: The College of Charleston's Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture
Publication Date: May 2016
Link to Live Exhibit: <http://ldhi.library.cofc.edu/exhibits/show/avery>

Exhibit Two Details

Exhibit Title: Remembering Individuals, Remembering Communities: Septima P. Clark in Charleston's Public History Landscape
Exhibit Description: This online exhibition interprets and maps the life of Septima Poinsette Clark—an African American civil rights educator, activist, and Charleston native—to interrogate historic and present day divisions in Charleston's public history landscape. The project is based on a presentation delivered by Katherine Mellen Charron, author of *Freedom's Teacher: The Life of Septima Clark*, at the 2015 Southern Association for Women Historians' Conference in Charleston, South Carolina.

Project Partner/Author: Katherine Mellen Charron
Publication Date: February 2017
Link to Live Exhibit: http://ldhi.library.cofc.edu/exhibits/show/septima_clark

There are two more exhibits which will include content digitized during this project, including “20th Century African American History: Desegregation at the College of Charleston” and “Morris Street Business District: Diversity and Preservation in Charleston, South Carolina.” These exhibits are currently under peer review and we hope to publish them within the next 6-12 months.

Performance Objective #8 Make Announcements on Relevant Listservs including the Society of American Archivists, Humanities and Social Sciences On-line (H-Net) and South Carolina Archival Association (SCAA). Also Promote the Project via Social Media, including LCDL's Tumblr, Twitter and Facebook feeds, SCDL's Facebook page, and the DPLA's Tumblr and Twitter feeds.

Posts have been made to various listservs. The College of Charleston has posted about the ongoing process of this grant project. Social media postings have been made throughout the award period highlighting the addition of new collections. The following serve as examples of this promotional work:

Guest blog post on College of Charleston's Southern Studies website:

<http://blogs.cofc.edu/southern-studies-minor/2017/10/24/uplift-and-activism-at-the-avery/>

LCDL blog post announcing completion of grant:

<http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/announcing-completion-our-nhprc-grant>

LCDL's Tumblr feed regularly features content from the grant:

<http://lowcountrydigitallibrary.tumblr.com/tagged/avery-research-center>

These posts are mirrored on LCDL's Facebook page and Twitter feed:

<https://www.facebook.com/lowcountrydigital/>

<https://twitter.com/LCDigitalLib>

In fact, our project was tweeted by the Society of American Archivists:

https://twitter.com/archivists_org/status/912832940303880192

The South Carolina Digital Library's Facebook page also posted about the completion of this grant: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthCarolinaDigitalLibrary>

Project Objective #9 Speak at Two Conferences for K- 12 Educators, University Faculty, and Cultural Heritage Professionals. Also Submit a Case Study for Publication in a Professional Journal.

Heather Gilbert spoke at the Society of American Archivists annual meeting in Atlanta Georgia in August of 2016. She delivered the presentation, "Context Clues: Building Workflows Between Digital Libraries and Digital Exhibit Platforms" where she discussed "Digitizing Twentieth Century Civil Rights Collections" as an example of the benefits of collaboration between platform types.

Heather Gilbert and Barrye Brown delivered a webinar on the Lowcountry Digital Library to the Archives and Archivists of Color round table of the Society of American Archivists in August of 2016. In the second half of the presentation Barrye Brown discussed this project in detail, including the collections to be digitized and the possibility of partnerships and outreach.

Amanda Noll, Lowcountry Digital History Initiative (LDHI) Project Coordinator, Mary Battle, LDHI Director, and Barrye Brown, Education Outreach Archivist for the Avery Research Center spoke at the International Conference on the Inclusive Museum held at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati, OH on September 16-19, 2016. They spoke about their experiences working with various community partners to promote awareness of the history of racial injustice in Charleston, South Carolina. Topics included the project, "Digitizing Twentieth Century Civil Rights Collections" funded by the NHPRC, with an emphasis on increased accessibility to archival materials on the topic of civil rights history.

Sam Sfirri, Project Digitization and Metadata Specialist for this award, delivered a presentation entitled, “Digitizing 20th Century Civil Rights Collections,” providing attendees insight on the grant process, collection overview, and digitization statistics at the South Carolina Digital Library’s statewide conference in July 2016. Additionally, he has contributed a co-authored an article that will appear in the upcoming Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture’s publication entitled, “The Messenger.” This article discusses the nature of the project made possible by the NHPRC, including its scope and highlights from the collections digitized thus far. Additionally, Mr. Sfirri has published a short article discussing the project, progress, and digitization statistics to the inaugural issue of the South Carolina Digital Library’s newsletter.

Barrye Brown spoke at the Mid-South Sociological Conference, North Charleston, SC in October 2016 where she delivered the panel presentation “The College of Charleston’s Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture” which discussed this digitization project and progress made thus far.

Amanda Noll, Lowcountry Digital History Initiative (LDHI) Project Coordinator and Aaisha Haykal, Manager of Archival Services for the Avery Research Center spoke at the South Carolina Federation of Museums annual meeting held in Walterboro, SC on March 10, 2017. They spoke about their experiences working with various community partners to promote awareness of the history of desegregation in Charleston, South Carolina. Topics included the project, “Digitizing Twentieth Century Civil Rights Collections” funded by the NHPRC, with an emphasis on increased accessibility to archival materials on the topic of desegregation history. The presentation was entitled, “Somebody Had To Do It: Collection, Preserving, and Exhibiting Stories of Integration.”

Mr. Sfirri published a short article discussing the project, progress, and digitization statistics to the inaugural issue of the South Carolina Digital Library’s newsletter and has submitted a second, companion piece about the ongoing project for the next issue.

Finally, Manager of Archival Services, Aaisha Haykal, Education Outreach Archivist for the Avery, Barrye Brown, both of the Avery Research Center and Heather Gilbert, published a case study in the September/October 2017 edition of [Archival Outlook](http://bluetoast.com/publication/?i=439853&ver=html5&p=10#%22page%22:10,%22issue_id%22:439853), the award-winning magazine of the Society of American Archivists (http://bluetoast.com/publication/?i=439853&ver=html5&p=10#%22page%22:10,%22issue_id%22:439853).

Summary

We have learned an enormous amount through the completion of this award. Not just about the history and heroics of the figures whose papers we digitized, but about the methods and workflows we use to digitize and describe this material. We completed this grant very successfully, digitizing more collections and pages than required, publishing and promoting the collections more than required, and reassessing our project workflows in ways we hadn’t previously imagined. In addition to bringing these important papers to the national stage, we also learned how to be better archivists and more efficient

digitization specialists. We are in an excellent position for future digitization grants and will use what we have learned during this project to apply for future funding, when the appropriate time and project arises. Thank you for this opportunity.