



Living Our Distinctives

Archives and Special Collections

A duPont-Ball Library *distinctive*, the University's Archives and Special Collections houses a wealth of historical information about Stetson University, the surrounding areas of DeLand and West Volusia, and successful alumni. Our many Special Collections include information unique to Stetson - which strengthens the quality of our library and brings recognition to the Stetson University name.

The Archives staff supports researchers, authors, and filmmakers, but also collaborates with faculty to help incorporate primary sources from the Archives into research assignments, and to teach their students the value of historical sources and artifacts. Public History and American Studies classes explore the Archives regularly, and students sometimes discover something that especially sparks their curiosity. Such was the case with Jessica Algieri who, after reading Elizabeth Stetson's 1917 diary, not only made Elizabeth the topic of her senior research, but went all the way to Portugal to find information on Elizabeth's time as a Countess in that country (see sidebar and below).

The Archives is filled with history, and we have witnessed over and over again that our collections are also powerfully nostalgic for our alumni. We are pleased to offer electronic access to most items in the Archives at archives.stetson.edu.



JESSICA ALGIERI ('19)



Jessica Algieri worked as a student assistant at the front desk and in the Innovation Lab, but her real passion is history. A Public History class visit to the Archives and Special Collections led to Jessica's unique senior research project.

"The Archives are actually what inspired my Senior Research into Elizabeth Stetson. I [learned about] Elizabeth Stetson, and that Elizabeth was a Countess in Portugal via her second marriage. I felt an instant pull towards Elizabeth's fascinating story and I wanted to learn all I could about it, so I made that my senior research. I even got to visit Elizabeth's castle on a trip to Portugal that was funded by a Stetson SURE Grant. My experience in the archives was fantastic. There was so much information and artifacts about Elizabeth that had been so well cataloged I was able to shorten my timetable drastically to get all the information I needed."

Recent Important Gifts

John B. Stetson IV and wife Solveig donated 450 photographs and memorabilia items pertaining



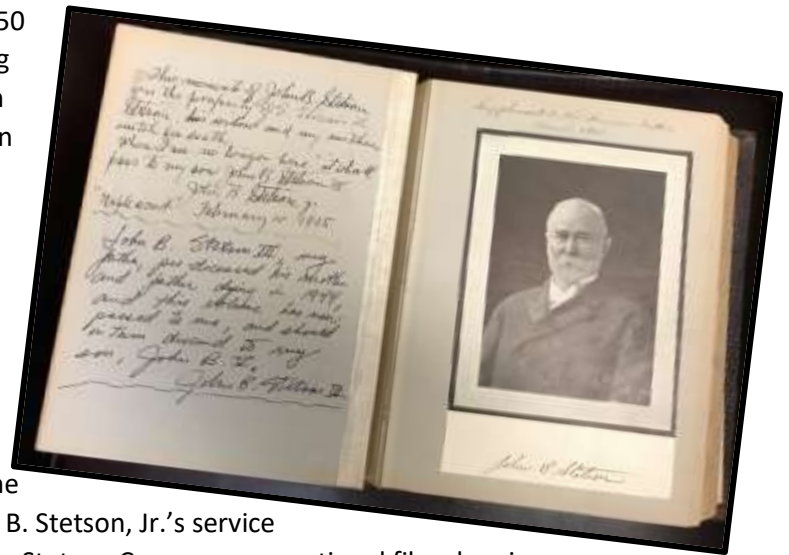
to the John B. Stetson family and company in March 2016. The gift included Elizabeth Stetson's 1917 diary

detailing the death of her second husband, the Count of Santa Eulalia; Elizabeth's widow's parasol; a book of John B. Stetson's obituaries; and more than a dozen reels of Stetson family home

movies from the 1920s. The films include John B. Stetson, Jr.'s service

as the U. S. Minister to Poland along with a rare Stetson Company promotional film showing the hat manufacturing process from beginning to end. ***The University now holds the largest known***

collection of Stetson Family history.



Jim Cara, a local merchant, donated a 19th century Native American dugout canoe, called *The Cypress Room Canoe* by the State Archives, that was part of the State of Florida exhibit at the 1933-34 Chicago World's Fair, and hung for years in DeLand's Putnam Hotel. The canoe is believed to have been made by the Seminoles using metal tools. The canoe now hangs on the main floor of the duPont-Ball Library.



This year, the Archives received the first college diploma issued by John B. Stetson University. Awarded to Leila May Child, the first and only college graduate in 1893 (previous Stetson graduates had all gone through the pre-college preparatory programs), the diploma is a unique and very special addition to the Archives. Donated by Leila's grandchildren, Betty Carol Smith and David Mann, the diploma is printed on vellum, written in Latin, and signed by Stetson's first president, John Forbes.

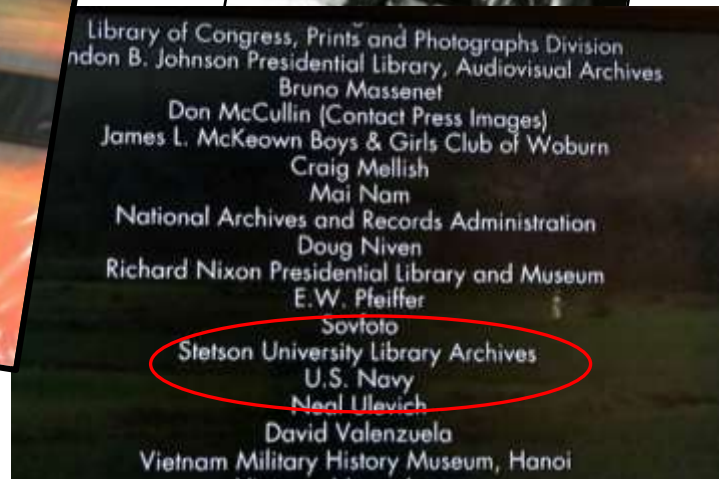
Donation of family treasures is often a tough decision – and sometimes emotional for the people involved. The Archives' excellent stewardship of physical gifts with attention to preservation, recordkeeping, and displaying gifts on-site and online is what convinces many donors that the Stetson University Archives is the right home for their memorabilia.

Exhibit, Documentary, and Book Credits

Vintage panoramic photographs from the Archives were featured in the Southeast Museum of Photography's exhibit, *Edge to Edge: Vintage Panoramic Photography in Florida*.



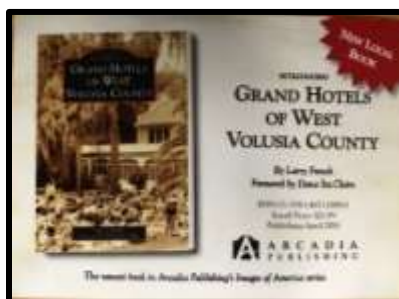
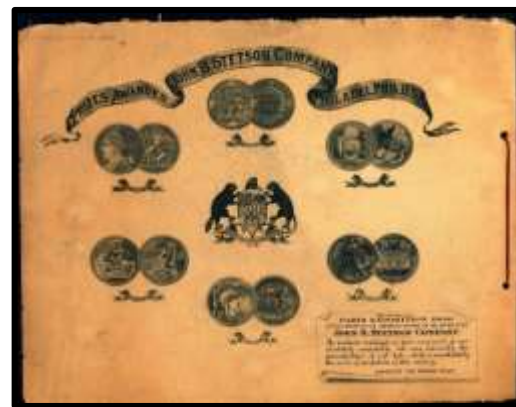
For several years, the library provided material (primarily from the Max Cleland Collection) to Ken Burns' production company in support of his documentary on Vietnam. The ten-part series, first aired in September 2017, featured alumnus Max Cleland ('64), along with material from the Max Cleland Collection. Similar to the work with Ken Burns, Archives staff provided photographs to the History Channel for the Emmy award-winning documentary series *Vietnam in HD*.



A Gillespie Museum exhibition on Florida featured photographs from the Archives' large 130-item Ross Allen Collection, donated by alumnus Jay Mechling ('67). A true Florida character, Allen attended Stetson as a freshman, and founded the Ross Allen Reptile Institute at Silver Springs in 1929. He featured native snakes, alligators, and a replica Indian Village with Seminoles that he recruited to work for him. Allen was known for milking snakes and wrestling alligators in front of Silver Springs' audiences.



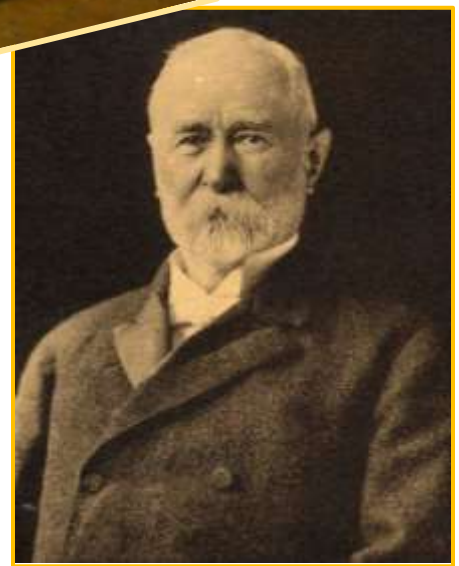
The Archives provided a significant amount of information and material to Robert England, who has written *Stetson: An American Icon*, the first biography of John B. Stetson (to be published in 2020), with Library Dean Susan Ryan quoted several times in the manuscript. So little is known about John B. Stetson, however, that the majority of the book focuses on the hats he made famous rather than biographical facts. (Photo of Stetson Company catalog from Robert England's draft manuscript, right).



Archives material was also used in the book *Grand Hotels of West Volusia County*, by Larry French, part of a popular Arcadia Publishing local history series. Authors from around the country often ask to include photographs from our Archives in books that they are writing. The topics are many – from the history of tennis to everything you ever wanted to know about the cabbage palm tree (Florida's state tree).

The strength of any Archives is its Special Collections that contain unique material. Sharing Archives' material with authors, museums, newspapers, television producers, and filmmakers brings recognition to the Stetson University name. For some for-profit companies, the library licenses photographs for a fee, but we usually provide photographs for free with photo credit.

Photographs and physical items from the Archives were used by sculptor Erik Blome (below with Wendy Libby), commissioned by the University for a John B. Stetson bronze sculpture that sits near the Rinker Welcome Center.



Sampling of Others Receiving Material from the Stetson Archives:

Association of Chinese Americans for Social Justice
Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Finding the Fountain of Youth, book by Rick Kilby
Florida Historical Society
Georgia Historical Society
Guidepost Magazine
Hatch Entertainment, Colorado
History Meeting House, Warsaw, Poland
Information Society Development Foundation, Poland
Library of Congress
Sonny's BBQ, DeLand
Stetson Mansion
Vintage Florida Baseball Team
Warrior Care and Transition, Arlington, Virginia
West Volusia Historical Society
World Cheerleading Hall of Fame Museum, Texas
WUCF, *Central Florida Roadtrip* Television Show



Archives and Special Collections Online

archives.stetson.edu



Photographs
31,500 items
1880s-present



Stover Theatre
419 items
1913-1970s



Memorabilia
11,000 items
1880s-present



University Documents
6,500 items
1887-present



University Catalogs
218 items
1886-present



Max Cleland
Political Memorabilia
15,700 items
625 online



Student Newspapers
2,400 items
1887-present



Clay Shaw
Political Memorabilia
4,300 items
450 online
250,000 papers



Student Research
670 items
1957-present



M. Jean Greenlaw
Children's Literature
1,500 items



Stetson Yearbooks
94 items
1908-2002



Regar
Civil War & Early Stetson
265 items