



# **Digitizing Riley House: Collaborating to bring a Museum's Archives Online**

Society of Florida Archivists Annual Meeting

Tuesday, May 11, 2023

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# John G. Riley Center & Museum of African American History and Culture

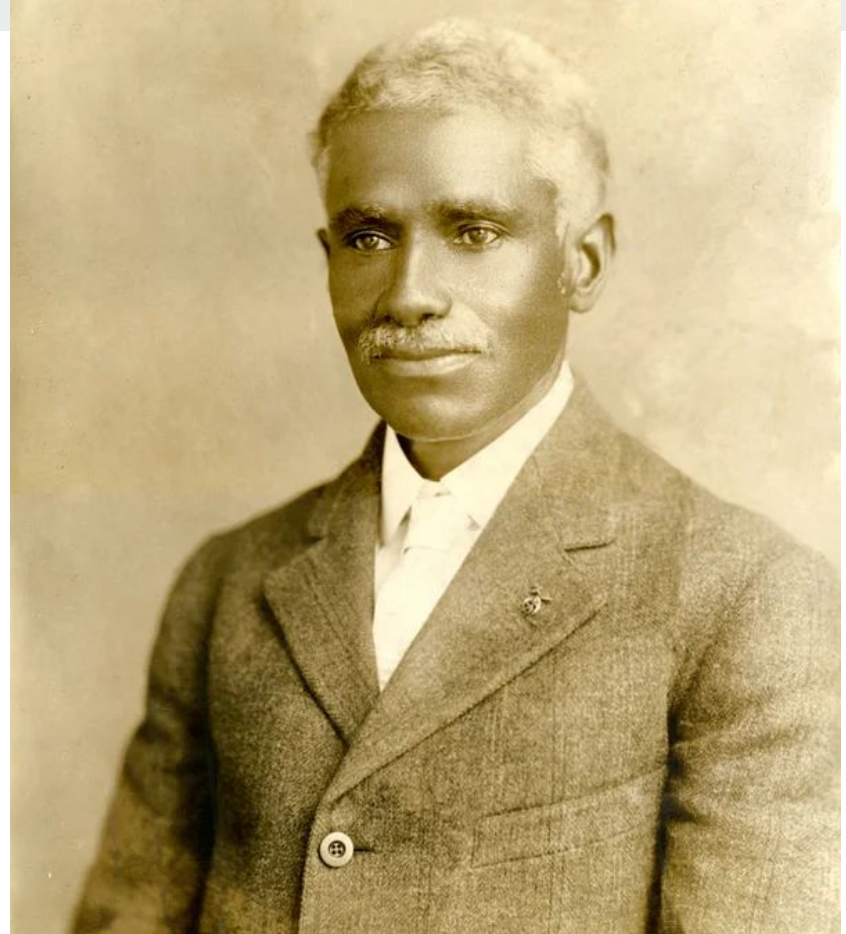
- Who is John G. Riley?
- What is the Riley House?



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## Who is John G. Riley?

- Born in 1857
- Businessman, Community Leader, Family Man, Educator
- House was built in 1890





## What is the John G. Riley Center & Museum?

- At the core of our mission: Outreach, education, and advocacy
- Our Founder, Althemese Barnes
- Celebrates Mr. Riley's life, which was one of triumph of achievement and elegant living
- More than a museum
  - Research Center
  - Families and communities across Tallahassee and Leon County

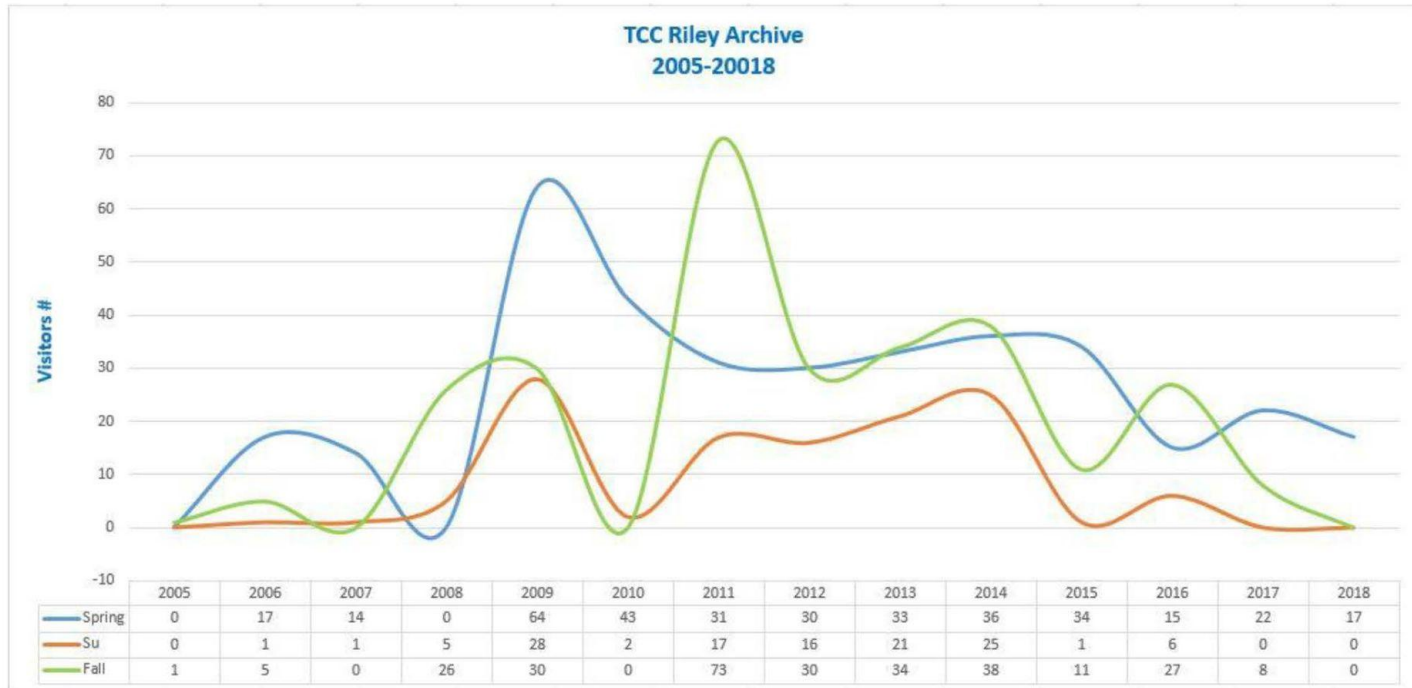
# TCC Riley Museum Archive

- Acquire special collections, otherwise forgotten; Local focus.
- Cultivate critical and analytical skill-sets in examining primary and secondary sources
- Preserve collective memory
- Share legacy of resilience, faith and integrity
- Educate youth, community sector stakeholders

*John Gilmore Riley*  
*Center / Museum of African American History & Culture*



# Archive activity



# Archive Use

## □ Student visits

- 775 approx. over 10 year period
- 25-30 visits /semester
- Primarily history students, secondarily sociology, anthropology, english and art.
- High interest in Harpers Weekly, Thelma Gorham, JN Crooms, Leon Co Schools collections with issue interest in Slavery, Jim Crow, Smokey Hollow late 19<sup>th</sup> century black women pioneers and plantations of Leon County.

## □ Visits by Semesters

- **Fall-** Typically strong visits. Average range between 25-30 students enrolled in History courses. Although course offerings, the Archive attracts patrons from current faculty.
- **Spring-** Stronger visits begin in late February/early March around a broad course offerings: Sociology, History, Humanities, Anthropology
- **Summers-** Less visits; supplemented with family reunion research from community.

# Archive

- Faculty engagement
  - Three to four faculty on avg. per semester; less in summer.
  - Proctor, Phipps, Owens, Oliver, Agama, Thompkins
  - Librarians- Regularly engage around primary & secondary sourcing for papers; co-present Librarian instruction
- Collection Management
  - Storage, Process, Catalog, Finding Aids
  - Archival storage, includes secondary texts
  - Listings in Aleph system
- Archive Lib-Guide
  - Complementary link to database and search for primary and secondary resources
- Small Collection
  - Local, hidden, untold culture, legacy of African-American pioneers.
  - Education focus- 1863to early 1980s.
  - Size: 852 Linear feet
    - Books, manuscripts, papers and limited art.



# Academic Discipline linkage

- History & Social Sciences
- Communications & Humanities
- Arts, Education, Business & Technology

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# History & Social Sciences

## Collections

- ❑ African American Studies
- ❑ African American Heritage Trail
- ❑ American Missionary Assoc.
- ❑ Antebellum South/Slavery
- ❑ Black Beaches 1935-1997
- ❑ Black Churches
- ❑ Civil Rights Collection
- ❑ Florida Black History
- ❑ Gadsden County Community
- ❑ John G. Riley House Museum
- ❑ Midwives Collection 1951-1979
- ❑ Cemeteries Collection
- ❑ First Lincoln High School 1876-1970

## Courses

(Applicable to multiple collections)

- ❑ AMH 2070 Florida History
- ❑ AMH 2091 African American History
- ❑ DEP 2004 Human Development
- ❑ EDG 2701 Teaching Diverse Populations
- ❑ GEO 1400 Intro to Human Geography
- ❑ IDS 2194 FL History, People , Politics
- ❑ IDS 2310 Methods for Soc. Science
- ❑ MAR 1053 Marketing for Non-Profits
- ❑ CPO Intro to Comparative Politics
- ❑ PLA 2610 Real Estate Law and Property
- ❑ SOP 2002 Social Psychology
- ❑ REL 2200 Intro to Biblical Studies

# Communication & Humanities

## Collections

- Thelma Gorham Collection
- Emancipation Essays
- Oral Histories
- Phylon Journals
- Ebony/Jet Collection
- Harper's Weekly Collection
- Leon County Schools
- Historic Buildings & Places
- Florida History
- Florida A&M University Collection
- Florida Black Schools
- Geraldine Johnson Collection

## Courses

(Applicable to multiple collections)

- AML 2600 African-American Literature
- ARH 2500 Non Western Art History
- ENC 1141 Writing about Literature
- ENC 1102 Argument and persuasion
- FIL 1930 Special Topics in Film
- HUM 2210(30) Humanities I & II
- HUM 2525 American Music : Jazz
- IDS 2900 Multicultural American Society
- IDS Applied Ethics Seminar
- IDS 2194 FL –History, People, Politics
- JOU 2440L Literary Magazine Prod.
- MMC 1000 Survey of Mass Media
- SYG 2230 Race& Minority Relations

# Arts, Education & Technology

## Collections

- TCC Riley Archive
- Dissertation and Theses
- Tallahassee Community Collection
- First Lincoln High School 1876 -1970
- John G. Riley Collection
- Thelma Gorham Collection
- Multicultural Collection
- Ebony/Jet Collection
- Florida Black Schools

## Courses

(Applicable to multiple collections)

- SPC 2600 Public Speaking
- ART 2050 Intro to Art History
- EME 2040 Intro to Educational Technology
- MMC 1000 Survey of Mass Media
- CNT 1000 Intro to Networks & Telecomm
- CGS 1540 Database Concepts
- MGF 1106/1107 Math for Liberal Arts
- LIB 2004 Intro to Internet Research
- ART 1202 C Design I
- ECO 2013 Macro Economics
- CGS 1820 Web Page Authoring
- THE 1000 Intro to the Theatre
- GRA 1131C Multimedia Graphics Design

<b>Collection(s)</b>	<b>Course(s)</b>	<b>Areas of Study</b>	
1. African American Studies	AMH 2091,-70	History	
2. The African American Heritage Trail	AMH 2091	Humanities	
3. American Missionary Association	AMH 1040, 2010,-91	Sociology	
4. The Antebellum South/Slavery	AMH 1040, 2010,-92	History	
5. Black Abolitionist Papers	AMH 1040, 2010,-93	History	
6. Black Beaches 1935-1997	AMH 2070,-91	History	
7. Black Churches	REL 2000	Religion, Philosophy, Sociology, Poli Sci	
8. Black Newspaper	AMH 2091	Technology and Professional Programs	
9. Cemeteries Collection	ANT 2410	Anthropology, History	
10. Civil Rights Collection	AMH 1050, AMH 2020,-91	History	
11. Dissertation and Theses Collection	AMH 2091	Humanities	
12. Emancipation Essays Collection	AMH 2091	History	
13. Family Reunion Planning	AML 2600, ENC 1101,-02, IDS 2194	Sociology, English, Humanities, Communication	
14. Florida A & M University Collection	IDS 2194, AMH 2091	Education, Pol. Sci,	
15. First Lincoln High School 1876-1970	AMH 2091	Education, Pol. Sci,	
16. Florida Black History	AMH 2091, IDS 2194	History	
17. Florida Black Schools	AMH 2091	Education, Pol. Sci,	
18. Florida Heritage Education	IDS 2194, AMH 2091	Education, Pol. Sci,	
19. Florida History	IDS 2194, AMH 2091	Humanities	
20. Gadsden County Communities	REL 2000, GEO 1400	History	
21. Genealogy	AMH 2091	Sociology	
22. Geraldine Johnson Collection	AMH 2091,	History	
23. Grant Writing Collection	PAD 2002	Cert. Non Profit Management	
24. Harper's Weekly Collection	JOU 2440L, IDS 2900	Media Technology,	
25. Historic Building and Places	REL 2000	Technology and Professional Programs	
26. Historic Tallahassee	REL 2000	Technology and Professional Programs	
27. John G. Riley House Museum	REL 2000, PAD 2002	History, Technology and Professional Programs	
28. Midwives Collections 1951-1979	SYG 1000, SOW 1031, ISS 2310, RET 2936	Sociology,	
29. Leon County Schools	IDS 2194, AMH 2091	History & Social Sciences	
30. Multicultural Collection	SYG 2230, SOP 2002, EPI 0030, EDG 2701, ANT 2410	Arts, Education & Technology	
31. NAACP Collection	IDS2900, -94, SYG 2230,	Arts, Education & Technology, History & Soc.Sci	
32. Oral History	ENC 1102	Communication and Humanities	
33. Organization and Clubs	AMH 2091, IDS 2194	History & Social Sciences	
34. Phylon Journals	JOU 2440L	Communication and Humanities	
35. Tallahassee Communities	AMH 2070, IDS 2194, REE1040	History & Social Sciences	
36. Thelma T Gorham Collection	IDS 2310, JOU 2440 L, MMC1000	Communication and Humanities	

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**In 2021, IMLS awarded the John G  
Riley Center and Museum of African  
American History and Culture a  
\$246,250 Museum Grant for African  
American History and Culture**



## 2021: Taking Time to Prep

- The original Project Team was called to order in October 2021
- Outlining the different needs to get in place prior to hiring of Interns
  - Logistics
  - Documentation
  - Workflows
- Outlining ideas of prioritization for digitization
- Exploring Omeka options

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## 2022: Figuring Out How to Actually Do the Work

- Things took a little longer than planned (shocking!) and the planning stage went through April 2022
- Our first cohort of interns started in May 2022
- May 21st was the first workshop held as part of the grant
- Making all the adjustments because what we thought would work did not...



Noah Cole, Neissa Philamon and Daniel Arenas, first intern cohort, with project developer Kiah Asabea



# 2023: Continuing the Work around (Temporary) Road Blocks



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## Collections

Listed below are the collections that are a part of the John G. Riley Center & Museum's Digital Archive.

### Gorham Collection

The Gorham collection consists of papers of Florida A&M University professor, Thelma T. Gorham, 1913-1992. The Collection spans over Gorham's lifetime. It includes papers, correspondence, photographs, greeting and postcards, and memorabilia. The arrangement of the collection is in both series and box identification. The series are: correspondence, educational and professional career, memorabilia, three-dimensional objects, IET Magazine



### Crooms Collection

The Joseph Nathaniel Crooms Papers consist of documents related to Crooms Academy named for J.N. Crooms, whose parents were slaves on a Tallahassee area plantation, and who, along with his wife, Wealthy Mabel Crooms, started the school Crooms Academy and were its first principal and assistant principal respectively. The Crooms Academy began operation in 1920 and until 1970, the Crooms Academy during the same time Bethune



### Hidden Sagas

"Hidden Sagas: Stories of Florida's African American Experience" Oral History Project had its roots as a response to the Florida Humanities Council's 30th Anniversary celebration in 2003, and three year initiative entitled "Telling Florida's Stories: Strengthening Florida Communities." The specific goal of this project was to collect the reminiscences of black Floridians who had lived through the Jim Crow Era and witnessed the changes wrought by the Civil Rights



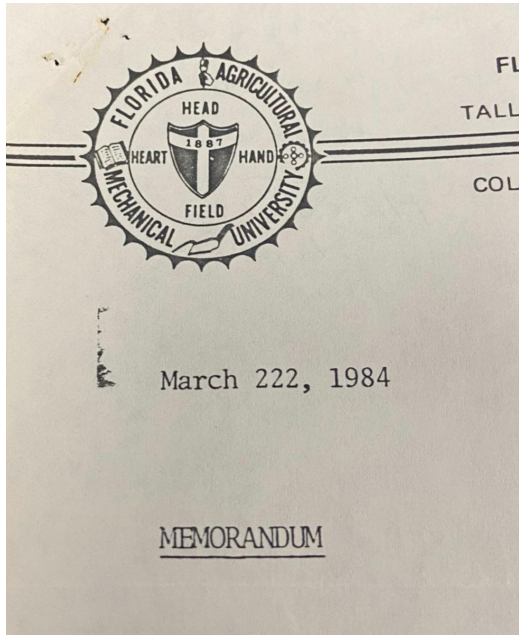
- Complete review of all collections and doing a full prioritization re-work. Being clear we aren't getting to everything and why
- Adjusting digitization guidelines and expectations
- Omeka Growing Pains
- Adding interns to help with the time deficient

# Internship Experience



- Neissa Philemon
  - Undergraduate
  - Pre-medical
  - Public Health
- Items
  - black experiences
  - primary and secondary sources
  - diverse forms of material
- Digitizing
  - familiar with software
  - organization through language
  - time efficiency
- Future
  - culture and the healthcare institution
  - public health
  - telehealth

# Caroline's Experience



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**Thank You!**  
**Questions?**