

## Welcome to Special Collections at Randall Library!

Whether you're an undergraduate, a graduate student or a professional researcher, Special Collections has many different types of materials that are available for you to see and use.

In Special Collections, you can find items like Rare and Special books, Manuscript Collections, Oral Histories, Maps and Art. Special Collections also has exhibits throughout the year showcasing unique items in our collection.

Some of our collections include:

- The Southeast North Carolina Collection
  - Which includes books written about Southeast North Carolina or written by authors from the region.
- The History of Science Collection
  - Which includes rare books related to scientific topics dating back to 1750.
- The History of Medicine Collection
  - Which includes rare books related to medicine and medical education dating back to 1600.
- The Special Book Collection
  - Which includes rare or unique books that require special care such as miniature books and 1<sup>st</sup> or limited edition books.
- Manuscript Collections
  - Which include letters, diaries, photographs and many other types of materials associated with important individuals, families or businesses.

The best part about these collections is that they are here for you to use! However, many of the items in Special Collections are not only rare, but also fragile and need special handling. Because of this, we have to use them a little differently from the rest of the collections in Randall Library.

Let me walk you through the process of finding, requesting and accessing items in Special Collections.

### Finding

The first step is to search the library catalog or the Special Collections website. You don't have to visit Special Collections to do this.

When you search the library's catalog, you might see locations such as:

- UNCW SENC-Books
- UNCW Special-Books
- UNCW Special- Hist of Med
- Special Collections-History of Science
- UNCW Special-Manuscript

This location means that the item can be requested in the Special Collections Reading Room. Make a note of the item's call number and title for your visit.

You can also search the special collections website for manuscript collections and oral histories. There, you will find guides called finding aids that can provide you with information about the manuscript

collection and its contents. Some manuscript collections are not processed but still available for you to use. If you have trouble searching or can't find what you are looking for, you can always ask a librarian for assistance.

## Requesting

The next step is to request the item in Special Collections at Randall Library. We are located on the second floor of the library near the auditorium. In general, Special Collections is open Monday through Thursday from 9 to 5 and Friday from 9 to 12.

When you arrive at Special Collections, ring the doorbell and staff member will let you in.

You are allowed use pencil and paper, or your laptop or mobile device if you would like to take notes during your visit. The rest of your belongings can be stored in the lockers located in the front of Special Collections.

Be aware that food and beverages are not permitted in Special Collections.

You will be asked to fill out a simple registration form and at this time you can also speak with a staff member about the items that you are interested in viewing. While you make yourself comfortable at a table in the reading room or browse the exhibit on display, we will retrieve the items that you requested from the closed stacks.

If an item that you requested is old or fragile, we will show you how to handle it safely. Photography without flash is permitted for most items in Special Collections. Once your research is complete, a staff member will assist you with checking out. Don't forget that the librarians are there to help you if you have any questions along the way.

Now you're all set to start your research. We look forward to seeing you in special collections.