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Pearl Carter Pace: A Women Ahead of Her Time

A Cumberland County woman's civic and political career stretched outside her home, taking her influence even to the nation's capitol.

That woman was Pearl Carter Pace, whose papers, correspondence, photographs and other memorabilia are a part of the Manuscripts unit of the Library Special Collections Department.

Pat Hodges, Manuscripts Supervisor, said part of the Pace Collection came to Western in 1970. Then, last fall, Pace's granddaughter, Rebecca Gray, of Burkesville, contacted Hodges, saying several more boxes of materials, discovered in a barn, would also be coming to the University.

To process materials most recently added to his mother's collection, Stanley C. Pace donated \$10,000, "a thoughtful and generous gift," Hodges said, providing resources necessary to give more immediate attention to the collection.

Pearl Carter was born in Tompkinsville in 1896. She became a school teacher; was wife and mother; ran a successful business; and became very active in politics, serving in many local and state Republican Party positions and as the Republican National Committeewoman for Kentucky from 1948 to 1957.

She brought national attention to Kentucky when President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed her in 1953 to the War Claims Commission (later the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission). Near the end of his administration, Eisenhower elevated her to Commission chairman, making her the second highest ranking woman in his administration, next only to the Treasurer, and the first Kentucky woman appointed by a President to a national post.

Research indicates that Pearl Carter Pace had a great philosophy of life: "Anybody can do anything he wants if he just wants enough to make the effort."

This philosophy took her into areas of life pretty much uncharted for rural, southern women. Of all her accomplishments, perhaps none catapulted her to fame more than her tenure as Cumberland County Sheriff, a position she held from 1937-1941. Although other women had served in this capacity, Pace was the first Kentucky woman--and perhaps the first in the nation--to be elected to the post.

According to written accounts, Pace's husband, Stanley Dan Pace, had been "drafted" in 1933 to run for Cumberland County Sheriff by county citizens determined to control rum-running during prohibition. He was elected--the first Democrat to hold that office since the 1800s. When his term ended, he was unable to succeed himself, so Pearl was drafted to run and was elected.

Mrs. Pace assumed her husband would continue to handle problems that arose, but that wasn't the case. "It wasn't until I took the oath of office that I realized it was I--not him--who had been elected," Pace said. "I was going to wear the badge."

Pace drew on her wit to curtail lawlessness. The most recalled example was a bootlegging raid. Despite covert efforts, Pace said in written accounts, suspects often knew about raids in enough time to hide evidence. Such was the case when Mrs. Pace and her deputies called on a woman who was suspected of moonshining.

When "the sheriff" and her deputies arrived at the woman's home, they could find not liquor. However, intuition provided the evidence Pace needed.

"There was a washing machine on the front porch, but on the edge of the porch was a tub of water," Pace said.

"The other tubs were dry. I knew there was something wrong with the picture and it suddenly dawned on me what it was. I rolled up my sleeve, put my arm in the tub of water and pulled out 3 half gallon jugs. My deputies asked how I figured it out.

"Being a woman, I knew that no mountain woman would ever let sundown catch her with her clothes on the line or her wash not completed."

Her tenure as Cumberland County Sheriff earned her titles such as "Pistol Packing Pearl" and "Two Gun Pace," although she said she never actually used a gun.

After resigning her Washington position in 1961, Pace moved back to Burkesville. Documents say soon after she had a massive stroke, leaving her with a speech impediment and partial impairment in her right arm and right leg.

Her indomitable spirit and tenacity were exhibited even near the end. From her ICU bed, Pace greeted relatives by gesturing at the surrounding machines saying, "Don't worry about them, I am ready to go. I am just not in a hurry."

Pace died January 14, 1970, in the county hospital.

Editor's Note: The writer is a student assistant in the Office of Marketing/Special Events for University Libraries.

~Erika Gladhill

WKU Libraries Internet Resources Available to Friends of the Libraries

A new benefit available to Friends of the Libraries is eligibility to access a number of WKU Libraries' Web-based services and databases. In addition to the benefit of library borrowing privileges already enjoyed, Friends with Internet connectivity can now access 18 databases from office or home via WKU Libraries' subscriptions to several Internet reference services.

As described below, the data bases available span all disciplines and range from bibliographic to full text. Results of searches can be printed, downloaded, e-mailed and, in some cases, faxed from wherever a Friend may have an Internet connection.

The Libraries makes available several databases through the popular InfoTrac SearchBank system. Expanded Academic indexes nearly 2,000 interdisciplinary periodicals from 1980 and provides the full text of articles, many with graphics, from over 500 of these periodicals. The Health Reference Center provides the full text of health-related articles from over 1,500 periodicals and provides the full text of over 500; and Net First, a catalog of Internet resources with hyperlinks. Also included are government, medical, education and literature databases, among others.

Finally, through the ProQuest system, Friends also have access to ABI/INFORM Global, the premier business database subscribed to by 18 of the top 20 MBA programs in the country. It indexes nearly 1,500 business-related journals dating back to 1971 and provides the full text of articles, many with graphics, from over 700 of those journals beginning as early as 1991. In addition to printing, downloading and e-mail delivery options, the ProQuest Direct system also offers faxing capabilities.

A quote from John Wigodsky sums up how Friends are reacting to this new benefit: "Access to WKU's Library online data bases was an unexpected and valuable benefit of my Library membership. I am now able to access from home or the office a wealth of data which I previously could get only at the library. My Friends membership has more than paid for itself..."

To obtain passwords and access instruction for the databases available, Friends may contact Elaine Moore, the Libraries' Electronic Information Coordinator by phone (502/745-6122) or e-mail (elaine.moore@wku.edu.).

~Elaine Moore

Check It Out!

The university Libraries/Kentucky Museum home page on the WWW has a new look and new features to make it more accessible. Spend some time and explore what the home page has to offer, at <http://www.wku.edu/Library>.

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Charitable Gift Annuity Program

Friends and alumni of Western Kentucky University now have a new way to provide financial support for university programs, while at the same time reducing personal taxes and providing for their future financial security. At their April meeting, the WKU Foundation Board of Directors approved a policy to create a charitable gift annuity program for the university.

By utilizing a gift annuity, a donor can transfer cash or property to Western and receive a favorably taxed and dependable income for as long as he or she lives. In addition, a portion of the gift may immediately be deducted on the donor's individual income tax return. The annuity payment received is specified at the time the gift is made and is based on the donor's age at the time the gift is made. For example, at age 65, the rate of return is 7.2 percent; at 90 and above, it's 12 percent.

At the time of the contributor's death, the current value of the gift is transferred to a permanent endowment fund. The income then will be used for a program specified by the donor, or for general purposes of Western Kentucky University.

The Kentucky Museum has been named the beneficiary of one of the university's first charitable gift annuities. Medora Davison Withers, a WKU graduate and friend of the museum, recently transferred a maturing certificate of deposit to the Foundation. Her gift makes her a member of the newly-created Society of 1906 designed to honor individuals who have made a provision for university programs in an estate plan.

Mrs. Withers has designated her gift for the conservation of Kentucky Museum collections. According to Riley Handy, Library Special Collections department head, contributions like hers are very important to the program.

Handy said, "Every collection has special conservation needs. The cost of these technical services escalate each year and we are always in need of extra funds."

"Gifts like hers," Handy added, "will help make it possible for artifacts to be viewed and studied by both students and the public for years to come."

To find out more about planned giving opportunities or Western's new charitable gift annuity program, contact me at (502) 745-5406 or toll-free 1-800-WKU-ALUM.

~ Carol Cummings

Private Treasures Become Museum Artifacts

One of the most exciting aspects of working at The Kentucky Museum is handling new acquisitions. Some gifts are important for their uniqueness. Unusual recent acquisitions include Michael W. Howell's gift of a diamond and platinum wristwatch made for President John F. Kennedy, and Miko Muraguchi's donation of two hand-painted silk kimonos. The latter was presented as a token of the Sister City relationship between Bowling Green and Kawanishi, Japan.

Other objects are significant, however, for the representative qualities they document. Barbara Ford recently donated the matched pair of alligator pumps and purse she bought with her first earnings as 4-H Club agent in Christian County; and Gordon Wilson, Jr., donated his first suit of clothes, short pants and all!

In July, long-time Kentucky Building supporters William and Roslyn P. Stamps offered an Art Deco period lithographed candy tin; one month later Dan and Frankie Stone gave a circa 1918 General Electric fan. Artifacts such as these are essential if the museum staff is to interpret the lives of most Kentuckians.

The Museum Recent Acquisitions Committee continually looks for donations that supplement existing collections. Lexington lawyer and Western alumnus Julius Rather continues to add artifacts to his extensive political memorabilia collection. His latest gift includes a campaign button promoting William Howard Taft's 1908 presidential campaign. Other individuals donate political memorabilia as well, including Judge Sara Walter Combs, who recently gave several items relating to her late husband's, Bert T. Combs', gubernatorial career.

Individuals interested in donating objects to The Kentucky Museum should contact Sandy Staebell, Museum Registrar, (502) 745-6260 or e-mail sandra.staebell@WKU.edu.

~ *Sandy Staebell*

A Personal Perspective

Jim and I came to Western directly from Vanderbilt Graduat School in 1963. We were in our mid-20s, parents of two young boys, the oldest not yet two. It never occurred to either of us that we had chosen home base for our entire working lives and the growing-up lives of our three children (our daughter was born in 1967).

Jim came home one day that very first semester, both pleased and amused: Julia Neal, then Director of the Kentucky Library and Museum, had asked him to donate his papers to the Kentucky Library! "My papers," he kept saying, "my papers." As academics we knew what "papers" meant, but at the time, Jim had only on little volume of poems, *COPPERHEAD CANE*, published by a small press in Nashville. True, it had attracted some serious attention, most notably from Maxine Cumin, who featured it in her column in *THE WRITER*, but at twenty-six Jim was having trouble absorbing the news that someone wanted him to promise his literary leaving to a library. "My papers! My papers!"

It was a promise, never formalized, never legally binding but one that Jim never regretted. Through the years he had the opportunity to see how the staff at Western's Kentucky Library, especially the Manuscripts, journals, and letters and was forever telling me that if he wanted to locate something of his, he just called Pat Hodges.

Other schools, many schools in fact, have approached me about Jim's papers, but I know where he wanted them to be. Like me, he worried sometimes that the staff was overworked, that the Kentucky Building, however lovely, desperately needed expansion, but he trusted those splendid professionals to go far beyond the call of duty, just as Mrs. Robert Penn Warren trusted them when she gave her husband's personal library to Western. She told me shortly before she died that Western had done for Warren's books what Yale had failed to do for his papers. That's why Warren's books are here.

That (along with his promise to Julia) is why Jim's papers are here too.

~*Mary Ellen Miller*

Advisory Councils Change Membership

Each July, both the Libraries and the Museum advisory councils are realigned.

This year, Interim President Barbara Burch appointed Joe Fragale* and Ann Rose Richards and re-appointed Shelby Bale, Paul Cook and Regina Newell to three-year terms on the Libraries Advisory Council.

Others currently serving with them are David Broderick, H.B. Clark, Ron Grim, Lowell Guthrie, Tim Hulse, James Hyatt, Alecia Marcum, Harold Matthews, Mike Owsley, Leon Page, Albert Petersen, Jr., and David Wiseman.

Dr. Burch also appointed two new members and re-appointed nine to second terms on the Kentucky Museum Advisory Council. Newly appointed are Rick Kelley and Cheri Natcher; re-appointments are Barry Bray, Jerry Cohron, Sarah Glenn Grise, Dianne Howerton, Carl Hall, Kevin Kirby, Wayne Priest, Anna Senter and John Wigodsky*.

Connie Allen, Mallard Benton, David Cole, Carl Dobson, Sarah Ellis, John Grider, Richard Grise, Bob Kirby, Jerry Martin, Bob Otto, Ruthi Steff, Stephen Todd, Ferris Van Meter and honorary member Kristen Bale round out the Museum Advisory Council.

University Libraries wishes to acknowledge the contributions made by the Advisory Council members and thank them for their interest and support.

*Since their appointments in July, Fragale and Wigodsky resigned because they left Bowling Green.

~ Earlene Chelf

First Steps Toward A Virtual University Library For Kentucky

Since coming to Western in 1985, I have collaborated with my library director colleagues at the state universities to develop several services based on cooperation and mutual understanding. With the passage of the Kentucky Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997, our cooperative spirit and willingness to work together have reached new heights.

Through our consortial organization-known as SAALCK (State-Assisted Academic Library Council of Kentucky)-we have developed a plan for the establishment of a Virtual University Library for Kentucky. When funded, it will serve as a foundation for the Commonwealth Virtual

University, itself a collaborative initiative of Kentucky's public institutions of higher education and major element of the legislation for providing off-campus education throughout Kentucky.

Virtual libraries are basically libraries without walls, delivering essential library resources via the Internet's World Wide Web. In our proposal, the resources that would be accessed electronically include abstracts, indexes and the full text of a core collection of academic journals as well as Kentucky-oriented materials. In addition to serving as vital support for the off-campus courses offered through the institutions' distance learning programs, the Kentucky Virtual Library will greatly enrich both the traditional library materials (in "hard copy") and the electronic library resources available from the state's campus libraries.

For additional information on the new, exciting and promising development, I invite you to visit the SAALCK web site at <http://www.uky.edu/OtherOrgs/SAALCK/>

~ Michael Binder

Warren Biographer's Archives Comes to WKU

The University is pleased to announce the acquisition of Prof. Joseph Blotner's archives assembled in preparation of his recently published biography of Robert Penn Warren. Blotner, professor Emeritus from the University of Michigan, is best known for his definitive biography of William Faulkner. Like the Faulkner study, Blotner's biography of Warren was authorized by the writer and his family, and it will take its place as the most important resource on the author.

Prof. Blotner spent seven years in producing his definitive work. Over this period he developed an extensive collection of Warren materials including books, papers, letters, taped interviews, and various other materials. The resulting archive is the most important compilation of information about Warren not already located or housed in a research library. Because of his long connection with Western's Center For Robert Penn Warren Studies, which he also consulted in his research, Blotner first offered us his archive, though it was actively sought by Vanderbilt and other libraries.

Our Center, with help from the English Department, Potter College, and the Office of Academic Affairs raised the \$6,000 asking price. Prof. Blotner indicated that this figure represented the amount of unreimbursed funding he had incurred assembling his archive.

The Kentucky Library will receive the Blotner archive this fall and plans to house it with our Robert Penn Warren Library; a formal dedication will take place at our annual meeting recognizing Warren's birthday next April.

Editor's Note: The writer is a Professor of English, WKU.

~ Joe Millichap