

Native American Studies Archive

Donations Policy

Historians, researchers, and students of history have found the history of an area to be more often told by unpublished records than printed materials. Unpublished items include letters, correspondence, reports, minutes, planning documents, financial statements, brochures, newsletters, photographs, and other types of personal and business records.

All people and organizations produce and accumulate these materials. We ask for the donation of primary sources because we recognize that they are important historical resources that should be preserved as part of the documentary record. Unlike published works, papers and records are very limited in quantity. If we do not actively locate and save these materials now, they may not be available when they are “historical.” Archivists take a long range approach by acquiring and preserving records for the future.

The importance of records is often connected to their seeming unimportance. An ordinary document could have unknown historical relevance, as a missing copy of a newspaper, or letter describing a historical event from a different perspective. Items we consider a part of “everyday life” may have unknown significance in fifty years.

To donate materials, please call. We will make arrangements to meet with you, and assess your materials. No donations can be accepted without a signed deed of gift.

A useful leaflet covering many donor and institutional concerns has been published by the Society of American Archivists. It is “A Guide to Donating Your Personal or Family Papers to a Repository.” <http://www.archivists.org/publications/donating-familyrecs.asp>

For more details, write to Native American Studies Archive, University of South Carolina Lancaster, 476 Hubbard Dr., Lancaster, S.C. 29720; wburgin@sc.edu; or call 803-313-7063