

Tennessee Archivist

the newsletter of the Society of Tennessee Archivists



Spring 2026 | Volume 45 | Number 2

Tennessee Archivist

the newsletter of the Society of Tennessee Archivists

Spring 2026 | Volume 45 | Number 2

Society of Tennessee Archivists

Established 1977

www.tennesseearchivists.org

2026 Executive Committee

President

Christopher Ryland
Vanderbilt University

Vice President

Janine Winfree
Knox County Public Library

Secretary

Grace Neeley
University of Memphis

Treasurer

Sandra Campbell
Middle Tennessee State University

Newsletter Editor

Molly Copeland
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Archivist

Sam Richardson
University of Tennessee at Martin

Webmaster & Past President

Carolyn Runyon
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Table of Contents

News & Notes	2
Webmaster's Report	6
Treasurer's Report	7
Society Committee Rosters, 2026	8
Repository Spotlight: Archives of Appalachia at East Tennessee State University	9

Cover Image

Alex Steward, a fourth-generation cooper, enters his shop located in Sneedville, TN, 1977. In 1986, Stewart received a National Heritage Fellowship, the nation's highest honor for master folk and traditional artists.

Tennessee Arts Commission, Folk Arts Program, Records (1899-2014), 1984.013A.001. Courtesy of the Tennessee State Library and Archives.

News & Notes

Punk Archive Arrives at MTSU's Center for Popular Music



Harlow Crandall, archival assistant at the Center for Popular Music.
MTSU photo by Jimmy Hart.

The Center for Popular Music is excited to announce that the *Maximum Rocknroll* collection has arrived from California. The *Maximum Rocknroll* collection includes more than 50,000 vinyl records along with an estimated 40 linear feet of business papers and other ephemera documenting punk's evolution. The Center already houses a full run of the *Maximum Rocknroll* zine; now, we can tell the full history of what went into creating the zine, and in turn, a history of punk music.

You can read more about the acquisition in this [article from MTSU News](#).

Join the New STA Google Group

Members are encouraged to join and participate in this new email discussion group. To join, [register here](#). Start a conversation, share information, ask for professional advice, or post announcements! tennesseearchivists@googlegroups.com is an easy way to connect with fellow members.

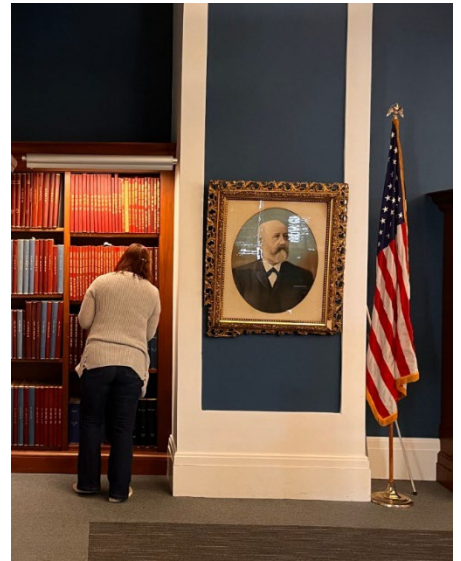
Save the Date: STA Annual Meeting, October 8-9, 2026

The Society of Tennessee Archivist's Annual Meeting will be held on **October 8-9, 2026** at the **University of Memphis**. The theme of the conference, "Many Voices, One Tennessee," acknowledges the America 250th celebrations this year. Stay tuned for more information on registration, lodging, and a call for session proposals.

Save the Date: Southeastern unConference, October 19-21, 2026

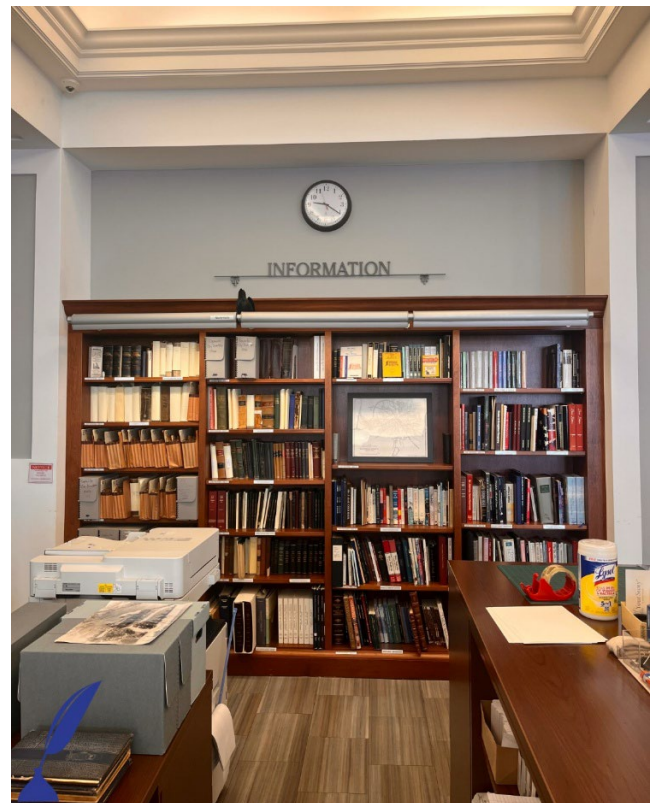
You are invited to "From the Ground Up: A Virtual Archives unConference." Free for participants and presenters, the unconference is for archivists, archives students, records professionals, and memory workers. We are looking for dynamic and participant driven session ideas and have created an [Idea Hub](#) to help connect collaborators. Stay tuned for an official call for session proposals. For questions about the unconference, email Dr. Nick Richbell at nrichbe@clermson.edu.

News & Notes



Metro Archives Open Again!

Starting Monday, March 30, the Nashville Public Library's Main Library reopened to the public, which means Metro Nashville Archives is once again welcoming researchers, visitors, and anyone interested in our new exhibit celebrating the Main Library building's 25th anniversary. While reopening is the big news, we're also excited about what we accomplished during the closure. Most notably, we're getting ArchivesSpace! It's still in the early stages, but soon both Special Collections and Metro Archives will have an ArchivesSpace page but as separate repositories. Other projects completed during the closure include reorganizing and indexing our offsite collections, digitizing the Plat Books collection, and continuing our ongoing partnership with Ancestry to digitize many of our records. Follow Metro Archives on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#) to stay updated on our progress and upcoming work!



Photos of the Metro Archives stacks and reading room courtesy of Sarah Arntz, Program Coordinator at Metro Nashville Archives.

News & Notes

Opportunity: Paid Archival Internship at Vanderbilt University

Position Title: Intern

Location: Nashville, TN

Duration: Summer 2026

Pay: \$15/hour

Vanderbilt Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA) holds the complete collections of cartoonists Tom Little and Charles Bissell whose work appeared in *The Tennessean* from the 1930s-1970s. Their work presents a near daily glimpse into four decades of local, regional, and national politics. The collections are housed in hundreds of oversized flat boxes, roughly collated together by year.

We are seeking an intern to help us process and describe these collections by examining each cartoon and entering the appropriate metadata in a spreadsheet. Some research may be required as well as some light preservation work. We are aiming to have a cartoon processed every 5 minutes, so time management is key. The goal is to make these collections accessible since they are currently under-described, which limits their educational and research value. This internship will provide hands-on archival experience in an academic library environment, and is generously funded by the TN250 program, which will highlight Tennessee as part of the celebration of America's 250th anniversary.

Key Responsibilities

- Examine items and enter all appropriate metadata into a spreadsheet
- Conduct research with designated databases when needed
- Request materials through our request management system
- Folder, label and re-box items as needed
- Separate items with tissue paper to help preservation
- Attend meetings and take notes when needed
- Perform other duties as assigned by the supervisor

Qualifications

- Undergraduate or graduate students currently enrolled in or recently graduated from a relevant degree program
- Strong attention to detail and organization with a willingness to learn
- Ability to lift 30–40-pound boxes
- Excellent time management skills are a must

Benefits

- Hands-on archival experience
- Mentorship and professional development
- Potential academic credit (if applicable)

To apply, please submit a cover letter and resume to specialcollections@vanderbilt.edu. In your cover letter, please describe your interest in the internship and why you would be an ideal candidate.

News & Notes

Nominations Are Open for the Thweatt Award!

The [John H. Thweatt Archival Advancement Award](#) recognizes achievement among archivists working in the state of Tennessee. The following are potential achievements that may be considered for nominations:

- Demonstrable contribution to archival theory or the development of new archival methods
- Service to the profession through extraordinary committee or advocacy work
- Development of an archival program of such depth and scope as to warrant special recognition

Nominees must be archivists or memory workers employed in archival repositories in the state of Tennessee.

To nominate yourself or a colleague for the John H. Thweatt Archival Advancement Award, complete the [nomination form](#) by **Monday, August 31, 2026**.

Call for Content for Special Issue

The *Tennessee Archivist* is dedicating its upcoming July 2026 summer issue to celebrating and reflecting on the 250th anniversary of the United States Declaration of Independence. You are invited to submit articles, short reflections, and collection highlights that in some way engage with the anniversary. Direct ideas or submissions to molly-copeland@utc.edu.



*Top: Alex Stewart splits wood at his shop in Sneedville, TN, 1977. 1984.013A.011.
Bottom: Alex Stewart uses a compass to measure wood for bottom of churn, 1977. 1984.013A.037.
Tennessee Arts Commission, Folk Arts Program, Records (1899-2014).
Courtesy of the Tennessee State Library and Archives.*

Webmaster's Report

Carolyn Runyon, Webmaster
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Recently, members of the Society of Tennessee Archivists (STA) Executive Committee voted unanimously to hire Merge Creative to design a new visual brand identity and custom theme for our pending subscription to [WildApricot](#). The Society will spend \$3,000.00 on design services from Merge Creative and \$1,346.40 on a pre-paid two-year subscription to WildApricot. In total, the Executive Committee approved \$4,346.40, making a historic investment in the Society's website, including robust new membership and event management tools, secure online payment processing, and members-only directory and job board.

Merge Creative will develop a visual brand identity for the Society, including a new logo, brand guidelines, and Canva templates to support consistent marketing and communication. The designers have completed three initial logo design concepts. [Submit your feedback on the initial concepts by 12 PM Eastern on Friday, May 8, 2026](#). Once we select an initial concept, I will be able to request up to three revisions. Additionally, Merge Creative will supply brand guidelines and Canva templates. The Society will take advantage of the free access to Canva Pro granted to nonprofits. Finally, Merge Creative will customize [one of their WildApricot themes](#) based on the logo and brand guidelines.

WildApricot is a cloud-based system that will allow the Society to automate new memberships and renewals, including secure online payments that meet the Level 1 PCI Data Security Standard (DSS),

a requirement for nonprofits in Tennessee. Further, the new system will streamline event and website management, allowing Society leadership to focus on value-added services. I hope to complete the website migration over the summer so that we can process membership and Annual Meeting registration payments electronically. In addition to online payments and automated processes for renewals and receipts, the WildApricot platform offers support for members-only features, including member directories and job boards.

continued next page



SOCIETY *of*
TENNESSEE
ARCHIVISTS

Concept 1: "Stacked Layers"



Concept 2: "Framed Name"



SOCIETY *of*
TENNESSEE ARCHIVISTS
Preserving the story of Tennessee

Concept 3: "Bold Monogram"

While we await the design work from Merge Creative, the Treasurer and I have renewed our domain, tennesseearchivists.org, and current hosting service from [WebHostingPad](#) for one year. The Society's Archivist and I have also submitted a proposal to publish born digital issues of *Tennessee Archivist*, annual meeting programs, and administrative records in [Digital Tennessee](#), the new Digital Commons repository available from the

Tennessee State Library & Archives (TSLA). Publishing born digital records in Digital Tennessee would complement the [physical records](#) housed at TSLA and give the Society an opportunity to digitally preserve and enhance access to our most important records.

Treasurer's Report

Sandra Campbell, Treasurer
Middle Tennessee State University

Budget Update, January—March 2026

Expenses: \$1,565

- State of TN Annual Report Filing Fee: \$20
- Website Design Contract Deposit: \$1,545.00

Income from Memberships Dues: \$1,050.91

Membership Dues Update

Beginning January 2026, membership in the Society of Tennessee Archivists operates on a rolling basis. Annual dues cover a 12-month period beginning the month payment is received. Renew within 30 days of your term expiration date.

Annual dues are very affordable!

\$30 – Regular Members (those working in the archival or related fields)

\$10 – Associate Members (those who are interested in supporting the objectives of the Society or students in degree-seeking programs)

Your involvement truly makes a difference!

Membership dues support:

- Website improvements – moving to a new platform this year!
- Awards and Scholarships

There are two options to join or renew your membership:

Pay by Check/Postal Mail

From [the STA website](#) - download, print, complete and mail the membership form with a check to:

Society of TN Archivists
1301 E Main St
MTSU Box 0488
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Pay Online

Join or renew your membership using the [PayPal online form](#). Pay with a PayPal account or with a debit or credit card – no PayPal account required.

Society Committee Rosters, 2026

A huge thank you to all the members volunteering on a committee this year! STA relies on an active membership to operate, offer programming, and grow. Committee descriptions can be found in [the Bylaws](#).

Arrangements Committee

Name	Institution	Grand Division
Janine Winfree, Chair	Knox County Public Library	East Tennessee
Jill Anderson	University of Tennessee at Knoxville	East Tennessee
Kathleen Feduccia	Nashville Public Library Special Collections	Middle Tennessee
Emma Heck	Tennessee State Library and Archives	Middle Tennessee
William Miller Coleman	Jackson Madison County Library	West Tennessee
Sandra Campbell	Middle Tennessee State University	Middle Tennessee

Education Committee

Name	Institution	Grand Division
Brigitte Billeaudeau, Chair	University of Memphis	West Tennessee
Teresa Gray	Vanderbilt University	Middle Tennessee
Christina Chester-Fangman	Austin Peay State University	Middle Tennessee

Membership Committee

Name	Institution	Grand Division
Heath Overton, Chair	Vanderbilt University	Middle Tennessee
Sandra Campbell	Middle Tennessee State University	Middle Tennessee
Evelyn Keele	Jackson Madison County Library	West Tennessee

Nominating Committee

Name	Institution	Grand Division
Hillary Brown, Chair	Rutherford County Archives	Middle Tennessee
Brynna Farris	Vanderbilt University	Middle Tennessee
Rachel Salvatori	Vanderbilt University	Middle Tennessee

Awards Committee

Name	Institution	Grand Division
Carolyn Runyon, Chair	University of Tennessee at Chattanooga	East Tennessee
Melissa Barker	Houston County Archives	Middle Tennessee
David Sowell	Tennessee State Library and Archives	Middle Tennessee

The Tennessee Archivist's new recurring feature, "Repository Spotlight," highlights a different Tennessee archival repository each issue. If you would like to see your institution featured in an upcoming issue, contact Newsletter Editor Molly Copeland at molly-copeland@utc.edu.

Repository Spotlight: Archives of Appalachia at East Tennessee State University

Jeremy A. Smith, Director
Archives of Appalachia



Archives of Appalachia's reading room, 2026. Courtesy of the Archives of Appalachia.



Archives of Appalachia's electronic classroom, 2026. Courtesy of the Archives of Appalachia.

Repository: Archives of Appalachia

Institution: East Tennessee State University

Location: Johnson City, TN

Website: www.etsu.edu/archives

Type of Institution: University

Number and Make-Up of Staff:

6 full-time staff (5 permanent, 1 two-year grant-funded), 2 Graduate Assistants, 4 undergraduate student workers

Size or Number of Collections:

9,800 linear feet of manuscript collections; 94,000 sound recordings; 9,000 moving image recordings; 19,500 published print volumes; 300,000 photographs; 65TB of digital files

Summary of Holdings:

The Archives of Appalachia at East Tennessee State University preserves the written words, images, and sounds that document life in southern Appalachia. Subject strengths include folk traditions, industrial and transportation history, social justice, religious practices, music and the arts, and the history of ETSU.

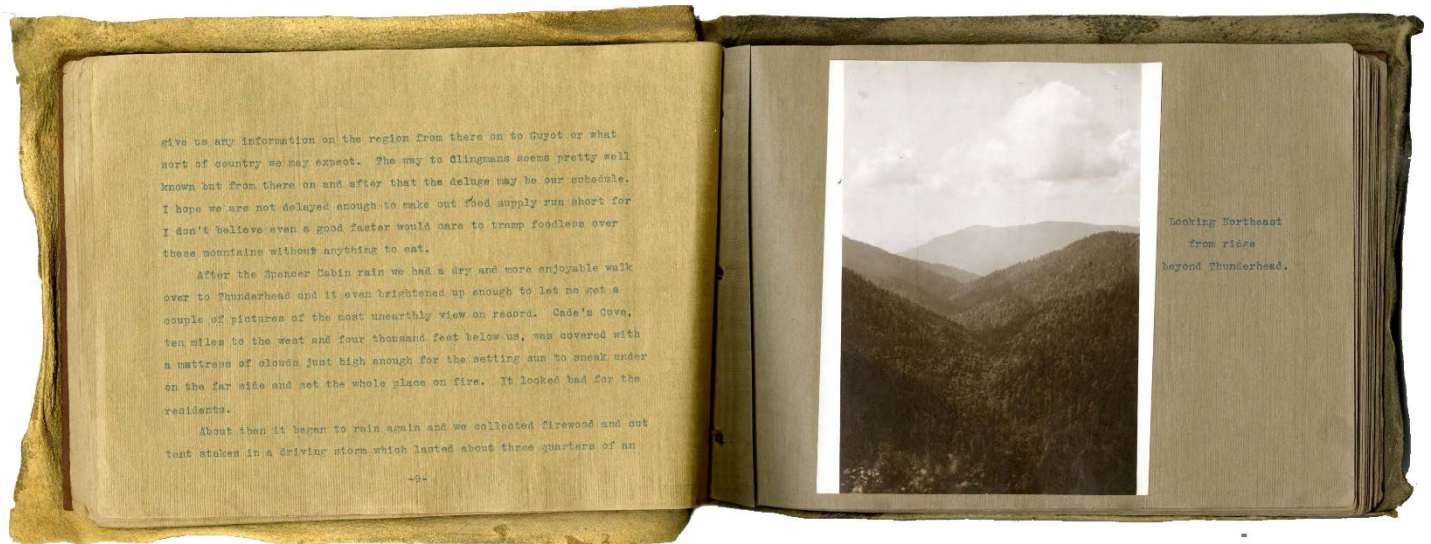
What are your most frequently accessed or distinctive collections?

- [Thomas G. Burton-Ambrose N. Manning Collection](#), oral history recordings and related materials primarily documenting Appalachian folklore.
- [Coal Employment Project \(CEP\) Records](#), document the organization's daily operations and its extensive activities supporting women coal miners.
- [Carolina, Clinchfield, and Ohio Railway Records](#), corporate minutes and reports, financial and marketing files, engineering drawings and blueprints, personnel and accident files, and photographs documenting the preliminary construction, management, operation, and the financing of the railroad company between 1899 and 1983.
- [East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railroad Historical Society Collection](#), documents the history of the ET&WNC Railroad and the Linville River Railway through company records, publications, maps, oral history interviews, films, videotapes, and photographs.
- [Mary Elizabeth Barnicle and Tillman Cadle Recordings](#), field recordings of music, stories, and speech in Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, and other locations during collecting trips from 1935-1950.

- [Bernard Rousseau Recordings](#), includes performances at fiddlers' conventions, bluegrass festivals, music clubs, and studio sessions from 1957-1984.
- [North American Rayon and American Bemberg Company Records](#), document labor relations, employee activities and training, public relations, and property transactions for various iterations of the companies including American Glanzstoff and Beaunit Fibers.



Unidentified portrait from the Coal Employment Project (CEP) Records, c. 1980. Courtesy of the Archives of Appalachia.



"A Walking and Camping Trip through the Great Smoky Mountains" from the D.R. Beeson, Sr. Papers (1914). Courtesy of the Archives of Appalachia.

What is a lesser-known collection you wish more people knew about?

[C. Hodge Mathes Family Papers](#) (1.5 linear feet), a small but rich collection of documents, photographs, and sound recordings of, about, or created by the family of Charles Hodge Mathes, one of the original faculty members at East Tennessee State Normal School.

What communities or types of researchers do you mainly serve? How many researchers do you serve a year?

More than 2,000 in-person visitors from around the globe utilize the Archives' collections each year for in-depth research projects, and over 50,000 more interact annually through our website, digital collections portal, and social media platforms.

What does outreach look like at your repository?

Campus outreach includes:

- Sponsoring or cosponsoring events that highlight Archives' collections (such as author talks, film screenings, and musical performances).

- Reaching out to relevant departments and faculty members to collaborate on primary source instruction and Archives-based projects (a typical academic year sees 25-30 class sessions in the Archives reaching 400-500 students).
- The annual Margaret Huffman Grant through which ETSU faculty, staff, and students may apply for funding of up to \$2,000 to support projects that utilize materials from the Archives of Appalachia and contribute to a better understanding of the Appalachian region.

Community outreach includes:

- Tours, public programs, and presentations to interested community groups (a typical calendar year includes 20-25 such events reaching 500-600 people).
- Consulting for community groups on issues related to archival practice, grant writing, and copyright questions.

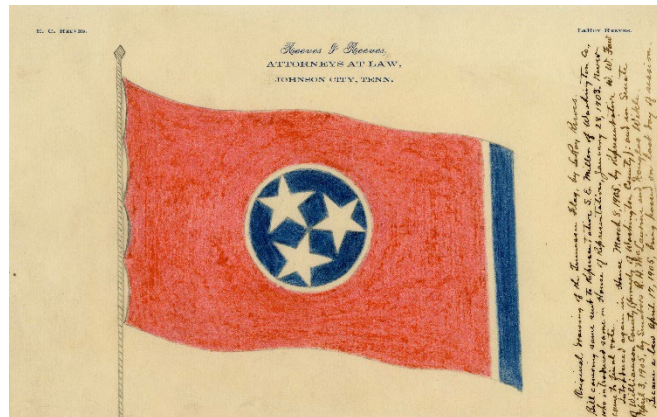
What are some new or ongoing projects or initiatives at the Archives of Appalachia?

- Jo Carson Papers: work by Jennifer Bingham to arrange and describe oral histories, notes, personal papers, ephemera, books, periodicals, and photographs from storyteller, author, and playwright from Johnson City, TN
- Jubilee Community Arts Records: work by Ryan Bernard to arrange, describe, and digitize 2,500 recordings of music and cultural events put on by Jubilee Community Arts in Knoxville, TN between 1981-2013.
- Center of Excellence for Appalachian Studies and Services (CASS) Records: IMLS grant-funded project for Tara Bradshaw to arrange, describe, and digitize materials documenting and history and contributions of the Center.
- “Unvarnished,” a three-part exhibit, in person and online, curated by Sandra Laws, highlighting the work of Jeanne M. Rasmussen, an accomplished photojournalist, who documented the human and environmental costs of coal mining.
- Work to identify and hire a new University Archivist, a permanent position in the Archives of Appalachia at ETSU.

What is your favorite item or collection?

Favorite item: 3.5 x 12.5 inch black-and-white panoramic negative of [Main Street in Johnson City, near Fountain Square](#), likely taken in the second decade of the 20th century, from the William Cary Hattan Collection (see below). This early photograph of Johnson City captures the bustle of an active downtown, including a representation of the evolution of transportation technologies at the time, with streetcar lines, an early automobile, and a horse-drawn buggy all in the same image.

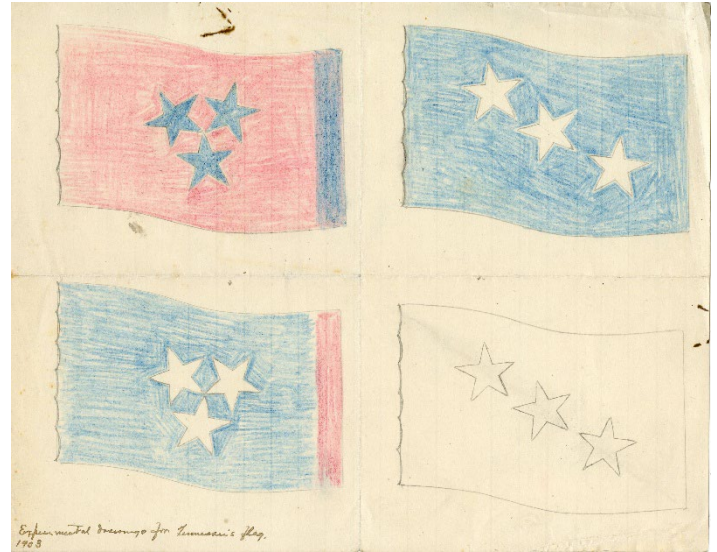
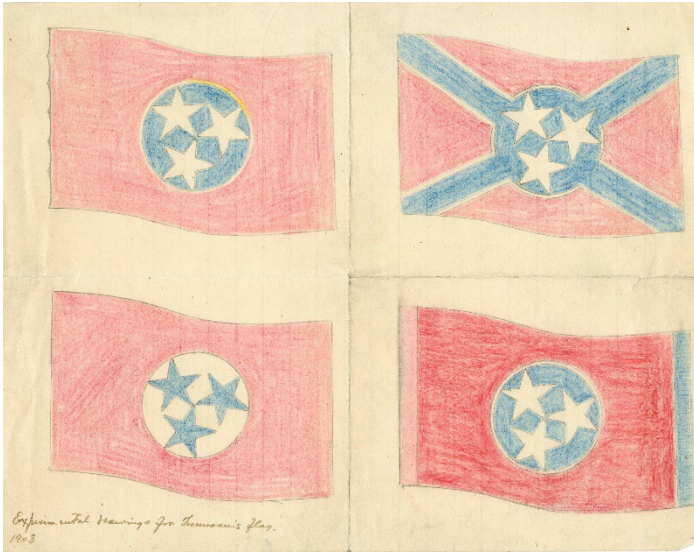
Favorite collection: [Le Roy Reeves Papers](#) (1.5 linear feet). This collection includes materials related to Reeves’ design of the Tennessee state flag, offering a detailed narrative of his five-decade quest to have his design adopted and brought into common use in the state.



“Experimental Drawings for Tennessee State Flag (1903)” from the Le Roy Reeves Papers. Courtesy of the Archives



“Main Street in Johnson City, near Fountain Square” from the William Cary Hattan Collection, ca. 1914. Courtesy of the Archives of Appalachia.



"Experimental Drawings for Tennessee State Flag (1903)" from the Le Roy Reeves Papers. Courtesy of the Archives of Appalachia.

What is your favorite part of your job?

I enjoy the people: my amazing colleagues who are passionate about the work of preserving and providing access to materials that provide individual, humanizing entry points to the range of people and institutions that make this region what it is; and the amazing researchers who I have the opportunity to sit alongside and to see our collections through their eyes and with their insight. I learn something new every week.

I also enjoy the responsibility of the job to pay attention to what is being created in the region around me and work to preserve and provide access to those items of enduring value that will go

on to form a part of society's collective memory. I have the rare opportunity to say to those people who have the courage to create, that what they are doing matters - that what they are doing is worth saving. I often get lost in the day-to-day of the work I do, but it's good for me to remember that the reason I'm an archivist is because I get to say to people "you matter; your stories matter." I get to facilitate the preservation and the experience of the human artistic and intellectual record. I get to make sure the material traces of our shared cultural and social history will be available for research and for pleasure for generations to come. I do not take for granted either the responsibility or the privilege of doing that.

Support the Society of Tennessee Archivists

STA is an entirely volunteer-run organization and relies on active participants and contributors like you to sustain the work of the organization. Get involved with STA today to support our professional community, share your expertise, and network with colleagues from across Tennessee.

Become a Member of STA

Visit the [STA website](#) to learn more about membership and download the membership form.

Join the STA Google Group

Join the STA Google Group to connect with colleagues across the state, share information, ask for professional advice and post announcements. To join, [register here](#).

Contribute to the Newsletter

We want to hear from you! *Tennessee Archivist* is the place to share ideas, activities, and accomplishments with a community of archivists, cultural heritage professionals, and memory workers.

Visit the [STA website](#) to learn more about submitting content to the newsletter.