



President's Message

By Carolyn Runyon

Over the last several months, the Executive, Nominating, Arrangements, Website, and Bylaws Committees have been hard at work planning our upcoming annual meeting, organizing nominations for officers that will determine the Society's future, and recommending updates and changes to our website and governing document. Thank you to our hardworking committee chairs and members who are making a positive difference.

I want to highlight the work on the Website Ad Hoc Committee. At the May 15, 2025 meeting of the Executive Committee, Chair, Sam Richardson presented a report advocating the use of WildApricot to manage membership, events, and the website. You can read the full report in this newsletter (Page 7). At the same meeting, the Executive Committee voted to begin a 60-day free trial of WildApricot. In early June, I began testing the software and developing content. I hope to have a prototype of the site ready to debut at the upcoming annual meeting. Look for more developments soon!

If you have questions or would like to get involved, please do not hesitate to contact me at **Carolyn-Runyon@utc.edu**.

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**SOCIETY OF TENNESSEE
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Message from the Vice President

Christopher Ryland
STA Vice President and Arrangements Committee Chair

We're looking forward to seeing you at the 2025 Society of Tennessee Archivists annual meeting in Nashville on October 16 and 17. This year's theme is **"Navigating Challenges: Archives in an Age of Uncertainty."** Please see the Society's website for more and updated information on registration, schedules, lodging, and tours. The meeting will be held in Vanderbilt University's Special Collections building.

Session proposals will be accepted until August 15, but don't wait until the last minute. Our call for proposals includes opportunities for individual presentations, lightning talks, panel presentations or roundtables.

See you then!

Important Lodging Information

Special discounts are available at Scarritt Bennett (across from Vanderbilt University)

Discount code: **Archivists 2025**

To get the discount that we are offering your group, guests must call SBC Front Desk directly to book at 615-340-7469. Guests can call weekdays/weekends 8 am until 9pm CST to book a room.

Accommodation details:

Twin - \$80.00 base price with tax is \$95.50 (One twin bed with a shared restroom/this is the majority of Center layout)

Full - \$90.00 base price with tax is \$107.13 (full size bed -25 only)

Queen - \$100 base price with tax is \$119.75 (7 only)

To make your room private, you may purchase the entire suite - prices start at \$130.00, depending on bed size. Please inquire when making your reservation.

All rooms now have a one-time cleaning fee of \$25.00 applied to every reservation. The houses have a one-time fee of \$100.00 for cleaning.

Guests will be required to pay the first night's charge as a deposit at the time of booking by CC. We will keep that card on file and run the balance on it. That is typically done when checking in. Guests have up to 48 hours prior to arrival to cancel without penalty. If they cancel within 48 hours of arrival, the deposit will be forfeited. (Which is the first night's charge)

For more information and details see: <http://tennesseearchivists.org/meeting-eventinfo.html>

TSLA's New Finding Aid Database

By Patricia Mitchell



Home Repositories Collections Subjects Names

Welcome to the Tennessee State Library & Archives' Finding Aids Database

The Tennessee State Library & Archives is excited to announce the launch of its new ArchivesSpace website! The site, which offers users access to more than 1600 finding aids, became public in April of this year, but the dedicated staff at the Library & Archives have been working on the project for several years. We first acquired ArchivesSpace in the spring 2018 and this year was spent testing and learning the system. We decided it would be best to focus our attention on migrating our accession records out of an old MS Access database and into ArchivesSpace. Since this data was already structured, it would be easier (relative to our finding aids) to crosswalk our fields to ArchivesSpace. We exported the records from Access to Excel, used OpenRefine to clean up the data, and then formatted the fields using a CSV template provided by ArchivesSpace.

We began tackling our finding aid data in 2020, but our work was delayed by the coronavirus pandemic and later by the move to our new building. It would be in spring 2021, after completing our move, that we would return to finding aid migration. Like many archives, we have decades-old finding aids in various formats and not a lot of consistency across formats. We started by creating a spreadsheet of all our finding aids and noting whether it was in the "old" format or the "new" format.

Below:
Spreadsheet examples from ArchivesSpace.

accession_title	accession_number_1	accession_number_2	accession_number_3
Tombstone Inscriptions: Old Cunningham Cemetery (Belleville, Tenn)	1970	051	
Oak Hill Institute (Belleville, Tenn.), Catalogue of the officers and stu	1970	052	
Nashville Woman Suffrage Association, Minute Book	1970	053	
United Daughters of the Confederacy, Collection	1970	054	
Clipping: Richard Harrison Jackson	1970	055	
Religious Society of Friends of Great Britain and Ireland, Memorial	1970	056	
Garrett, Jill Knight, Collection	1970	057	001
Garrett, Jill Knight, Collection	1970	057	002
Garrett, Jill Knight, Collection	1970	057	003
Garrett, Jill Knight, Collection	1970	057	004

New format finding aids were already DACS compliant and would be entered manually in-house by Library & Archives' staff. Old format finding aids were not DACS compliant and would require some additional work to parse the documents into EAD XML. We decided to outsource this work and settled on a vendor who had done similar work for Vanderbilt Special Collections.

One of the problems we ran into was that the template would only allow us to import one agent record with each accession record, but our accession records had two agents - creators and donors. Ultimately, we decided to combine the creator names with the collection titles so that we could retain that information and use the template's agent field to import our donor records. We completed the migration of more than 10,000 accession records in 2019.

While outsourcing these finding aids did save us some time and labor, we still had to do some clean-up and edits to get the EAD files ready for importing into ArchivesSpace. Some of the issues we came across included EAD tags not being formatted properly and the container lists not being interpreted and parsed correctly by the script developed by our vendor.

Right: Examples of various finding aid formats in various states of compliance.



```

<ead xmlns="urn:isbn:1-931666-22-9" xmlns:xlink="http://www.w3.org/1999/xlink" xmlns:
  <eadheader countryencoding="iso3166-1" dateencoding="iso8601" findaidstatus="comp
  <eadid countrycode="US" mainagencycode="US-TNS">AC. NO. 1621</eadid>
  <filedesc>
  <titlestmt>
  <titleproper>Garrett, Jill Knight, Collection, ca. 1800-1969</titleproper>
  <author>Frazer, Mary Washington</author>
  </titlestmt>
  <publicationstmt>
  <publisher>Manuscript Collections</publisher>
  <p>
  <date>1970</date>
  </p>

```

Left: EAD example from ArchivesSpace.

In 2023, the Library & Archives hired two full-time, permanent archivists to join the newly formed Description and Access team. This team developed workflows and guides for inputting finding aids into ArchivesSpace and trained additional

staff to assist in the manual entry of new format finding aids. Prior to launching our public site, the Description and Access team identified some inconsistencies post-import and established a multi-phase plan to resolve these issues. We completed our Phase One edits in March 2025.

Also in March 2025, the Description and Access Manager conducted trainings for public-facing staff on the ArchivesSpace Public User Interface. After our launch in April, we began our Phase Two edits and are developing plans for Phase Three. The work is never really done, but now that the bulk of our finding aids are in one format, the work should at least be a little more streamlined.

Some lessons learned: do lots of testing, document everything, ask for help, and take your time to do it right.

Despite some obstacles and a few imperfections, we are very proud of our new finding aid website and wanted to share our experience with our colleagues across the state. Most importantly, we want to acknowledge the hard work of the Archival Collection Services section at the Library & Archives for their help in completing this project with special thanks to Kaitlyne Bowling, Emma Heck, Lori Lockhart, Veronica Sales, Will Thomas, and Jewel Thompson. We also appreciate the support of our director, Emily Farek, Assistant State Archivist Jami Awalt, and State Librarian and Archivist Jamie Ritter.

If you have additional questions about this project, you may contact the Description and Access Manager, Patsy Mitchell, at Patricia.Mitchell@tnsos.gov. If you'd like to check out our ArchivesSpace website, visit <https://archives.tnsos.gov/>.



Center: Example of Finding Aid landing page in ArchivesSpace

New Digital Collection at UTC Documents Historic Women's Organization and Boarding Home

By Molly Copeland

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Special Collections is pleased to announce the publication of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Chattanooga records digital collection. Description and digitization of the collection was funded, in part, by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission distributed by the Tennessee Historical Records Advisory Board in 2024. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was one of the largest and most influential women's organizations of the 19th century, and the digital collection at UTC offers unique insights into a local chapter's activities and social reform efforts.

The national WCTU was founded in 1874 as a women-led, ecumenical Christian temperance organization. In a time when women were barred from voting and when their sphere of influence was considered to be restricted to the home, the Temperance Movement offered an acceptable way for women to engage in political activism (Bordin, 1990). Through its public lobbying efforts, the WCTU was instrumental in reshaping how women engaged in politics at a local and national level in the decades before suffrage.

While the WCTU was primarily focused on prohibition reforms and temperance education, under the organization's second president, Frances Willard, the organization dramatically expanded its platform include other social and political issues such as women's suffrage and labor and prison reform. Willard's "Do Everything" philosophy provided local chapters considerable autonomy, and by the 1880s, the WCTU was the main driver and supporter of charity organizations in metropolitan areas around the country (Bordin, 1990).

In Tennessee, many of the local chapters and the state-level organization formed following a speaking tour Frances Willard undertook throughout the South in 1881. In May of that year, Willard made a brief stop to give a speech in Chattanooga before visiting Nashville and Memphis (Wedell, 1991). A year later in 1882, the first gathering of the Chattanooga union took place in the parlor of the YMCA.



Left: Frances Willard home exterior, 1928. Courtesy of the Chattanooga Public Library and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Special Collections.



Above: Frances Willard Home postcard, circa 1901 - 1907. Courtesy of the Chattanooga Public Library and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Special Collections

Concerned with the labor and housing conditions of wage-earning, unmarried women in the city, the WCTU of Chattanooga established a "working girls home." The boarding home was designed to provide low-cost room and board to the city's self-supporting, single women in a supervised, Christian environment. The Working Girls Home, first opened in 1887, operated at several locations around Chattanooga over the years. Later renamed the Frances Willard Home, the institution eventually occupied the building at 615 Lindsay Street for nearly fifty years, from 1928-1976.

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Chattanooga records digital collection features charters of incorporation, bylaws, financial reports,

(continued)

correspondence, and photographs that date from 1882-1995. Materials document the formation and incorporation of the Chattanooga chapter, in particular, the union's establishment and operation of the Frances Willard Home, and the renovation of the historic Frances Willard Building in 1980. With the help of student assistant De'sha Wilkins '26, UTC Special Collections was able to digitally capture, transcribe, and provide public access to 53 paper documents and photographs from the collection.

Considering the impact of the WCTU of Chattanooga, a 1958 article in the Chattanooga Times claimed that the Frances Willard Home was the only boarding home for women owned and operated by a chapter of the WCTU (Peck, 1958). Though very little extant, publicly accessible documentation of WCTU chapters exist, given the organization's reach both nationally and internationally, it remains likely that other unions operated boarding homes along a similar model.

The Frances Willard Home was the first of its kind in Chattanooga when it opened

Right: Anne Brinkley Home for Working Women, 291 South Second Street, Memphis, Tennessee, undated. Courtesy of the University of Memphis Libraries, Special Collections Department.



in 1887, but the boarding home was part of a larger national trend in the late 19th century of charitable or reform organizations providing congregate housing options to young, unmarried women in cities. In Memphis, the Women's Christian Association opened their Young Women's Boarding Home also in 1887, which was later renamed the Anne Brinkley Home (Wedell, 1991).

Chattanooga's Frances Willard Home, while not unique within this larger historical trend, was perhaps unique for its longevity. Following the repeal of prohibition in 1933, the WCTU diminished in membership, but the Willard Home continued to operate for another four decades until its closure in 1976. Materials in the WCTU of Chattanooga records document the later restoration of the building by a local investment group and its conversion into commercial office suites in 1980.



Above: *Chattanooga Times* newspaper clipping, 1980 November 4. Courtesy of Chattanooga Public Library and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Special Collections.

When the building reopened, former residents, many of whom had been residents in the 1930s, were invited back for a reception to recognize and celebrate the Willard Home's nearly 100-year legacy. By providing access to the WCTU of Chattanooga records, UTC Special Collections aims to preserve this legacy and provide scholars, students, and the general public the opportunity to explore this rich chapter of Tennessee history through the perspective of an organization by and for women.

References:

Bordin, Ruth. *Woman and Temperance, the Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900*. New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1990.

Peck, Marion. Chattanooga Times newspaper clipping, 1958, CHC-2012-038-022-b. CHC-2012-038 Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Chattanooga records. University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Special Collections, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Wedell, Marsha. *Elite Women and the Reform Impulse in Memphis, 1875-1915*. Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1991.

Ad Hoc Website Committee Report

Samuel S. Richardson

Overview

The Website Ad Hoc Committee was tasked with evaluating potential membership management platforms for implementation. The committee reviewed three options—WildApricot and YourMembership, and the chair did a preliminary review on MemberClicks—based on feature availability, security compliance, and cost-effectiveness.

Recommendation

After careful analysis, the committee recommends WildApricot as the preferred platform for STA's membership and website management needs. YourMembership and MemberClicks are not recommended, primarily due to their high costs and insufficient feature sets relative to their pricing.

Feature Comparison

Feature	WildApricot	YourMembership	MemberClicks
Level 1 PCI DSS Compliance	✓	✓	X
Membership Registration	✓	✓	✓
Automated Membership Renewals	✓	✓	X
Automated Payment Receipts	✓	✓	X
Multi-Tiered Membership Options	✓	X	✓
Member-Only Pages	✓	✓	X
Event Registration & Payment	✓	✓	✓
Event Waitlist Function	✓	X	X
Automated Donation Receipts	✓	✓	X

Cost Comparison

Plan	WildApricot	YourMembership	MemberClicks
Paid Monthly	\$63.00	\$583.33	NA
Prepaid Annually	\$680.40	\$7,000.00	\$4,500.00
Prepaid Biannually	\$1,285.20	NA	NA

WildApricot clearly falls within the STA's current budget, while both YourMembership and MemberClicks are cost prohibitive. WildApricot also offers prepaid discounts for longer-term commitments, providing additional savings potential.

Additional Considerations

WildApricot is already in use by several archives associations, demonstrating its applicability and effectiveness for organizations with similar needs and structures. Its robust set of features, including compliance with Level 1 PCI DSS, automated communications, and multi-tiered membership options, make it an excellent fit for STA's operations.

Conclusion

The Website Ad Hoc Committee strongly recommends adopting WildApricot as the Association's website and membership management platform. It meets all technical requirements, supports complex membership structures, and offers exceptional value for cost—all while maintaining a proven track record in the archives community.

Ad Hoc Website Committee members

Role	Officer	Affiliation	Division	Term
Chair	Richardson, Samuel S.	University of Tennessee at Martin	West Tennessee	2024-2025
Member	Runyon, Carolyn	University of Tennessee at Chattanooga	EastTennessee	2024-2025
Member	Lockhart, Lori	Tennessee State Library and Archives	Middle Tennessee	2024-2025
Member	Lasley, Noah	University of Tennessee at Chattanooga	EastTennessee	2024-2025
Member	Neeley, Grace	University of Memphis	West Tennessee	2024-2025

Announcements

Tennessee History Day Award Recipients

In April, the Society of Tennessee Archivists awarded two prizes in the amount of \$150 each to recognize exceptional archival research in the Junior and Senior Divisions of Tennessee History Day 2025 State Content to the following projects:

- "Breaking Barriers: Black Education Rights and the Fight for Equality at Maryville College," a Junior Division Group Documentary by Connor Patterson, William Swindle and River Leverenz
- "Carrying the Burden: Labor Rights and Civic Responsibilities in the Memphis Sanitation Strike," a Senior Division Group Website by Nancy Ortiz and Kyndal East.



The projects feature primary sources from several Tennessee repositories, including the Maryville College Archives, Memphis Public Libraries, Rhodes University, Storyboard Memphis, and the University of Memphis Special Collections.

From Metro Archives (Nashville)

Introducing the New Metropolitan Archivist

Following the retirement of long-time Metropolitan Archivist Ken Fieth, the Archives has a new leader at the helm—and she's no stranger to the Nashville Public Library or the world of archives. Kelley Sirko's journey is a true library fairy tale: she began as a volunteer in the department more than 13 years ago and steadily worked her way up through the ranks. Well-prepared to carry forward the legacy of Ken Fieth's remarkable 30-year career, Kelley has already earned his pride and endorsement as his successor. With two master's degrees (in English and Library & Information Science), the title of Certified Archivist, years of hands-on experience, and countless hours of continuing education, Kelley brings both expertise and vision to Metro Archives.

New Partnership with Ancestry

The Metro Nashville Archives is partnering with Ancestry in the digitization of a huge amount of our archival materials to be used for online genealogical research. Among the many materials to be digitized and made available on Ancestry.com are our marriage records, wills, physician and nurse registers, and our yearbook collection. Starting in April, we will be working with a trained digitization specialist over the next several months to ensure that these documents are scanned at the highest quality while still keeping the originals protected.

Announcements

From University of Memphis Libraries, Special Collections Department

New faces in the Special Collections Department, University of Memphis Libraries

The Special Collections Department wishes to announce the addition of two new employees to the Department.

Grace Neely joined the department in 2022, but has recently been promoted to Assistant Professor, Librarian & Archivist for the Department. She is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi.

Anna Kirby joined the Special Collections Department in May 2025. Her experience has been primarily in Government Publications, but has made the move to Special Collections to learn more about applying archival theory. She is a graduate of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Got something to say?

Is your archive doing something that you want to share with the membership of the Society of Tennessee Archivists? Let us know! We want to celebrate the things that are happening in Tennessee Archives. You can share what's happening with your editor, Brigitte Billeaudeau, and we can promote your news!

Contact the editor at
bbilledx@memphis.edu.



Newsletter art links:

Sanborn fire insurance map of Nashville, Tenn. (1897, rev. 1911):

<https://teva.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15138col123/id/9451/rec/2>