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SC Library Spotlight - Lander University Archives

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Lander University, Jackson Library

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Abstract

April Akins shares information about Lander University Archives, and the new research space that has been established.

Keywords

Lander University, Archives, Jackson Library



SC LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT

Lander University Archives becomes space for researchers

Lander University, located in Greenwood, South Carolina, is the second smallest publicly funded baccalaureate institution within the state. Student enrollment averages 3,000 students a year with over 130 faculty members. The university has over 60 areas of study in an enriching liberal arts and science education. The university's library is the Larry A. Jackson Library located in the campus center surrounded by academic buildings and connected to the pedestrian plaza. Over the last few years, the Jackson Library has envisioned archives as more than a collection, rather as a place for researchers. This vision led to the creation of spaces to house archives and special collections. The library added the Self Family Foundation Archives in 2012, the Rare Book and Special Collections Reading Room in 2014, and the Lander University Archives Reading Room in 2015.

Lander University is rooted in rich history. Founded as Williamston Female College in 1872 by the Reverend Dr. Samuel Lander in the small town of Williamston, South Carolina, the college was housed in an abandoned hotel within the town's center. In 1898, the South Carolina Methodist Conference began supporting the college and moved to Greenwood, South Carolina in 1904. At that time, the school changed its name to Lander College to honor its founder Samuel Lander. It remained a female-only college until 1943 upon admission of the first male day students. In

1948, Greenwood County became interested in the college when the Methodist Conference began considering ending its support for the institution.



Abandoned hotel that originally housed Williamston Female College.

Greenwood County obtained the college name and property from the Methodist Conference in 1951. In July 1973, the college became a state assisted institution. Lander College formally became Lander University on July 1, 1992.

Lander University's history remained in storage rooms throughout the library until several library staff conceptualized and took steps to create a reading room and space on campus to provide access to the university's history. Over the course of 2015, the Lander University Archives Reading Room was completed. Material selections included in the room were chosen based on the most requested items from the archives. The Lander University Archives Reading Room houses university related archival materials, including university catalogs, student handbooks, yearbooks dating back to 1923, student, faculty, and university publications, and unique historical objects from Lander's history. Other materials are maintained in archival storage and available for use by students, faculty, staff, and community members. Rare finds within the collection include Samuel Lander's textbook, *On*

Arithmetic, his 1872 personal diary, and some of Dr. Lander's sermons.



Lander University Archives Reading Room

Adding the Lander University Archives Reading Room to the two other special collections housed within the library has given archives a place on campus for researchers to access a wealth of Lander history. Utilizing glass front spaces within the library has created exhibit displays for students, faculty, staff and other passersby to view. Archival instruction for courses is increasing now that there is a space for students to come in and work with the materials. The archives are not only physically seen on campus, but they are now making appearances in social media, classrooms, and on the web. Follow Jackson Library on Facebook to see weekly #TBT (Throw Back Thursday) posts from the archives.

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