

Waring Library Society Newsletter

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President's Corner

By Dr. James H. Tolley, Waring Library Society Board President

As the yellowing of our cars and sidewalks from pollen begins to fade, along with our beautiful azaleas, we know that we are firmly into spring. With the change of season, we all look with hope towards the light at the end of this pandemic tunnel, while remembering some lessons we learned as stewards of history.

This newsletter contains reflection about one of the strongest advocates of the Waring Library Society, Dr. Ward Curtis Worthington, Jr., who served as the second director of the Waring Historical Library from 1982 until 2014, and passed away on March 27. ([See obituary here.](#)) I like to think that from his desk in the northwest corner of the library, he watched and supported me as a high school teacher who brought students to the anatomy lab in the late 70's, as a medical student, and then as a faculty member later in my career.

As we reflect on Dr. Worthington's service to the Waring, we also reflect on the past year when we held our lectures virtually and expanded from two to four, collaborating with local organizations. A welcome benefit was more widespread attendance, nationally and internationally. Pending future relaxations of restrictions, we may utilize a hybrid, virtual/in person, format.

Work is continuing in development of a master plan and in fund raising to help preserve the unique treasure of the Waring building and the valuable collections within. With the changing of the academic year and new students, residents, fellows and faculty coming to campus, I ask all to share our treasure through the Waring website and social media accounts, with an invitation to join our organization.

Please continue to take recommended precautions with regard to COVID-19. In doing so, we can hope to eliminate future waves and heed the lessons learned from the Pandemic of 1918.



Curator's Comments

By Dr. Brian Fors, Curator

It goes without saying that the last year has been fraught with economic, political, and social disruption. Fortunately, we can use our history to help us reflect on challenging times and to find the best way to move forward. History provides context and allows us to recognize that there is hope.

Fifty-two years ago, a handful of African American women working at the Medical College Hospital decided they would no longer accept inadequate wages, less pay than equivalent white workers, and working conditions in which they often experienced racism and prejudice, interspersed with what today we would identify as daily microaggression. The women demanded equality and respect, and they launched a labor action that turned into a one hundred-and-thirteen-day strike at the College hospital

The strike addressed inequities for Black women, for the African American community in Charleston, and for laborers in general. At the time, forty percent of the Black community in Charleston lived below the poverty level, and as a significant employer in the city, what happened at the Medical College impacted the community at large.

Protests and marches in the street resulted in hundreds of arrests, boycotts of businesses on King Street, speeches, and other acts of peaceful civil disobedience for over three months. The civil action included clogging cash register and checkout lines at grocery stores and high school students dribbling basketballs down King Street.

The city and state reacted with a show of force as the police and the National Guard

confronted protesters, ordered them to disperse, and then loaded individuals on buses and police wagons while arresting them. The crowds, threatened with arrest and facing curfews, continued to gather, undeterred. Negotiations eventually led to an agreement. The African American hospital workers succeeded, and the strike in 1969 can be seen as a turning point in the relationship between MUSC and the community.

The Medical College and the city seemed to be in turmoil at the time, yet people went to work, students continued their education at the Medical College, patients still received care. During the disruption of the last year, the work of the Waring Historical Library continued as well. In addition, we have looked to engage with communities beyond the

library walls and to embrace the opportunity to move the organization in a new direction.

It has been a busy year. We have moved the University Archives collection off campus to accommodate the Colbert library renovation and developed procedures to continue serving researchers. Since July we have answered ninety-five reference requests; over eight hundred participants joined our lecture presentations; and there have been one hundred twenty-

three thousand views of material in MEDICA, the digital archives. We have established policies and procedures for preserving digital records, initiated new processes for records management at the university, and helped create a framework for planning the bicentennial. It has been an extraordinary year, and there is more to come.

We look forward to: a renewed focus on the collection; an expansion of our presence in the academic world as we

connect with historians of health sciences; the possibility of renovating the building; maintaining the expanded public lecture offerings; and commemorating the institution's bicentennial.

A new strategic plan provides a guide to our journey together over the next three years. We encourage you to read it and help us reach our goals. There is much to accomplish, and we hope you join us.

MUSC COVID-19 Archive

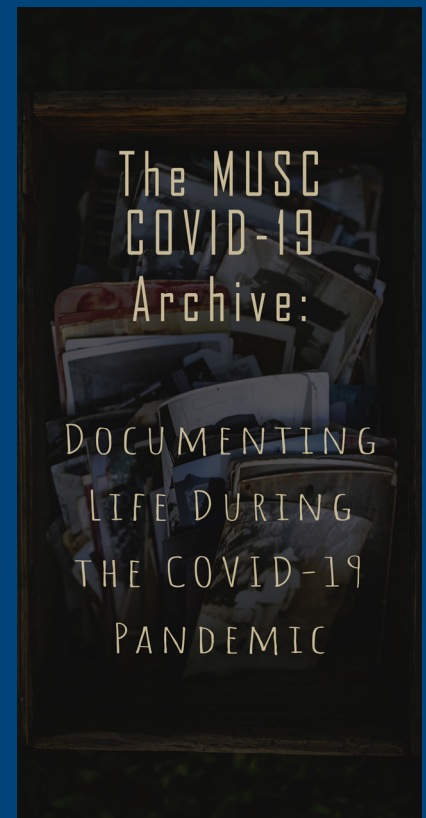
By Ms. Tabitha Samuel

The [MUSC COVID-19 Archive](#) was created to aid in the Waring's efforts to build its collection of COVID-19-related materials and in fulfilling its mission to document the history of the health sciences in South Carolina and the Southeast. Half of the mission of this archive project is to collect personal reflections of people living in South Carolina and the Southeast during the pandemic. So far, the MUSC COVID-19 Archive has received a number of personal reflection submissions ranging from poetry to short stories and artwork, and submitted by SC K-12 students to MUSC physicians.

We invite you to [share your personal reflections](#) with us. From Waring Library Society Board Members to our student members, we want to hear your story.

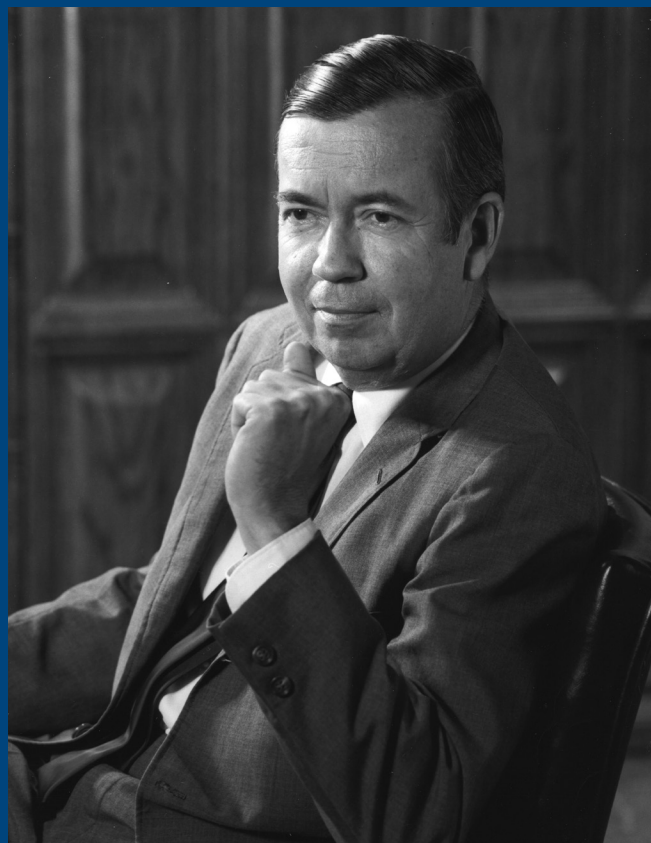
[Personal reflections](#) qualify as any sort of creative expression that has been produced during the pandemic and may or may not address life during the pandemic directly. Examples include written or video journaling, poetry, artwork, prose, musical compositions, and photography. If you would prefer to have your reflection recorded as an oral history, the Waring's staff is happy to help and to record your story.

If you have questions about the project or about how you can contribute, contact the Waring.



W. Curtis Worthington, Jr., M.D., Director of the Waring Historical Library (1982-2014)

With heavy hearts the Waring Historical Library and the Waring Library Society face the passing of W. Curtis Worthington, Jr., M.D., former director of the Waring Historical Library (1982-2014). Dr. Worthington graduated from the Medical College of the State of South Carolina in 1952, and joined the faculty of the Medical College as an assistant professor in 1957. During his 50+ year career at MUSC, Dr. Worthington held many positions including Chair of the Department of Anatomy, Associate Dean of the College of Medicine, and Vice President for Academic Affairs.



Whenever a visitor had the chance to climb the stairs and open the door to the Waring Historical Library, they were greeted by a silent calm, a mood created by the man who sat behind a large desk in the shadows of the northwest alcove. Physically small, but large in intellect and spirit he always rose from his desk as you approached and held out his hand in greeting and welcome.

Dr. Worthington loved the Waring Library and was humble and kind and fun in that service. He was passionate about what he called Dr. Waring's library, which he managed with a light and loving, and often humorous, touch. Although he rarely cracked a broad smile, he often showed the twinkle in his eyes as he recounted an historical tale that could sometimes be more mythical than factual. He was a man of science, a devotee of history, a lover of books. He was the indisputable face of MUSC history.

Dr. Worthington projected a light and a warmth that transcended his alcove, that transcended the Waring Library, and that transcended all of MUSC. He was one of those souls who loved MUSC and made a covenant that is shown by the few who willingly serve MUSC in whichever manner it is needed. His leadership talents served the institution well. Department Chair, Associate Dean, and Vice President were many of the hats worn by Dr. Worthington. He no doubt loved best the last hat he wore from 1982 to 2014 as Director of the Waring Library from where he made his presence felt over all of the MUSC campus, the city of Charleston, and the creeks and estuaries of the Low Country.

The Waring's Digital Archivist Becomes a 2020-2022 David J. and Kathy Cole BRIHTE Leader

By Ms. Tabitha Samuel, MLIS, Digital Archivist

Last fall, I was selected to be part of the 2020-2022 cohort of the David J. and Kathy Cole BRIHTE Leadership Academy. The program, which was created for Building and Retaining Inclusive High-Potential Talent and Excellence, focuses on equipping MUSC's high-potential talent, who identify as under-represented minorities (URM) in academic health care, with lifelong skills and leadership training. Created and facilitated by Dr. Willette Burnham-Williams, University Chief Diversity Officer and Title IX Coordinator, Mrs. VeLonda Dantzler, HR Manager/Learning and Talent Development and Dr. DaNine J. Fleming, Associate Professor, Director of Training and Intercultural Education, Unconscious Bias Faculty Scholar, the BRIHTE program is designed to invest in MUSC's existing talent in an effort to also improve retention of URM faculty and staff. Each

month, the cohort meets, virtually during the pandemic, for training and to explore topics in leadership, such as recognizing and confronting unconscious bias and microaggressions, human capital management, just culture, and safe zone allyship.

It has truly been an enriching experience, and we're just a few months into it. Every session, we receive invaluable first-hand insight from extraordinary leaders at MUSC. I usually end up with pages of notes from just one day. There's so much to reflect on and that's applicable to my position now and my career journey as a whole. Employing the NCHL Health Leadership Competency model, the two-year program consists of one year of didactic training and one of experiential training in which the cohort members are paired with leaders across the MUSC enterprise for



shadowing opportunities. I feel inspired, and our program directors, Drs. Burnham-Williams and Fleming and Mrs. VeLonda Dantzler, are truly passionate about the program and about each of us getting what we need out of it despite the limitations of gathering in-person due to COVID. I'm looking forward to what they will have in store for us for the next year of training.

History Highlight

While the Waring is working to diversify its collection to better reflect all social groups, other work is being done to communicate a comprehensive history of the area. A new digital exhibit created by the College of Charleston and the Lowcountry Digital History Initiative takes a look at the [Morris Street Business District](#) and the diverse population that operated businesses there. Check it out.



Intern at the Waring

By Ms. Catherine Shipman

In January of 2021, I joined the Waring Historical Library as the Spring intern. I am currently finishing my senior year at the College of Charleston, majoring in Anthropology. I grew up in Summerville, South Carolina and have a passion for learning about the health sciences and the history of it in South Carolina. I was eager to intern at the Waring to have access to publications and research relating to medical history and to be able to work on several interesting projects.

I have been working on three main projects while interning at the Waring. One project involves researching and finding sources about civil rights activities related to racial justice on college and university campuses in the south. A second project focuses on researching the Reconstruction era projects in the South, the kinds of federal programs that existed to rebuild the South after the Civil war, and if the medical college used funds from Reconstruction era expenditures. The two research projects have given me the opportunity to explore my interest in South Carolina's history and in the history of health sciences at MUSC. My research into the civil rights activities has also allowed me to explore more deeply the transformative role played by many people the same age as I am and the importance of organization for collective change to occur. The third project consists of creating metadata for MUSC's College of Nursing from the early to mid-1900s. I have thoroughly enjoyed creating metadata that will be useful in helping future researchers navigate the pages of the Waring's digital library collection.

I greatly appreciate being able to work on projects that interest me, benefit the organization, and enhance my education. Working with such an amazing organization and the helpful and welcoming staff has made this internship the best possible internship experience that I could have. It has been so interesting to watch the Waring staff in action and hear about all of the projects that are in process. I look forward to taking what I have learned with me into graduate school and into my future career.

Statement of Harmful Content in WHL Collections

By Dr. Brian Fors, Curator

It is important to recognize that some materials in library collections present hateful stereotypes or particularly offensive beliefs. The Waring Historical Library is no different, and, in fact, does contain offensive items. Therefore, the library will be adding a Statement of Harmful Content to the website in order to clearly state our position while still making the material available for historical research.

The most glaring example of concern are the early twentieth century photographic images of anatomy lessons depicting African American cadavers. The institution openly emphasized the availability of cadavers and surgical patients because of the slave population in South Carolina during the first few decades of its existence. The continued ready access to African American bodies in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries versus the availability of white cadavers continued the racial nature of acquiring bodies for anatomy lessons.

One description of a photo from the Anatomy and Dissection collection (available on MEDICA) remains innocuous: "Photograph of anatomy class from the Medical College of the State of South Carolina (MCSSC), 1906, examining and posing with partially covered cadaver on

dissection table. Photograph bears title and signature Flashlight by Dowling '06." The description would not prepare the researcher to find an image of southern white male students standing around a dissected African American body, posing to document the event.

While making the collection readily available, we have a responsibility to warn researchers what they might come across in the collection, and to prepare them to view items that might be particularly disturbing.

The statement is below:

"The Waring Historical Library's holdings may contain resources that could be offensive and/or harmful. Historical records can, and often do, contain content that illustrates a harmful, stereotyped, and/or offensive outlook, particularly when the collection focuses on often uncomfortable topics related to medical care, medical educational practices, and medical experimentation. While the Library does not condone any harmful and offensive content that may be found in our collections, we have a strong belief in and commitment to furthering and expanding knowledge about the history of health sciences in South Carolina.

Part of this commitment includes stewarding our resources in a way that will be as respectful to our community, especially those who have experienced acts of violence, hate, and aggression. We respect those who were depicted then and who are affected now by these hurtful and harmful representations. For without proper acknowledgement and discourse, the harmful imagery and language used can be problematic in overcoming systemic racism, prejudice, and oppression even as it appears in archival institutions and collections. We, therefore, affirm our belief in and commitment to providing a comprehensive view of our community and history, and in facilitating access to resources in our holdings as equally, equitably, and respectfully as possible.

In preserving historical documentation and ensuring access, we support the research fundamental to furthering important national conversations about history and historical interpretation, social justice, and equity.

Doing so means that there is ready access to materials that you might find disturbing to view and read."