

For Immediate Release
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Manuscript collections in small libraries and archives sought

Small libraries, archives and other repositories are being asked to submit information concerning their manuscript collections for publication in the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC). The request is being made by the Reference and Adult Services Division (RASD) History Section Local History Committee in cooperation with the Library of Congress.

The Library of Congress has published NUCMC since 1962 in an attempt to provide a comprehensive guide to identifiable groups of manuscripts in American repositories that are regularly open to the public for research.

"While NUCMC provides excellent coverage of larger institutions and manuscript collections, the holdings of many small libraries, archives, historical societies and other local institutions have not been submitted," said Judith P. Reid, chair of the Local History Committee. "To improve access to the often valuable collections in these institutions, the Local History Committee and the Library of Congress are reaching out to these institutions to encourage them to register their collections, which are especially rich in local history records."

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Participating repositories supply the Library of Congress with information to identify their collections, either on specially prepared data sheets, or using printed or typed guides, calendars, local catalog cards, computer printouts, or other sources that already exist.

The Library of Congress organizes this information into formal catalog entries and enters the data into RLIN to make it immediately available for online searching through RLIN's Archival and Manuscript file. It is also available through OCLC (AMC records) and WLIN. The information is thoroughly indexed and published annually with each volume listing about 2,000 collections and containing a cumulative index.

There are no limitations on the time, place of origin, or nature of the collections reported in NUCMC. Holdings range from transcripts of oral recordings to significant single items of great historical importance, research potential, or association value. Accessible archival records located in a repository other than the originating archive are included. Records remaining with the creating body, such as county records in a county courthouse, are not.

Detailed information for determining the eligibility of collections and instructions for filling out NUCMC data sheets are available from: The NUCMC Team, Special Materials Cataloging Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540-4375. Telephone: 202-707-7954. Fax: 202-707-6269.

RASD is a division of the American Library Association (ALA).

