



Central Library
of Rochester &
Monroe County

Viewing the Past in the Present:

An Exploration of the Local History and
Genealogy Division

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Believing in the fundamental value and equity of all humans, **the Local History & Genealogy Division preserves and ensures widespread access to inclusive resources and information about the diverse history of Greater Rochester and all its residents.**

This work is done in support of the Rochester Public Library's mission of engaging the community in life-long learning for all through equal access to information, technology, gathering spaces and expert staff.

Local History & Genealogy Division



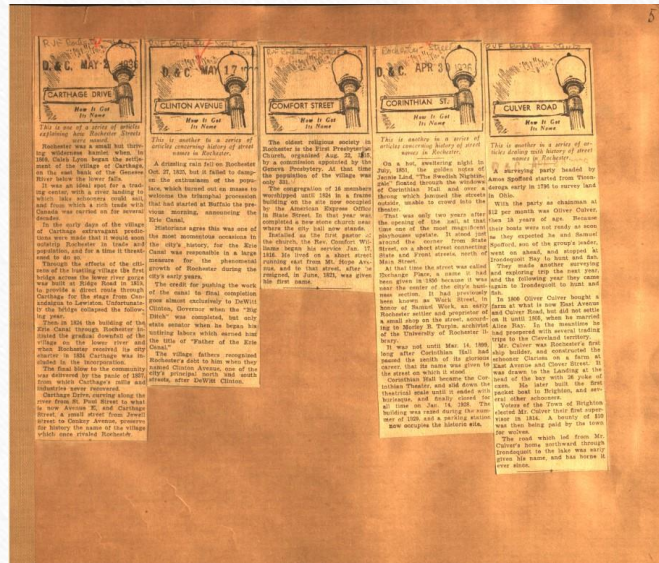
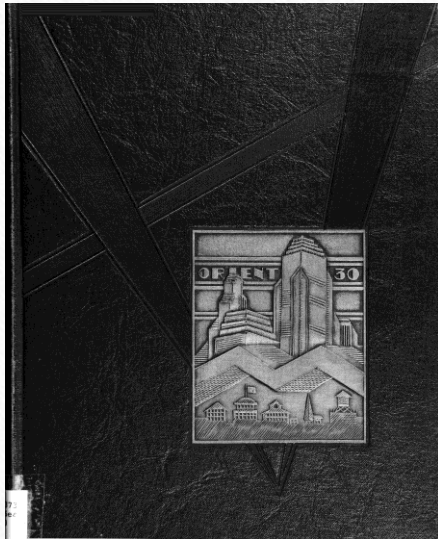
- 2nd floor of the Rundel Memorial Library
- Home to the region's largest collection of primary and secondary source material about the history of Rochester and the Genesee Valley



What we do...

- Preserve Greater Rochester history resources and provide access to them
- Share local history with patrons of all ages
- Tours of historic spots
- Tours of the library's resources

Resources



- Books & Serials
- Maps
- Photographs & postcards
- Directories dating from 1827
- Local newspapers dating from 1818
- City and County council proceedings
- Trade Catalogs
- Scrapbooks
- Yearbooks
- Unique historical documents
- Genealogy databases like Ancestry.com
- Life Records database
- Newspaper Index
- Scanning equipment
- And much, much more!

Digital Resources and Where to Find Them

- Rochester Images
- City Directories
- Maps
- Scrapbooks
- Pamphlets
- Manuscripts
- Trade Catalogs
- Newspapers
- MCLS catalog: libraryweb.org
- RPL website via LHGD page: roccitylibrary.org/digital-collections/
- Rochestervoices.org
- New York Heritage: nyheritage.org
- New York State Historic Newspapers: nyshistoricnewspapers.org
- FamilySearch

Community Archives

- Clarissa Street Digital Archive
- Archive of Black History and Culture
- Shoulders To Stand On LGBTQIA2+ Archive
- Community driven archives are archives created by individuals or groups who want to document their cultural heritage based on their shared experiences, interests, or identities.
- Committee members will identify collections the library should preserve, advise on creating related library programming, may assist with arranging and describing the collections, and help to connect researchers with the new collections to create scholarship.



Clarissa Street Digital Archive

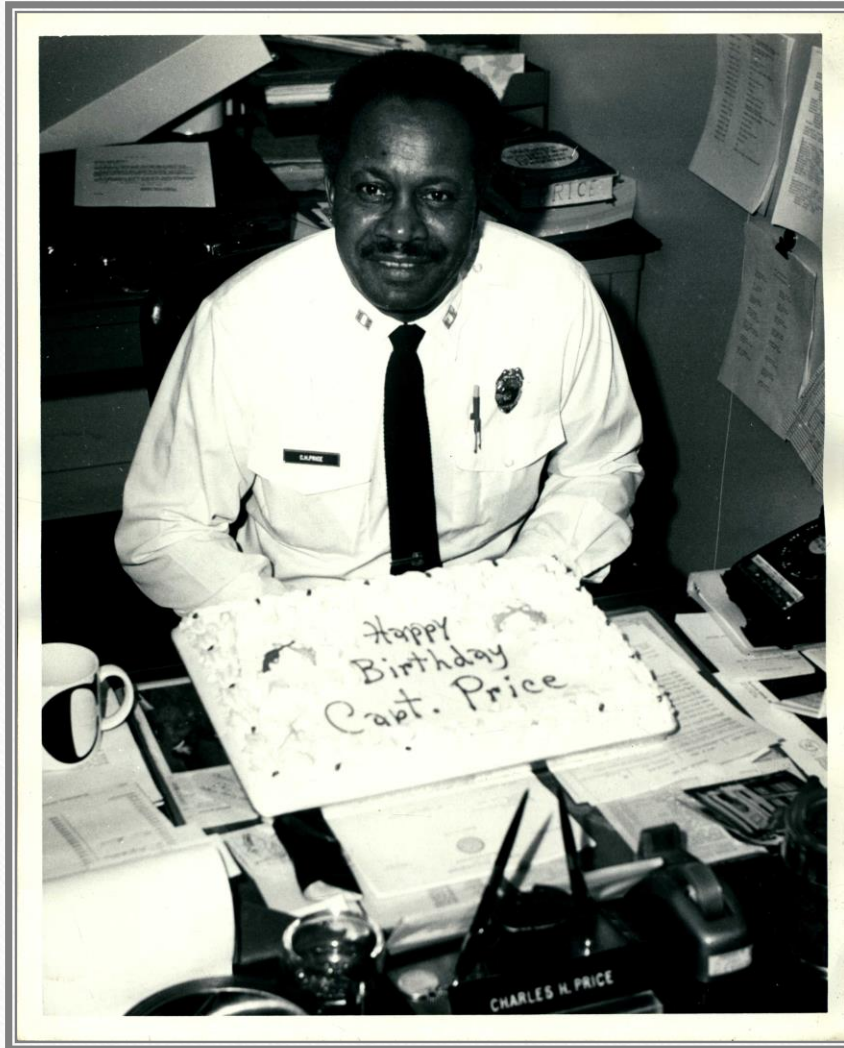
- Clarissa Street Reunion Ephemera
- Family photos of Clarissa Street residents
- Urban Renewal Records
- F.I.G.H.T. Organization records
- Soon to be accessible on New York Heritage Digital collections!
- Clarissa Street exhibit open Wednesdays 3:00-6:30 and Saturdays Noon-4:00

Archive of Black History and Culture

- First committee was assembled in 2023 by Public Services Librarian Antoine McDonald
- Acquired several new collections-currently unprocessed
- We are taking applications for community advisory committee members right now.
- Antoine.mcdonald@libraryweb.org

Charles Price Collection

- Captain Charles Henry Price Jr. 1923-2021
- Served in World War II with the Tuskegee Airmen as an intelligence officer
- Was the first African American to be appointed to the Rochester Police Department
- Was the first African American to become Captain of the Rochester Police Department



Charles "Buddy" Granston Collection

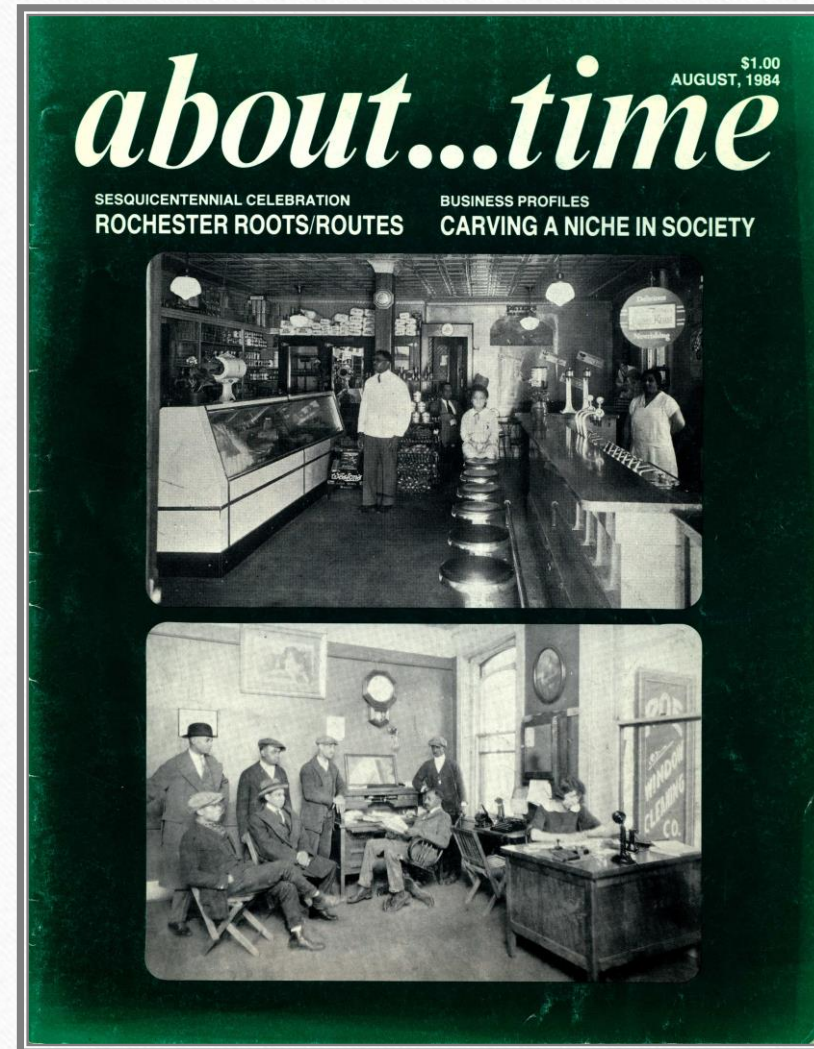
- This collection fills a gap in information about the history of the black community living in Rochester's East side
- Photographs of family and friends including those taken at the Baden Street Settlement and Gaylords activities
- Wide date range of photos but primarily 1950s-2000s

-On Saturday, November 27th, the GAYLORDS will host their 12th annual Reunion. This will be the first year the group has held their 'always successful' affair at the Wishing Well Party House, on Chili Avenue. No tickets will be sold at the door, so you better try to get in touch with one of the Gaylords. Try Buddy Granston at 328-0327. Good Luck - I hope tickets are still available .



about...time

- Magazine published by James and Carolyne Blount
- Covered international, national, and regional issues for the black community
- Blount family recently donated an archival collection containing records about the magazine
- LHGD has a complete collection of the magazine available now for patrons but the archival collection will likely be available for patrons in 2026





Shoulders To Stand On

"A Community without a history is a
community that doesn't exist." -Evelyn
Bailey



Shoulders To Stand On LGBTQIA2+ Archive

- Six collections are being processed
 - Tim Mains Papers
 - Tim Sally Papers
 - Susan Jordan Scrapbooks
 - Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church Records
 - AIDS Remembrance Garden Records
 - R. Kasprzyk/Nancy Ann Howes Papers

Tim Mains Papers



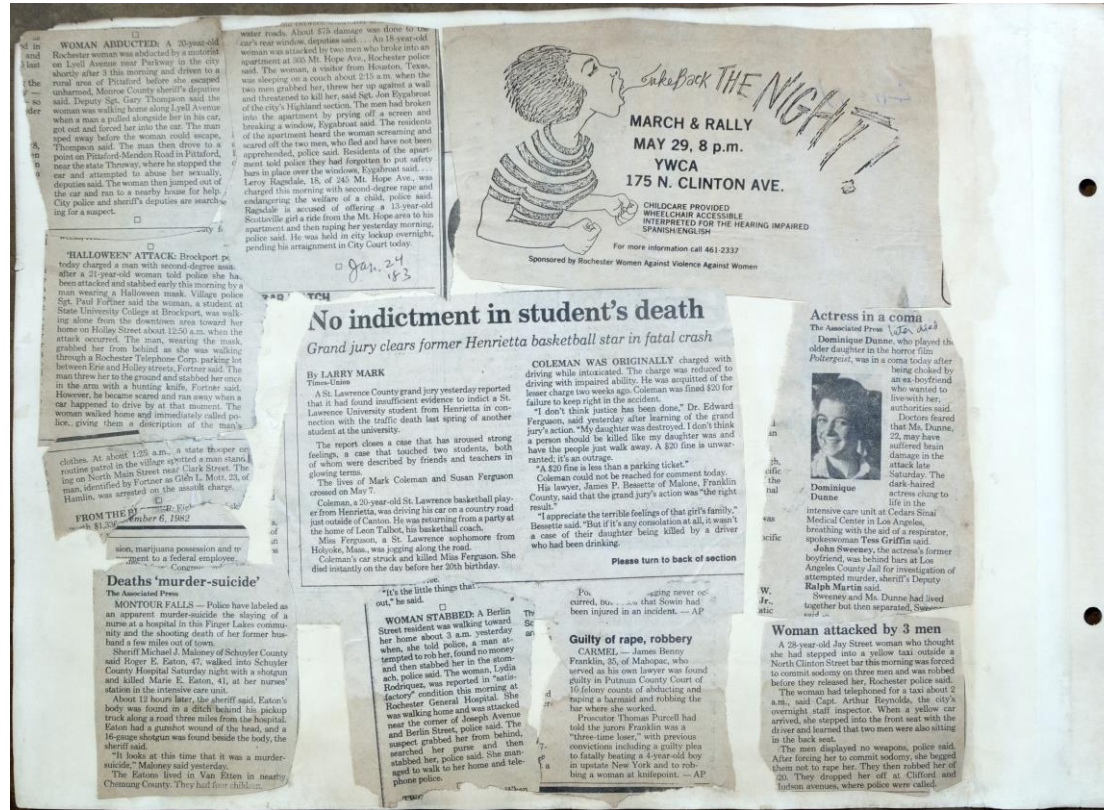
- 1948-2021
- Educator, activist, and local politician
- Elected in 1985, Mains served on the Rochester City Council for 20 years
- He was the first openly gay member of the Rochester City Council

Tim Sally Papers

- Founding member of AIDS Rochester, PFLAG Rochester, and Dignity/Integrity
- Known for his activism around the impact of circumcision
- Collection consists of documents, photographs, newspaper clippings, ephemera



Susan Jordan Scrapbooks



- Activist, feminist, and social justice advocate
- Editor of The Empty Closet for 28 years (1989-2017)
- 9 scrapbooks dating from 1977-1989 and include ephemera and newspaper clippings

Open Arms
Metropolitan
Community
Church
Records

Church operated from 1981 to
2023

Inclusive church and pillar of the
LGBTQIA2+ Community

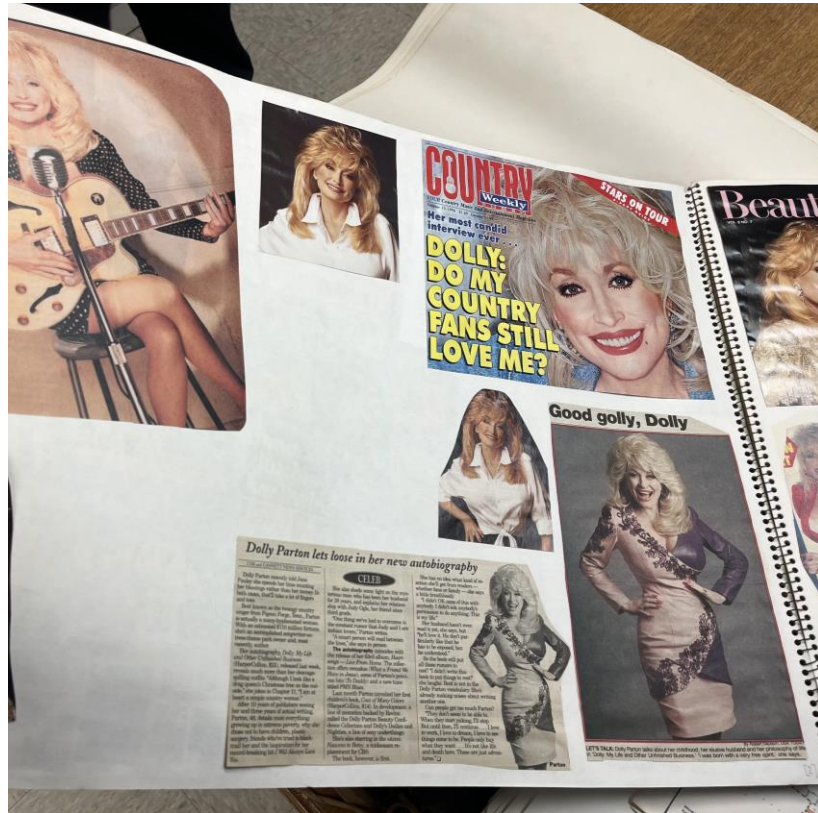
Collection includes church
records, ephemera, church
bulletins and church memorabilia



AIDS Remembrance Garden Records

- Documents related to the development and construction of Rochester's AIDS Remembrance Garden dating from 1997 to 2004
- Includes documents related to lives lost to AIDS dating back to 1980
- Paper documents, site plans, and maps

Nancy Ann Howes Papers



- Donor was heavily involved in the Rochester Cross-Dresser Network
- Collection dates between 1964-2010
- Includes documents, essays, tagged and annotated periodicals, and sketchbooks



SPECIAL COLLECTIONS



The Special Collections of the Local History & Genealogy Division hold over 500 cubic feet of personal papers, records, and manuscripts related to the Genesee Valley region. These important primary sources are invaluable to the preservation of our collective memory and provide first-hand glimpses into the lives of local luminaries and average citizens alike. Collection areas include the beginning and growth of public-supported educational media in Rochester; social reform in Rochester and Monroe County; and Rochester businesses, clubs, and organizations. Comprised of paper-based documents, glass plate negatives, lantern slides, and original artwork, highlights of these collections include a 1792 deed signed by Ebenezer "Indian" Allen; unpublished histories and biographies; and personal papers of Susan B. Anthony, former Rochester mayor Hiram Edgerton, and Nathaniel Rochester and the Rochester family, among many others.

Procedures for Access and Use of Special Collection Materials

Terms of Access to Materials

Only a small number of collections are in the catalog; these are listed below. All collections held and described by the Rochester Public Library are searchable through our page on the Empire Archival Discovery Cooperative at <https://www.empireadc.org/search/repositories/rpl/>. Researchers are asked to call ahead or use the appointment request form at <https://roccitylibrary.org/local-history-genealogy-resources/research-appointment-request/> to request access to special collections materials. Access to collections cannot be guaranteed without prior contact; please contact us at least 2 days before you plan to come in to use special collections materials. Because of the rare and unique nature of the collections, additional access procedures apply to all special collections. All researchers are subject to the Local History & Genealogy Division Terms of Access.

- [Terms of Access](#)
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How to search RPL's Archives

- Search our collections here:
 - [Roccitylibrary.org /special-collections/](https://roccitylibrary.org/special-collections/)
 - [empireadc.org](https://www.empireadc.org)

Thank You!!



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