



The members of the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), who deliver the mail to homes and businesses across the country, embody the principles set forth by the popular credo. Not the official motto of the United States Postal Service, the quote was written nearly 2,500 years ago by Greek Historian Herodotus describing Persian couriers sending messages on horseback during their war with the Greeks. The creed, and its description of a commitment to service, have since become synonymous with letter carriers and the members of the NALC. August 2009 marked the 120th anniversary of the founding of the union that represents city letter carriers across the country.

“Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.”

improved salaries, better working conditions, and greater security for carriers and their families.

The convention was called to order on August 29, 1889 in a meeting hall above Schaefer’s Saloon with 60 letter carriers present. The delegates adopted a resolution to form a National Association of Letter Carriers, and William Wood from Detroit was elected the first president of the new union.

The membership of the NALC is made up of male and female city letter carriers of the United States Postal Service. Other people working for the

postal system, including clerks, mail handlers, and carriers on rural routes, are members of separate unions. Since 1889, membership has grown steadily, beginning with 96 members and reaching over 300,000 active and retired members today.

Membership has long been diverse. African Americans have worked as letter carriers from around the time of city delivery service; the earliest known black carrier was a former slave named William Carney who delivered mail in 1869. In the 1890s, women attempted to enter the letter carrier trade, but it was not until World War I, and later World War II, that women started working as city letter carriers to fill the empty positions of men drafted into military service. Retired carriers remain integral members in the union.

The NALC and its members have continuously fought to improve the working conditions of letter carriers. Along the way, legislation concerning the carriers, the post office, and federal employees has been enacted which has resulted in the eight-hour work day, the closing of post offices on Sunday, numerous small wage increases, a forty-hour work week for federal employees, and official recognition of the role of unions in handling grievances and collective bargaining. However, financial and emotional hardships created by low pay and low morale continued to plague the carriers until the 1960s when promises for wage increases were not kept, and the Nixon Administration planned to transform the Post Office

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To honor that anniversary, the Reuther Library opened a retrospective exhibit, “Still Delivering: A History of the Letter Carriers,” that chronicles the mail service of the United States from the inter-colonial communication that helped to unite a new nation, to the Pony Express that provided fast service across the country, to free city delivery for the growing towns and cities. “Still Delivering” focuses on the founding of the National Association of Letter Carriers, its leaders, and its members through photographs, documents, and artifacts from the NALC Collection at the Walter P. Reuther Library.

Before the advent of home delivery, Americans often collected their mail at the local post office. But, beginning in 1863, free city delivery allowed those living in cities and villages with larger populations to receive mail at their doors. The delivery of mail to homes and businesses increased the need for letter carriers in the neighborhoods. Initially, multiple deliveries took place, and it was not uncommon for a carrier to make three mail deliveries each day. With the advent of delivery, letter carriers began to seek organization and standardization.

Since the beginning of the postal service, letter carriers worked together locally to promote important issues including the eight hour day, a regular pay scale, and job security. Looking to organize on a larger level, letter carriers answered a call to meet in Milwaukee in 1889 to form a national association to ensure

Collections Newly Open for Research

AFSCME Central Files Department

1944-1974 [21 l.f.]

Comprised primarily of correspondence, the collection covers a broad range of the operational activities of AFSCME International Headquarters during the 1960s and 1970s, its procedures, and its dealings with other unions, organizations, and the government.

AFSCME International Executive Board (IEB) Records

1935-1999 [23 l.f.]

This collection includes minutes, agendas, and transcripts of the meetings of the International Executive Board of AFSCME, as well as officers' reports, correspondence, resolutions, budgets, judicial panel hearing reports, and other miscellaneous material.

AFSCME Local 1733: Memphis, TN Records

1962-1973 [2 l.f.]



*Martin Luther King, Jr. speaks in Memphis.
Photo Credit: Ernest C. Withers*

AFSCME Local 1733 in Memphis, Tennessee is famous for its 1968 sanitation workers' strike during which Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated while lending his support to the strikers. Local 1733 went on to wage other campaigns for workers' rights. The vast majority of this collection consists of newspaper clippings that follow these campaigns in both local and national publications. There is additional material relating to the strikers' strategies and the organizations formed to support the strikers.

AFSCME Office of the Secretary-Treasurer: Judicial Panel Records

1966-1998 [25.25 l.f.]

The AFSCME Judicial Panel was established in 1964. Reforms regarding how the Judicial Panel operated came in 1972 and again in 1980. These records primarily contain transcripts of hearings held for Judicial Panel cases. Also included are exhibits, decisions, correspondence, by-laws, constitutions, legal documents, petitions, meeting minutes, election ballots and vote tallies, and financial documents.

AFSCME Women's Rights Department Records

1974-1986 [2 l.f.]

The collection focuses on comparable worth and job evaluation in state governments. The majority of the collection is comprised of consultants' proposals to state and local government committees to conduct studies addressing issues of pay equity and job evaluation and ranking systems.

American Federation of Teachers (AFT) International Affairs Department Records

1980-2000, bulk 1990-1999 [12 l.f.]

This collection reflects the work the AFT has done to help promote democracy in former communist countries. Of note is information on the development and creation of various organizations, such as Education for Democracy International and the International Civic Education Exchange Program.

James and Grace Lee Boggs Papers [Part III]

1930s-1980s [2 l.f.]

This part of the collection contains materials relating to Grace's involvement in the formation and operation of the Asian Political Alliance (APA). The collection also includes James and Grace Lee Boggs's writings, speeches, and research notes from the 1930s to 1980s. Topics include revolutionary philosophy and leaders, economics, and philosophy.

Cincinnati Federation of Teachers Local 1520 Records

1963-1995 [19 l.f.]

The collection includes documents dealing with student discipline, teacher strikes, public employee collective bargaining, career ladders, class size, peer and evaluation programs, student grading, and social promotion. The records also cover the work of Tom Mooney, who was president of the CFT from 1979 to 2000. Considered one of the leading voices of education reform in America's public education system, Mooney was a co-founder of the Teacher Union Reform Network and Institute for Teacher Union Leadership.



Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) Records [Part III]

1974-2001, bulk 1987-2001 [56.25 l.f.]



Members of CLUW and their families march in support of the United Farm Workers boycott of grapes and Gallo Wines in the 1970s.

This part of the collection highlights important issues such as reproductive rights, domestic violence, sexual harassment, AIDS, union relations, and pay equity. Also included is information on the organization and promotion of programs such as Working Women's Awareness Week, Come Shop With Me, Take Our Daughters to Work Day, and National Vote Day.

Peter Eckstein Papers

1970-1995 [34 l.f.]

This collection features the papers of Peter Eckstein, a UAW and AFL-CIO economist. They include his studies and reports on Michigan's economy, correspondence, articles, and handwritten notes. Important topics within this collection include the Chrysler Loan Guarantee Act, Michigan Governor's Commission on Jobs and Economic Development, UAW CAP, and the 1978 Carl Levin Senate Campaign.

Focus: Hope Oral Histories

Eleanor Josaitis [June 26 & July 10, 2007]

Eleanor Josaitis and Senator Carl Levin [October 19, 2007]

Focus: HOPE is a civil and human rights organization in Detroit, which works to fight poverty, racism, and injustice. Two oral history interviews with Focus: HOPE co-founder Eleanor Josaitis explore the history of the organization from 1968-2007, the founding of Focus:HOPE following the Detroit Riot of 1967, and programs for food aid and job training in southeast Michigan. Also open for research is an interview between Josaitis and U.S. Senator Carl Levin that addresses the history of Focus:Hope, Detroit politics, and U.S. Government grants to Focus:Hope.

UAW President's Office: Leonard Woodcock Records [Part II]

1968-1977 [3 l.f.]

Leonard Woodcock was president of the United Auto Workers from 1968 to 1977. Documents within this collection include

correspondence, International Executive Board meeting materials and resolutions, clippings, and subject files. Important topics covered are UAW Canada, the International Executive Board, and contract negotiations.

International Conference of Women Engineers and Scientists (ICWES) Records

1962-2005 [3 l.f.]

These records document the origin and development of ICWES, as well as the technical and sociological subjects discussed at the conferences. Compiled from members of the Society of Women Engineers (SWE), these records document the planning



Members at the ICWES VI Conference in 1981 in Bombay, India.

and execution of the first and seventh ICWES conferences (ICWES I and ICWES VII) held in 1964 and 1984, which were hosted by SWE. The records also document SWE's involvement with ICWES conferences hosted in other countries. Records include correspondence, reports, clippings, proceedings, and bound volumes of conference proceedings.

UAW President's Office: Douglas A. Fraser Records [Part II]

1977-1983 [3 l.f.]

Doug Fraser was president of the United Auto Workers from 1977 to 1983. Important topics in this collection include the Chrysler Federal Loan Bailout, contract negotiations, and the UAW International Executive Board.

Douglas A. Fraser Papers

1976-2008 [5 l.f.]

The Douglas A. Fraser Personal Papers consist mainly of personal papers and correspondence collected by Fraser during his tenure as University Professor of Labor Studies at Wayne State University. Documents from Fraser's term as UAW President are also found within this collection. Of particular interest are the Doug Fraser & Patrick Wright interview transcripts which delve into the efforts by Fraser and others to secure the passage of the Chrysler Loan Guarantee Act in 1980.

SEIU 925 Oral Histories Donated:

Women and the Labor Movement

The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) District 925 Legacy Project has donated 47 transcribed oral history interviews and corresponding audio tapes to the Reuther Library. Now open for research, these interviews chronicle the organization's 20-year history and provide insight into the relationship between the women's movement and organized labor. Most of the interviews were conducted by Ann Froines of the Legacy Project, with Project Manager Stacey Heath conducting a few. Labor leaders such as Karen Nussbaum, Debbie Schneider, Kim Cook, Bonnie Ladin, Anne Hill, and Ellen Cassedy, as well as activists such as Gloria Steinem, Jane Fonda, and Tom Hayden, are among those interviewed for this project.

In 1975, SEIU partnered with members of the group 9to5, National Association of Working Women to organize office workers in Boston. These clerical employees became SEIU Local 925. Stakeholders expanded upon this idea in 1981 by forming SEIU District 925 in order to organize office workers into chapters throughout the country. District 925 dissolved in 2001 when it consolidated with other SEIU locals. While District 925 also organized men, the collective power of organized women is a unifying theme throughout the oral histories.

9to5, the association, and District 925, the union, used a variety of techniques to raise community consciousness about the issues facing female clerical workers. When 925 launched, office workers were one of the largest, lowest paid, most exploited, and least unionized segments of the nation's work-

force. District 925 helped to legitimize "women's issues" in the workplace as union issues. Members organized women, propelled them into national leadership positions within the labor movement, tackled pay inequity, and addressed issues such as family and medical leave—all during a time of great social and technological change.

The challenges facing clerical workers were also popularized in the 1980 movie, *Nine to Five*, starring Jane Fonda, Dolly Parton, Lily Tomlin, and Dabney Coleman. The inspiration for this film came from the real life experiences of 925 members. ■



Bricks, Mortar and More:

The Jewish Community and the Growth of Wayne State University



Wayne State's campus. In yellow, those buildings donated by members of the Jewish community.

As an urban university, Wayne State has a long tradition of enrolling students and working with groups from surrounding communities in southeastern Michigan. Likewise, many members of these communities have been great supporters of the University. One group that has had a tremendous impact upon the growth of Wayne State is the Jewish Community of metropolitan Detroit.

The evidence of support from this group is easy to see at the University: between 1956 and 2008, fifteen buildings on Wayne State's main and medical campuses were built through funding from more than a dozen members of the Jewish community.

To honor these donors who helped build the University, the Reuther Library mounted the exhibit "Bricks, Mortar and More: The Jewish Community and the Growth of Wayne State University" in its Woodcock gallery from October 2008 to October 2009. Display materials were drawn from many collections within the Wayne State University Archives. Each exhibit panel presents photographs, graphics, and brief histories of each of the fifteen buildings on campus that were built with funds donated by members of the Jewish community. Also included in the exhibit is a large version of the map shown at left, highlighting where each building is located on campus. ■

NALC Exhibit



Continued from page 1

Department into a government owned corporation. Unhappy, on March 18, 1970, letter carriers in New York City, led by Branch 36, walked off the job and began a wildcat strike that lasted eight days and spread across the country. The Strike of 1970 was the first strike in the history of the postal service and was the largest walkout by federal employees.

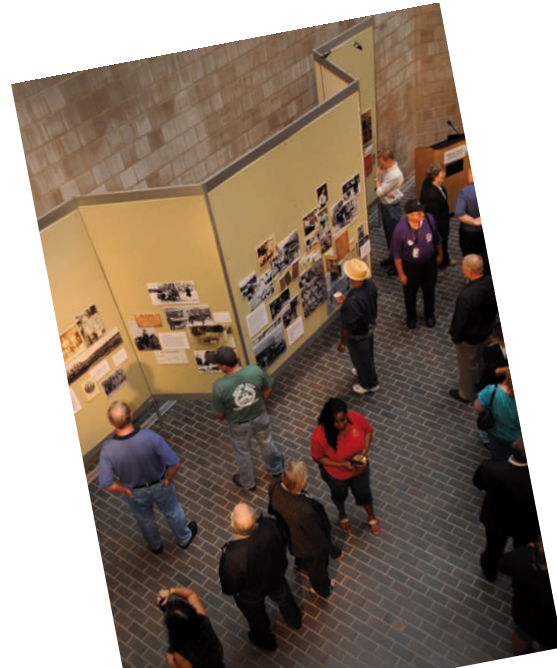
The strike caused disruption and delays in mail service across the country. As a last resort, President Nixon declared a national emergency and ordered Federal Troops and National

Guardsmen into New York to handle the mail. Finally, letter carriers began to return to work, with Branch 36 remaining on the picket line until the end. Negotiators reached an agreement for wage increases, compression of service years from 21 to 8 for top pay rate, collective bargaining with binding arbitration, and amnesty for strikers. In addition, the 181 year old Post Office Department was replaced with an independent government agency—the United States Postal Service.

Visiting homes and businesses to deliver the mail six days a week, letter carriers are fixtures in the neighborhoods and as a result are actively involved in the community. Carriers on the street are often the first to respond to a fire, emergency or accident. Their heroic actions are recognized with the Hero of the Year award, established in 1974, that recognizes the men and women who risk their lives to save others. The NALC became the first national sponsor for the Muscular Dystrophy Association in 1953 and has continued to raise funds for research. The Letter Carriers National Food Drive has become the nation's largest annual one-day food drive, collecting more than 909 million pounds of food over the past 16 years. Donations of non-perishable food are left by mailboxes and at post offices. Letter carriers collect the items on their routes and deliver the donations to local food banks, pantries, and shelters across the country. The most recent food drive in May 2009 brought a new record as 73.4 million pounds of food were collected.

The letter carriers of today can look back with pride to the 19th century carriers who established the NALC, while forging ahead to meet the challenges of the future. Letter carriers continue to play a vital role in American life even as technology changes the way Americans communicate. Carriers are delivering more rental DVDs and fewer personal letters, more mail order prescription drugs and fewer invoices, more small packages from online merchants and fewer payments—but they still connect every house and business across the country.

“Still Delivering” will be on display in the Reuther's main gallery through June 2010. ■



From left: Mike Smith, Director of the Reuther Library; Frederic V. Rolando, President of the NALC; and Dr. Jay Noren, President of Wayne State University.



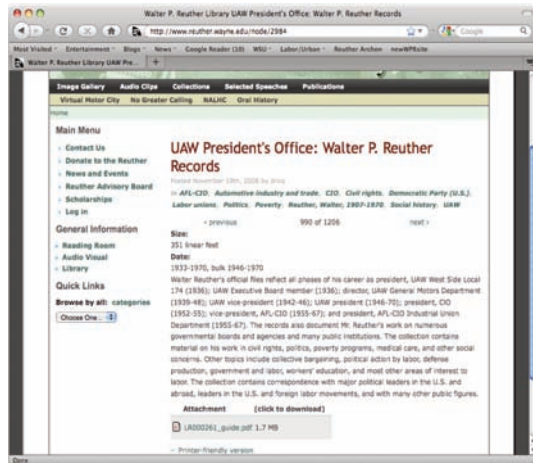
Records and Manuscript Collections

Enhanced Online Access Now Available on the Reuther Web Site

The Reuther Library is pleased to announce a new and improved method for researching records and manuscript collections through our Web site. Beginning in early 2009, abstracts were created for all available collections, encompassing both the Labor and Urban Affairs Archives and Wayne State University Archives. These abstracts supply relevant information on each collection, detailing their size and date as well as providing a short synopsis of their content. Available at

www.reuther.wayne.edu/abstracts, search and advanced search options are provided for finding specific collections. Users can also browse the full alphabetical listing of collections, or find related collections by utilizing subject tags attached to each abstract.

Complete finding aids, including many never previously available online, can be downloaded from their respective abstracts as PDF documents. All abstracts are slated to have corresponding finding aids by the end of the year, marking the first time the Reuther Library has offered full descriptive access to its records and manuscript collections on the Web. These finding aids themselves are full-text, keyword searchable, making it possible for

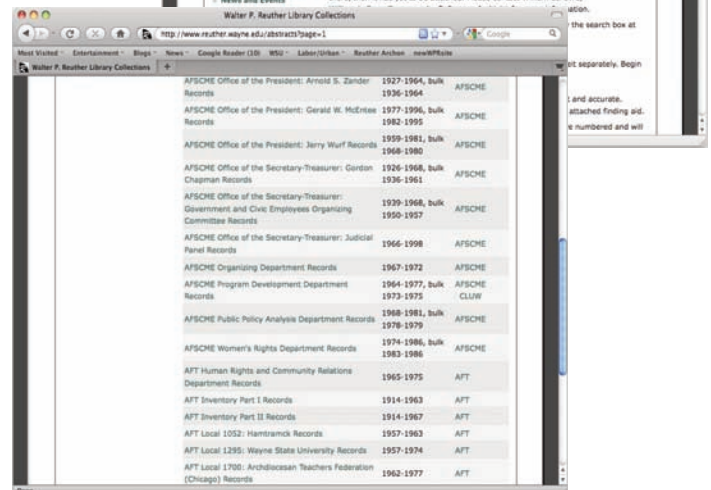


Screen shot of a collection abstract.

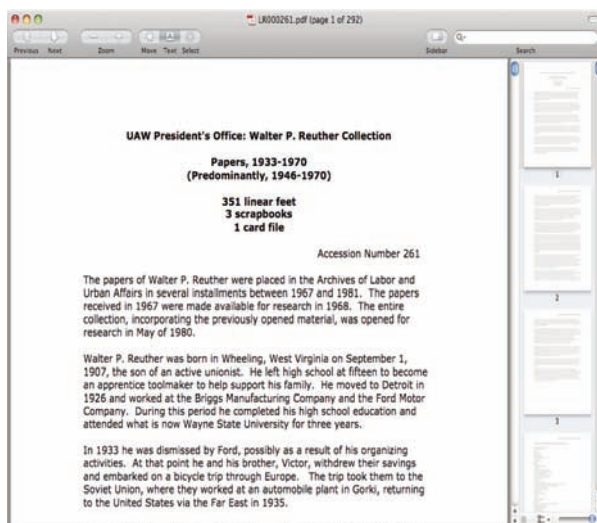
researchers to pinpoint material down to the folder level.

As new collections open to the public, full descriptions (abstract and guide) will be placed online. Possible future additions include Web-based finding aids, in addition to the PDFs, and digital selections of documents from the collections.

For more information about our records and manuscript collections already online, please contact reutherreference@wayne.edu.



Screen shots of the Collections list.



Screen shot of a finding aid PDF.

Want to keep more up to date with Reuther Library news? Soon, the Reuther will launch a listserv. If you want to subscribe, please send an email to eb5801@wayne.edu with the subject line "Listserv Subscribe". In the body, please put your name and mailing address.

Botsford Hospital Collection

Reuther Library Fieldwork

Over the last year, the Reuther Library conducted a unique case study in donor relations and fieldwork. It began when Botsford Hospital donated its historic photograph collection to the Reuther Library.

Botsford Hospital currently sits on a complex in Farmington Hills, MI. One facility, the Botsford Assisted Living Center, was originally the Michigan Hospital for Crippled Children. This institution was the state's home for children afflicted with polio and other crippling diseases from the early part of the 20th century until the mid-1950s. Renowned architect Albert Kahn designed the red brick buildings used for classrooms, dorms, staff quarters, and treatment facilities. Botsford organized a reunion for former patients and staff of the Michigan Hospital for Crippled Children in September 2008 and invited staff members from the Reuther Library attend.

Reunion attendees swapped stories and toured the grounds, which some had not seen in over fifty years. The attendees also learned that the Reuther Library was to become the repository for the records from the Michigan Hospital for Crippled Children. The Reuther would make a good home for the records since it is already the repository for many Detroit hos-

pitals, including the Children's Hospital of Michigan, also affiliated with Botsford's Farmington site. Reunion attendees were encouraged to return the following year with photographs and other materials documenting their time at the hospital so the Reuther Library could add them to the collection.

A team of Reuther archivists arrived at the next reunion in July 2009, armed with scanners and laptops to capture those documents and photographs that residents had brought to share. Over ten individuals allowed their items to be scanned, and twelve others donated their original items to be added to the larger collection.

Through this project, Reuther Library staff successfully incorporated new technology into standard archival fieldwork. The Reuther will imitate this successful and productive collecting trip in future visits with other donors.

For more information on these reunions and on the efforts of Botsford Hospital to explore and preserve the history of its current location, please visit

<http://www.botsfordcommons.org/reunion>. ■



Clockwise from top left: the red brick facility designed by famous Detroit architect Albert Kahn; resident members of The Campfire Girls receive cooking lessons from a scout; residents enjoy the wading pool as shown in a photograph that has ironically suffered water damage.

Walter P. Reuther Library

For an up-to-date listing of Reuther Library events, log on to our Web site at
www.reuther.wayne.edu

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Monday-Tuesday - 11 a.m.-6:45 p.m.
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