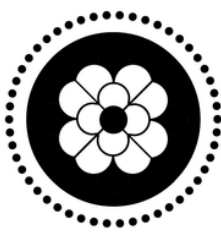


**TPL
ARCHIVES &
SPECIAL
COLLECTIONS
ANNUAL
REPORT
2022**



View of the 11th Street Bridge and Mt. Rainier, 1947,
Richards Studio, D25736-3



Northwest Room
at Tacoma Public Library



**Community
Archives Center**
at Tacoma Public Library

INTRODUCTION

In 2021, the Northwest Room team began to implement a radically welcoming vision for local history collections at Tacoma Public Library. This vision is oriented around two guiding questions:

How can we begin to address existing silences in our collections and move toward a more inclusive local history record?

How can we eliminate existing barriers to access and empower our community to discover, use, and interpret our collections?

This year, we have made significant progress in responding to these questions. The Community Archives Center, which began in late 2021 with support from a grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services, became an active presence in the community in 2022. The Center, in collaboration with community partners, developed 14 new collections and recorded 40 oral histories focused on groups and topics that have been under-represented in local history collections. Additionally, the Center engaged in numerous outreach and educational activities designed to build and share this growing collection of community stories.

Our new collections database, Northwest ORCA, publicly launched in April of this year. This system provides unprecedented public access to the extensive holdings of the Northwest Room and the Community Archives Center. Users can explore hundreds of collections and thousands of digital objects that were previously inaccessible.

The Northwest Room was among 3 libraries nationally to be selected to join the Memory Lab Network. As part of this program, we will be launching a DIY space that will provide users with the equipment, software, and training they need to digitize, record, and preserve their personal photos, home movies, and more.

Our educational programming connected hundreds of K-12 and college students across Pierce County to our collections.

This annual report summarizes our accomplishments in 2022 and establishes priorities for the coming year.



224

**COLLECTIONS MADE
AVAILABLE**

48

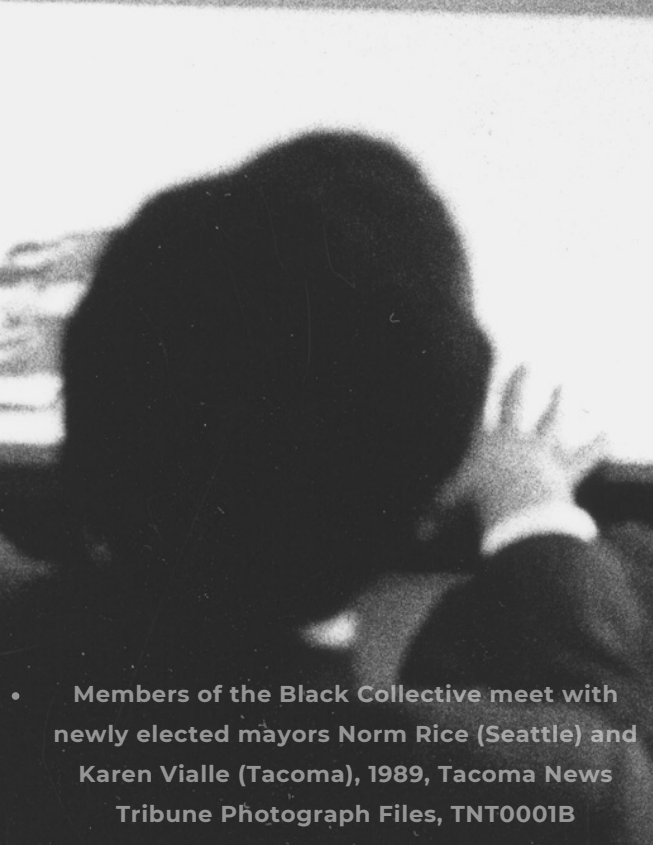
OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

400

**STUDENTS INTERACTED
WITH
NWR/CAC COLLECTIONS**

1 OF 3

**LIBRARIES SELECTED
NATIONALLY TO JOIN THE
MEMORY LAB NETWORK**



• Members of the Black Collective meet with newly elected mayors Norm Rice (Seattle) and Karen Vialle (Tacoma), 1989, Tacoma News Tribune Photograph Files, TNT0001B

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

TPL's special collections continue to grow and expand in strategic directions. Our collection development focus is on content that moves us toward a more inclusive and representative record of Tacoma and content that responds to the anticipated research needs of our growing user base. New collections acquired in 2022 include:

Black Lives Matter Mural Project Collection

Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed Council Records

Charles Carson Papers

Community Archives Center Oral History Project

Community Event Collection

George Kupka Papers

George M Miller Papers

Hilltop Library Planning Committee Records

Justi Pfutzenreuter Salishan Research Files

Matthew Dick Boat Building Photographs

Paul Jackson Digital Videos

Radio Tacoma Programs

Tacoma Art Museum Records

Tacoma Community House Oral History Project

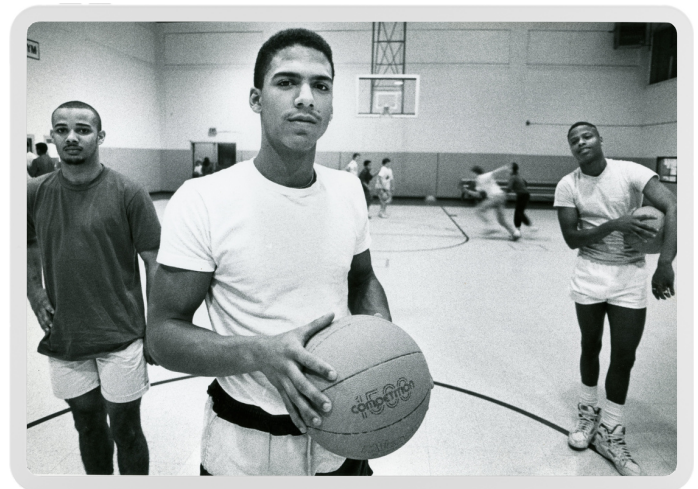
Tacoma-Pierce County Black Collective Records

Willits Brothers Canoe Company Records

WILLO (Women's Intergenerational Living Legacy Organization) Records



A photo of canoe construction at the Willits Brothers Canoe Factory, Willits Brothers Canoe Company Records, 2.6.2-A145



Charles Carson (center) founder of the Late Nite basketball program for at-risk youth in Tacoma, c. 1989, Charles Carson Papers, CAC1002

COLLECTION ACCESS

Over 220 collections have now been made publicly available in Northwest ORCA, giving users unprecedented access to the library's archival holdings. Thousands of documents, photographs, and audio/video recordings were digitized and made accessible including the TPL *Book Notes* radio program recordings, Murray Morgan audio recordings, photographs from the *Tacoma News Tribune*, scrapbooks of the Tacoma Mountaineers, numerous plans and documents related to local buildings, and much more. Hundreds of boxes of irreplaceable documents and photographs were re-housed, arranged, and described according to archival best practices. Newly available collections include personal papers, family papers, photograph collections, business records, organizational records, and local periodicals.



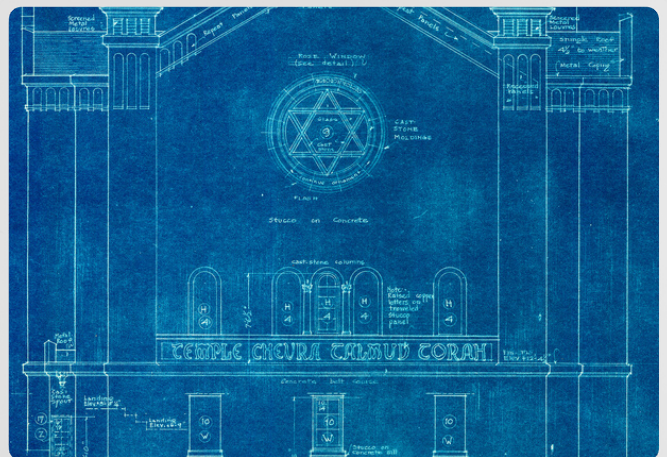
An image of *Loggers*, by Thomas Handforth, Thomas Handforth Collection, 3.5.3--217



A photo from a Tacoma Mountaineers scrapbook c. 1912, The Tacoma Mountaineers Records, 3.6.1



Community members participate in a Community Painting Day for the Black Lives Matter mural project, Black Lives Matter Mural Project Collection, CAC3002



A portion of the Talmud Torah Synagogue blueprint, Lost Tacoma Project Collection, 9.11

PARTNERSHIPS

In 2022, the Northwest Room and Community Archives Center strengthened existing partnerships and developed new relationships with community organizations, cultural heritage institutions, and city departments. Highlights of these partnerships include:

- Partnered with *Tacoma Community House* to record oral histories with students enrolled in English language classes
- Partnered with *Tacoma Housing Authority, Salishan Association, Grit City Magazine, Metro Parks, the UW iSchool, and the UW Technology and Social Change Group* to host Salishan Story Fest
- Partnered with the *City of Tacoma Historic Preservation Office* to develop public presentations for Preservation Month and the Heritage Café series
- Partnered with the *City of Tacoma Office of the City Clerk* to provide access to digitized City Council Meeting Minutes, 1884-2021
- Partnered with the *Tacoma Family History Center* to host "A Proud Heritage African American Family History Event"
- Partnered with the *Tacoma Historical Society* to present a webinar on researching historic properties in Tacoma
- Partnered with local artists and the *City of Tacoma Office of Arts & Cultural Vitality* to document the creation of the Black Lives Matter mural in Tollefson Plaza
- Partnered with the *Washington State Historical Society* to become founding members of the Pierce County Collections Emergency Response Network



An English class at Tacoma Community House, 1987, Tacoma News Tribune Photograph Files, TNT 0163T



A group of children gather in the Salishan neighborhood in this image digitized during Salishan Story Fest

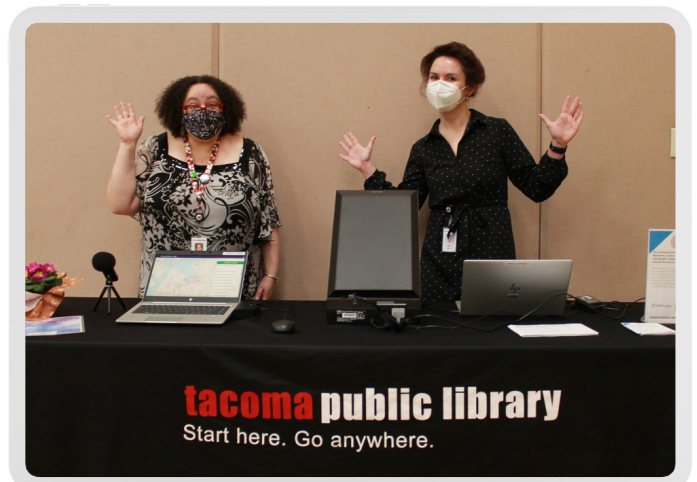
OUTREACH

To expand our user base and raise awareness about TPL's archives and special collections, the Northwest Room and Community Archives Center engaged in a variety of outreach activities in 2022. Our goal was to liberate our collections beyond the walls of the library and to create opportunities to connect with the community in new and exciting ways. Some of these activities included:

- Held Salishan Story Fest, a first-of-its-kind community event focused on documenting and sharing stories of the Salishan neighborhood
- Led Preservation Month and Heritage Café sessions hosted by the City of Tacoma
- Participated in community events and hosted preservation stations at the African American Family History Event, Poetry Picnic, Project Homeless Connect, Black Lives Matter Mural Community Painting Days, and more
- Delivered presentations for community organizations interested in participating in the Community Archives Center project
- Re-invigorated the Northwest Room blog by sharing new posts that dive deeper into collections, highlight the accomplishment of student interns, and take readers behind the scenes
- Launched and distributed "Northwest Room Update," a highly visual monthly email newsletter that provides opportunities for user engagement



Audience members engage with storytellers at Salishan Story Fest, August 2022



dindria barrow (left) and Anna Trammell (right) at the Community Archives Center digitization station at the African American Family History Event, February 2022

EDUCATION

Local history collections play an important role in supporting lifelong learning. In 2022, we worked with educators across Pierce County to find ways to facilitate transformational encounters between students and archival materials. We also worked to produce instructional materials that help users navigate our collections. Educational projects undertaken in 2022 included:

- Taught a hands-on workshop for Tacoma Public Schools social studies teachers demonstrating local history resources and how our collections can be used in the classroom
- Partnered with teachers at Franklin Pierce High School and Lincoln High School to provide opportunities for their students to conduct interviews with community members for inclusion in the Community Archives Center database
- Supported students engaging in oral history projects at the University of Puget Sound
- Worked with faculty and students at Pacific Lutheran University on a collaborative project focused on the Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed
- Led research workshops and hands-on primary source analysis exercises for students at Annie Wright Schools, IDEA High School, Bethel Middle School, Cedarcrest Middle School, Elk Plain School of Choice, Liberty Middle School, and Spanaway Middle School
- Developed educational guides including A Beginner's Guide to Northwest ORCA, Home and Building Research Guide, Family History and Genealogy Research Guide, and the Black History Research Guide



Spencer Bowman demonstrates the Northwest ORCA database to a group of Tacoma Public Schools teachers, October 2022



8th grade students interact with Northwest Room collections

PROGRESS ON GOALS FOR 2022

- Northwest ORCA was publicly launched in April 2022. Educational materials were prepared for staff and external users
- The Northwest Room website was redesigned to make it more attractive and easier to navigate
- The Community Archives Center offered numerous options for community participation and engagement
- Significant progress was made towards fully accessible holdings
- Multiple donors and content creators partnered with the Northwest Room and Community Archives Center to develop a more inclusive collection

GOALS FOR 2023

- Create and broadly disseminate the Community Archives Center Toolkit, providing a model for other communities interested in establishing a similar program
- Continue to make progress towards fully discoverable Northwest Room collections
- Develop and nurture partnerships with community organizations
- Expand scalable educational and outreach programs that connect the community to TPL's archives and special collections

OUR TEAM

The accomplishments described in this annual report would not be possible without the hard work, expertise, and enthusiasm of the Northwest Room Team:

dindria barrow, Community Archives Center Associate
Spencer Bowman, Northwest Room Librarian
Ilona Perry, Northwest Room Associate
Jim Peterson, Northwest Room Assistant
Anna Trammell, Archives and Special Collections Manager

Our work was also supported this year by an incredible group of volunteers and interns:

Zoe Ellis
Corey Hodder
Grace Holt
Ruth Keller
Leah Selinda Kusnierek
Lauren Moseman
Charlotte Nabors
Andrew Weymouth