

# A Guide to the Leri Melissa Thomas Papers, 1926-1995 (bulk 1988-1992) SC 0156

Leri Melissa Thomas Papers  
1926-1995



## Title Statement

A Guide to the Leri Melissa Thomas Papers, 1926-1995 (bulk 1988-1992) SC 0156

**Author:** Lindsay Mannell and Chris Bolgiano, Tara Mastrangelo

## Publication Statement

**Publisher:** James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

820 Madison Drive  
MSC 1706  
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22807  
Telephone: (540) 568-3612  
library-special@jmu.edu  
URL: <https://www.lib.jmu.edu/special/>



December 1998, October 2010

## Profile Description

**Creation:** This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2025-10-08 07:05:42 -0400.

**Language Usage:** Description is written in: English, Latin script.

**Descriptive Rules:** Describing Archives: A Content Standard

## Descriptive Summary

**Unit ID**

SC 0156

**Unit ID**

/repositories/4/resources/301

**Unit Date**

1926-1995

**Unit Date**

1988-1992

**Language**

English

## Abstract

The Leri Melissa Thomas Papers, 1926-1995 (bulk 1988-1992), consists of one box of files documenting the relationship between Shenandoah National Park (SNP) and residents and officials in several counties adjoining the park, especially Madison, Augusta, and Rockingham counties, Virginia.

## Creator

Thomas, Leri Melissa

## Extent

0.33 cubic feet 1 box

## Repository

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

# Administrative Information

## Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research. Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection. Please contact Research Services staff before visiting the James Madison University Special Collections Library to use this collection.

## Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have been transferred to the James Madison University Special Collections Library. For more information, contact the Special Collections Library Reference Desk. (library-special@jmu.edu).

## Acquisition Information

Leri Thomas donated the collection to Special Collections in September 1998.

## Processing Information

In order to streamline the process of applying collection numbers, Special Collections staff completed a large-scale renumbering campaign in 2017-2018. **This collection was previously cataloged as SC 4015.**

## Preferred Citation

[identification of item], [box #, folder #], Leri Melissa Thomas Papers, 1926-1995 (bulk 1988-1992), SC 0156, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Va.

# Bio/Historical Note

In 1979, Leri Melissa Thomas moved to Madison County within five miles of Shenandoah National Park. In the late 1980s, when the park inaugurated a study of its surrounding lands, she became a leader in the private property rights movement that protested the potential expansion of the park. She contacted government officials at all levels and publicized the public concern over the park's Related Lands Study (also known as Adjacent Lands Study) and other activities. Among her neighbors were descendants of people who had been dispossessed by the park in the 1920s and 1930s, when the park was first established.

# Scope and Content

This collection is composed of one box of files documenting the relationship between Shenandoah National Park (SNP) and residents and officials in several counties adjoining the park, especially Madison, Augusta, and Rockingham Counties, 1926-1995. The documents, which are mostly photocopies, constitute a wide variety of materials, including newspaper clippings, newsletters, correspondence, memos, reports, maps, minutes of meetings, and surveys. Some materials were obtained from SNP and other federal agencies by Ms. Thomas through Freedom of Information Act requests. She has made notes on and/or highlighted many of the materials.

# Related Material

Shenandoah Park Oral History Collection, 1964-1999, SdArch SNP, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Va.

# Keywords

Shenandoah National Park (Va.) -- History

Shenandoah National Park (Va.). Related Lands Study  
Private property rights movement  
Right of property -- United States  
Real property -- Virginia  
Compensation (law) -- United States  
Land use -- Law and legislation -- United States  
Land use -- Government policy -- United States  
Land use -- Virginia  
Land use surveys -- Virginia  
Eviction -- Government policy -- United States  
Rural-urban migration -- Virginia  
Appalachians (People) -- 20th century  
Mountain people -- Government policy -- Virginia  
Mountain life -- Shenandoah River Valley (Va. and W. Va.)  
Hunting -- Virginia -- Shenandoah National Park  
Hunting -- Shenandoah River Valley (Va. and W. Va.)  
Poaching -- Virginia -- Shenandoah National Park  
Poaching -- Shenandoah River Valley (Va. and W. Va.)  
Floods -- Virginia -- Madison County  
Hunting customs -- Shenandoah River Valley (Va. and W. Va.)  
Depressions -- 1929 -- United States  
National parks and reserves -- Virginia -- History  
Environmental monitoring -- Virginia -- Shenandoah National Park  
Gore Tract (Madison County, Va.)  
Light Tract (Madison County, Va.)  
Rose River Tract (Madison County, Va.)  
Madison County (Va.) -- History  
Augusta County (Va.) -- History  
Rockingham County (Va.) -- History  
Page County (Va.) -- History  
Shenandoah River Valley (Va. and W. Va.) -- History -- 20th century  
Research (documents)  
United States. National Park Service  
United States. Bureau of Land Management  
Blue Ridge Committee for Shenandoah National Park Relations

## Location of Originals

Some originals are retained by the donor.

## Arrangement

This collection is arranged topically into thirteen folders.

## Description of Subordinate Components

### Related Lands Study

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/1570

**Unit Date** 1926-1992

**Mixed Materials [1000885896]** 1 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

### Scope and Content

Letters, memos, laws, minutes of meetings, newsletters, reports, and other documents on the adjacent lands study conducted by SNP.

**Adjacent Lands Surveys**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/1571

**Unit Date** 1980s-1990s

**Mixed Materials [1000885896]** 1 (box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

Forms containing survey information for Madison and Rockingham counties.

**SNP Acquisitions**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/1572

**Unit Date** 1979-1992

**Mixed Materials [1000885896]** 1 (box)

**Container** 3 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

Letters and other documents concerning SNP acquisitions, and the role of The Conservation Fund in securing those acquisitions.

**Gore Tract**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/1573

**Unit Date** 1989-1992, undated

**Mixed Materials [1000885896]** 1 (box)

**Container** 4 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

Letters, memos, surveys, maps, etc., related to SNP interest in the Gore Tract in Madison County.

**Rose River Tract**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/1574

**Unit Date** 1991, undated

**Mixed Materials [1000885896]** 1 (box)

**Container** 5 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

Documents related to SNP interest in the Rose River Tract in Madison County.

**Light tract**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/1575

**Unit Date** 1981-1990

**Mixed Materials [1000885896]** 1 (box)

**Container** 6 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

Documents related to SNP interest in the Light property in Madison County.

**Page County**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/1576

**Unit Date** 1988-1992, undated

**Mixed Materials [1000885896]** 1 (box)

**Container** 7 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

Documents concerning the Park's interest in several tracts of land in Page County.

**Park Jurisdiction**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/1577

**Unit Date** 1969-1992, undated

**Mixed Materials [1000885896]** 1 (box)

**Container** 8 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

Documents concerning Park boundaries and concurrent jurisdiction.

**Property Rights and Anti-Park Expansion**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/1578

**Unit Date** 1979-1992, undated

**Mixed Materials [1000885896]** 1 (box)

**Container** 9 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

Newsletters and other documents concerned with private property issues in general and specifically as related to SNP, including the pamphlet *Us vs. NPS*, co-authored by L. Thomas.

**Blue Ridge Committee on SNP Relations**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/1579

**Unit Date** 1992-1993, undated

**Mixed Materials [1000885896]** 1 (box)

**Container** 10 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

Documents concerning formation of an advisory committee to SNP of the eight bordering counties.

**Newspaper articles**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/1580

**Unit Date** 1978-1991

**Mixed Materials [1000885896]** 1 (box)

**Container** 11 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

Miscellaneous articles related to SNP.

**Hunting/Poaching**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/1581

**Unit Date** 1977-1992

**Mixed Materials [1000885896]** 1 (box)

**Container** 12 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

Letters describing several incidents in or near SNP.

**Report of Floods**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/1582

**Unit Date** 1995

**Mixed Materials [1000885896]** 1 (box)

**Container** 13 (folder)

**Scope and Content**

A 15 p. report by L. Thomas entitled, "The floods of 1995: a case study of Madisonian attitudes and experiences in the wake of flood relief efforts," which links attitudes and behaviors in response to floods to those concerning SNP. Includes some biographical information on L. Thomas.