

A Guide to James Madison University: An Environmental History oral histories SdArch 0027

James Madison University: An Environmental History oral histories
1929-2000



Title Statement

A Guide to James Madison University: An Environmental History oral histories SdArch 0027

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Descriptive Summary

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Unit ID

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Unit Date

1929-2000

Language

English

Abstract

The collection comprises five interviews as well as supplemental materials pertaining to the natural history of James Madison University's campus grounds. They cover the history and descriptions of the campus gardens, Black Run's stream, Newman Lake, and the CISAT campus.

source

Dawson, Susan Elaine

Extent

xx cubic feet

Repository

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection open to 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.

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Acquisition Information

Background paper and supplemental documents were donated in September of 2000. By 2004, the transcripts and audiocassettes were also donated.

Processing Information

Collection was originally cataloged at the item level; the descriptive metadata was compiled into a finding aid format in 2022.

Preferred Citation

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Bio/Historical Note

The series of interviews were conducted as part of James Madison University's efforts to detail an environmental history of the campus since its founding 1908. This was done in preparation for the university's Centennial anniversary celebration that took place in 2008.

Scope and Contents

The collection comprises five interviews as well as supplemental materials pertaining to the natural history of James Madison University's campus grounds. They cover the history and descriptions of the campus gardens, Black Run's stream, Newman Lake, and the CISAT campus.

Janet Smith, a public relationship specialist for James Madison University, discusses the layout of campus in 1977 and the new buildings that were erected in the years after. Mary Spitzer Etter talks about campus layout from the early 1930s and speaks to Professor George Chappellear's role in changing the landscape of campus with addition of most of the trees. Bruce Clemmons, and environmental engineer and James Madison University faculty member, talks about his environmental sustainability course that he taught at the university. Additionally, he shares insights on how JMU's campus compares to other universities he has attended and his own "guerilla action" wherein he, and students, planted a tree on campus without permission. Chip Horton, Director of Landscaping at the university, details the master landscape plans and future restoration goals for the campus layout. He goes into detail about the various types of grass on campus and the specialized watering guidelines to maintain the landscape. Ronald E. Carrier, James Madison University President, talks about the evolution of the campus landscape during his time as president and he remarks on Newman Lake's various qualities and the installation of the fountain during the 1990s.

Keywords

Description of Subordinate Components

Background paper

Unit ID 27-1a

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27513

Unit Date 2000 August 15

Mixed Materials [1000897756] 1 (box)

Extent 56 pages

Supplemental documents

Unit ID 27-1b

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27514

Unit Date 1929-2000

Mixed Materials [1000897756] 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Janet Smith interviewed by Susan Dawson

Unit ID 27-2

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27515

Unit Date 2001 May 31

Creator Smith, Janet

Creator Dawson, Susan Elaine

Creator Smith, Elaine

Scope and Contents

Records the recollections of Janet Smith, a public relations specialist for James Madison University and a JMU alumna from the class of 1981. Recalls her freshman class as the first to attend JMU after its name change from Madison University in 1977. Describes the physical layout of the campus at that time, including the Quad, Newman Lake, and popular student haunts. Remarks on the number of new buildings erected on the campus over the years, as well as the importance of retaining green spaces. Comments on the increase in vehicular traffic at JMU and the hazards it presents to bicyclists and pedestrians. Recalls popular legends of ghosts inhabiting the pedestrian tunnels running beneath the Quad. Remarks on the role played by collegiate sports at JMU and mentions several student athletes who went on to play for professional teams. Predicts that JMU will continue to balance the infrastructural requirements of its expanding student body against the human need for natural and green spaces.

Transcript

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27516

Mixed Materials [1000897756] 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Extent 8 pages

Original audiocassette

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27641

Audio SA027-CS-001 (Audiocassette)

Audiocassette (copy)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27646

Audio SA027-CS-006 (Audiocassette)

Mary Spitzer Etter interviewed by Susan Dawson**Unit ID** 27-3**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/27517**Unit Date** 2000 June 26**Creator** Etter, Mary Spitzer, 1912-2002**Creator** Dawson, Susan Elaine**Creator** Smith, Elaine**Scope and Contents**

Records the recollections of Mary Spitzer Etter, a graduate of the Madison College class of 1934. Describes the landscape and physical layout of the campus in the early 1930s. Recalls the construction and dedication of Wilson Hall, on May 15, 1931, which was attended by the first president of the college, Julian A. Burruss and his successor, Samuel P. Duke. Describes the new auditorium located in the Hall, as well as new office space for the college president and treasurer. Remarks on the minimal landscaping of the college grounds at that time, until the intervention of Prof. George Chappellear, who was instrumental in the planting of many of the trees on campus today. Recollects various aspects of student life, including the hostesses in the Dining Hall who presided over "family style" meals, regulations regarding dress and behavior, both on and off campus, and weekends spent at the College Camp on the Shenandoah River. Mentions such college traditions as the Old Girl New Girl Weddings and recounts tales of ghosts inhabiting the pedestrian tunnels running beneath the Quad. Recalls her participation in the college Glee Club, under the direction of Edna Shaeffer, including anecdotes of concerts given and live radio performances in Harrisonburg and Northern Virginia. Closes with reminiscences of her 39 year teaching career, the deaths of her mother and sister, and her recent philanthropic works on behalf of James Madison University and Bridgewater College.

Transcript**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/27518**Mixed Materials [1000897756]** 1 (box)**Container** 4 (folder)**Extent** 16 pages**Original audiocassette****Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/27642**Audio** SA027-CS-002 (Audiocassette)**Audiocassette (copy)****Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/27647**Audio** SA027-CS-007 (Audiocassette)**Bruce Clemens interviewed by Susan Dawson****Unit ID** 27-4**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/27519**Unit Date** 2000 June 26**Creator** Clemens, Bruce, Dr.**Creator** Dawson, Susan Elaine**Creator** Smith, Elaine**Scope and Contents**

Records the views and opinions of Bruce Clemens, an environmental engineer and JMU faculty member. Briefly describes the curriculum of the Environmental Sustainability course he designed and teaches at JMU. Recounts his experience as an environmental engineer in South America for ten years. Compares the landscape environments of JMU and other institutions he has attended. Recalls his personal and political views on environmental activism, such as encouraging JMU students to register to vote in Harrisonburg elections and the subsequent ouster of three incumbents who supported the creation of a controversial golf course. Also recounts an act of civil disobedience, or "guerilla action", in which he and several students planted a dogwood tree, without permission, on the newly completed CISAT campus. Recalls his efforts to have bicycle racks installed on that campus and his promotion of cycling to relieve auto congestion and pollution. Describes his interests in environmental factors affecting JMU and the greater Harrisonburg

region, such as campus recycling policies, rainwater runoff management, emissions from the CISAT incinerator, and air quality issues arising from Harrisonburg's feed and poultry industries. Closes with a discussion on the economic and environmental impact of Latino immigration to Harrisonburg and his desire to organize poultry workers in the region.

Transcript

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27520

Mixed Materials [1000897756] 1 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Extent 10 pages

Original audiocassette

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27643

Audio SA027-CS-003 (Audiocassette)

Audiocassette (copy)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27648

Audio SA027-CS-008 (Audiocassette)

Chip Horton interviewed by Susan Dawson

Unit ID 27-5

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27521

Unit Date 2000 July 18

Creator Horton, Chip

Creator Dawson, Susan Elaine

Creator Smith, Elaine

Scope and Contents

Records the views and opinions of Chip Horton, Director of Landscaping at James Madison University. Discusses the university's master landscape plan, including the riparian corridor restoration goals for Blacks Run. Recalls his experience working for the Central Park Conservatory in New York City. Describes the university's efforts to monitor the health of its trees, lawns, and shrubs, including the completion of a tree survey, which maps the location and species of every tree on campus. Relates the stressful effects of people, buildings, pavement, and air pollution on the trees and other plant life. Explains the different varieties of grasses found at JMU, as well as the specialized watering guidelines for each group. Discusses the extra maintenance required for high traffic areas such as the Quad and Godwin Field. Briefly mentions the water quality and aquatic life found in Newman Lake. Describes his vision for the landscaping of the newly created CISAT campus, which would include a majority of species native to Virginia; not only for their ease of maintenance but to help restore the original environment of the area. Closes with his thoughts on a possible future master garden program at JMU, grounds crew staffing requirements, and the Arboretum.

Transcript

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27522

Mixed Materials [1000897756] 1 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Extent 9 pages

Original audiocassette

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27644

Audio SA027-CS-004 (Audiocassette)

Audiocassette (copy)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27649

Audio SA027-CS-009 (Audiocassette)

Ronald E. Carrier interviewed by Susan Dawson**Unit ID** 27-6**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/27523**Unit Date** 2000 July 20**Creator** Carrier, Ronald E., 1932-2017**Creator** Dawson, Susan Elaine**Creator** Smith, Elaine**Scope and Contents**

Records the recollections of James Madison University President Ronald E. Carrier. Discusses the evolution of the landscape during his tenure as president of Madison College, later renamed James Madison University. Remarks on the history of Newman Lake, its water quality, and the variety of fish and other animals found there. Recalls the installation of the fountain in the lake in the 1990s. Describes his decision to close the road in front of Wilson Hall to vehicular traffic. Comments on the growing number of vehicles on campus and the resultant parking issues. Discusses the work of two landscape architects on campus and their creation of a master landscape plan. Briefly mentions the award presented to JMU in 1994 by the Association of Physical Plant Administrators of Universities and Colleges in recognition of the university's landscape design. Recollects his decision to replace many of the trees planted on the Quad in the 1950s. Recalls the relocation of the memorial rose garden dedicated to JMU's second president, Samuel P. Duke. Discusses his efforts to relocate a section of railroad track which currently bisect the campus, and the plans for a parking deck to be built near Godwin Hall. Closes with comments on the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum, named in honor of his wife. Carrier declares the Arboretum to be his "proudest accomplishment" at JMU and describes an endowment he and his wife will be leaving for the ongoing maintenance of that facility.

Transcript**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/27524**Mixed Materials [1000897756]** 1 (box)**Container** 7 (folder)**Extent** 8 pages**Original audiocassette****Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/27645**Audio** SA027-CS-005 (Audiocassette)**Audiocassette (copy)****Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/27650**Audio** SA027-CS-010 (Audiocassette)