



## GUIDE TO SPECIAL COLLECTIONS: ARCHITECTURE

This guide seeks to support you in your research on architectural material housed in the UCT Libraries' Special Collections Department which is in the Jagger Library on the south side of Sarah Baartman Hall on University Avenue. It contains answers to frequently asked questions and other pertinent information related to accessing architectural collections.

### How did these collections come to be housed in Special Collections?

The collections related to architecture in Special Collections are both unique and historic. Before 1950 the School of Architecture did not have its own library. In 1946, presided over by Professor L. Thornton-White, the School of Architecture Executive Committee began to hold meetings to investigate available options to re-organise architectural material in the Jagger Library. Discussions included selection of new books, cancellation of little-used periodicals and speeding up periodical binding processes, and six students were elected to the committee to assist library staff members in conducting this work. In 1950 a new library branch was established under the chairmanship of Prof W A Reyburn. Collections of architectural plans, lantern slides, theses, abstracts, journals and books were brought together and located in the School of Architecture (then housed at the wooden huts adjoining the rugby field) to render a more effective service to the students and staff.

The Architectural Library was opened there in March 1951. In 1959 they moved to the more splendid present premises – Centlivres Building. The collections continued to grow through donations, including very valuable original drawings and documents of historical interest, representing architects such as F. K. Kendall and Earle Gift. At the time, Franklin Kaye Kendall was a leading South African architect working in Cape Town as a senior partner in the firm of Baker and Kendall. The collection comprising this material is known as the **Herbert Baker Collection** (ref no. BC206). Space was a significant concern in the Architectural Library, especially considering the unique spatial requirements of architectural drawings and maps. Ultimately, these constraints resulted in transfer of the architectural material back to what has become their permanent home - Special Collections.

### How do I use Special Collections material for architectural research?

As a research library, material is not available for loan but can be consulted in the reading room and arrangements can be made for copying or scanning. Special Collections comprises both published collections (the African Studies Library and Rare Books), and primary collections (unpublished archives and manuscripts.)

#### Published collections



Your first port of call in identifying relevant sources is the dedicated Built Environment Library. Contact Dianne Steele for more information: [dianne.steele@uct.ac.za](mailto:dianne.steele@uct.ac.za).

**The African Studies Library** forms part of Special Collections. It is a closed access library, meaning that the material on the shelves must be requested and accessed in the Jagger Library Reading Room. The PRIMO catalogue on the homepage of UCT Libraries' websites can be used to identify relevant print material. Once you have logged in on PRIMO, you can request the items online. These can be collected in the Special Collections Information Desk in the Jagger Library Reading Room. Users may also request specific items in person at the Information Desk by providing the shelf number, author and title. The African Studies Library holds a variety of published monographs (the shelf number identified with BA or BAO), published and unpublished brochures and conference papers (BAP), maps (BM), posters (BP) and DVDs relating to Africa (BZDV). Publications such as the old street directories; street maps (old and new); books of photographs of urban areas both historical and modern; publications on specific architects; histories of cities, churches, schools and small towns may all prove of value to your research. For more information please contact Principal Librarian Mandy Noble: [mandy.noble@uct.ac.za](mailto:mandy.noble@uct.ac.za).

### **Archival collections**

The archival holdings include the textual records and drawings of several architects, collections relating to UCT's own properties, a UCT-related clippings and photograph collection and other collections containing photographs. The retrieval of and provision of access to archival material poses special challenges. *Owing to its nature such material is unique and fragile, and needs to be handled with care in the interest of preservation and to reduce the risk of damage.* Some material is kept in off-site storage, and the retrieval of architectural drawings in particular requires work on the part of staff, both in identifying relevant material and in physically retrieving large, fragile rolls or oversized portfolios. We are dedicated to making these collections of vital research material available to you. Given the challenges listed above, it is therefore **essential that advance arrangements be made** to consult archival collections. To make an appointment with a dedicated archivist, please contact the Principal Archivist for Primary Collections, Michal Singer, at [michal.singer@uct.ac.za](mailto:michal.singer@uct.ac.za) at least **48 hours before you plan to visit** indicating the building/s you are interested in, precisely what type of plan and other archival material you are looking for.

### **Handling of archival documents**

In order to ensure the longevity and usefulness of the archival material in our collections, kindly adhere to the following guidelines:

- Do not bring food or drink into the reading room.
- Please use pencils for note-taking.
- Keep documents flat on the table and do not place any objects on them. Library staff will provide foam rests for large heavy volumes.
- Do not remove documents from folders or change the order in which they are arranged.

- Gloves will be provided for handling photographs and other fragile items.

### **Security**

- **There are lockers available but please do bring your own lock.** Please place bags and briefcases in lockers and take only pencils, blank sheets of paper or note cards, and laptop computers into the reading room.

### **Using cameras and requesting scans**

- Prior permission must be requested for the use of Smartphone / digital cameras by signing a digital user agreement that the images will be used for research only.
- The use of flash photography is not permitted; it can cause damage to materials.
- Please speak to the archivist on duty for reproduction of material. Archival material **may not be scanned** or copied by users. Professional, high-resolution scans or copies of specific documents may be requested. These requests are fulfilled through the Digital Library Services and will thus take a few days. You will receive them via UCT Filesender.

## **What kind of archives can I find in Primary Collections?**

The **Guide to Manuscripts in UCT Libraries** is a top level overview of all the archival collections. In PDF form, it is keyword searchable, so you can search for a specific architect's name. It also has an index, which under "Architects" lists all of those represented in the collections. Note that each collection has a unique identifier, e.g. BC1217 is the Jack Barnett Papers.

See the Guide to Manuscripts in UCT Libraries at:

[http://webcms.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image\\_tool/images/25/resources/Guide%20to%20manuscripts2016.pdf](http://webcms.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/25/resources/Guide%20to%20manuscripts2016.pdf)

**Detailed finding aids are available** for each archival collection listing specific types of records, and in the case of drawings, particular buildings. Most are accessible on-line at: Access to Memory@UCT: [www.atom.lib.uct.ac.za](http://www.atom.lib.uct.ac.za)

As a database, it is possible to search by name of architect, collection or BC number, or any specific term, e.g. Jack Barnett; Jack Barnett Papers; BC1217; Baxter Theatre; College of Music.

In addition, there are listings of architectural collections, usually in spreadsheets, that are not accessible on-line, but may be requested to be e-mailed. In some cases, the textual records belonging to an architectural collections are listed on AtoM@UCT, but not the drawings.