



The College Attic

by SIDNEY DREESE
photos by STEVE FALK

What are archives? When you hear the word, do you think of a dirty attic where stuff is put away and forgotten?

The College Archives and Special Collections is the College's attic, just as the Smithsonian Institution is the nation's attic.

It's the place to save, protect, and preserve institutional memory and history; to hold the recorded memory of Albright College; and to keep items as long as possible for future generations. Materials to be included in the archives are evaluated for their possible historical significance, and many items are one of a kind.



May Day dress, 1940s



“Through the study of such materials, researchers can gain a better understanding of social and cultural issues and events from a particular time, or find answers to specific questions.”

– Sidney Dreese,
Special Collections/Reference Librarian

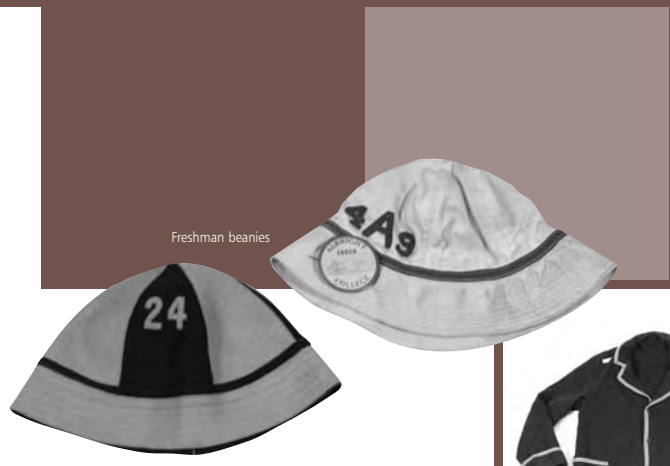
Albright's collection contains materials and memorabilia related to the College and its predecessor colleges and seminaries. There are materials on the United Methodist Church, especially the College's Evangelical Association roots. There are books by faculty and alumni, and books about Reading, Berks County and the Pennsylvania Dutch. And there are even some very rare books.

Unlike the library where books are organized by subject, materials in the archives are arranged, as much as possible, in their original order to preserve the context in which the records were created. However, some rearrangement is necessary to make the records useful to researchers.

When an item is submitted to the archives, all paper is re-filed in archival folders and boxes. Rusty staples, metal paper clips, old cellophane tape and rubber bands are removed and replaced with plastic clips and rust-free staples. Every item in a collection is looked at, one by one, and then listed and described in an inventory (or “finding aid”) so a researcher may easily see the contents of a collection.

Through the study of such materials, researchers can gain a better understanding of social and cultural issues and events from a particular time, or find answers to specific questions.

But for all Albrightians, “the forgotten stuff” – yearbooks, photographs, student handbooks, meeting minutes, college catalogs, student newspapers – tells a story about the life of the College through the eyes of those from yesterday. ■



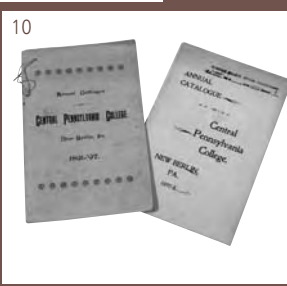
Freshman beanies



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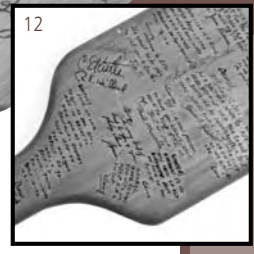
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Alpha Pi Omega
fraternity paddles,
1954 & 1960



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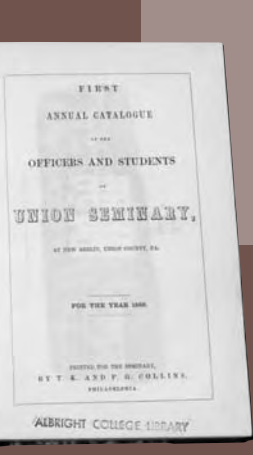


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1. A piece of the chain welded together by President Warren Teel in 1929 to celebrate the union of Schuylkill College and Albright College. The welded link is in the center.
2. Neocosmian Society and Excelsior Society minute books from Union Seminary, 1870s-1880s.



7 The first catalog, Union Seminary, 1856



Albright College wall hanging with seal dated 1895 (the current seal was created in 1906)



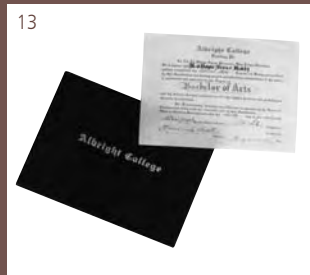
Football program and ticket, 1930.



Commement programs: Union Seminary, 1882 (left); Central Pennsylvania College, 1895 (right)



Albrightian Newspapers



- 3. An assortment of freshman handbooks from the 1920s - 1940s.
- 4. Albright College banner, 1931
- 5. Schuylkill Seminary wall hanging
- 6. Gym suit, 1950s
- 7. Schuylkill College catalogs: 1927-28; 1928-29
- 8. Schuylkill College wall hanging
- 9. Schuylkill College jacket, 1929
- 10. Central Pennsylvania College catalogs: 1891-92; 1897-98
- 11. Albright College, Myerstown catalogs: 1927 & 1928
- 12. Inscriptions on back of Alpha Pi Omega fraternity paddle, 1960 (paddle belonged to George Zug '60)
- 13. Diploma awarded to Kathryn Irene Kutz, 1932.