



Academic Library Services

East Carolina University

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For immediate release on January 25, 2006.

J.Y. JOYNER LIBRARY ADDS DIXON PAPERS TO SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Greenville, NC, January 25, 2006: The Special Collections Department at East Carolina University's J.Y. Joyner Library is pleased to accept the Melvin T. Dixon Papers into its collection. The papers document the successful career of self taught architect Melvin T. Dixon (1923-2003), from 1954 to 1998. The collection includes over 15,000 pages of architectural drawings, specifications and working notes for 161 properties that Dixon designed and built in and around Elizabeth City, Northeastern North Carolina and the tidewater area of Virginia. The collection was a gift to the library from Dixon's daughter, Diana D. Hardison of Abingdon, Virginia and also includes photographs, commercial and technical literature of the period, architectural reference books and office files.

After earning a Bronze Star for his World War II service, Dixon returned from Europe in 1945 and took a series of carpentry and cabinet building jobs which sparked his interest in drawing and design. Through the early years of his career he worked for the Elizabeth City Shipyard, Holmes and Potter Cabinet Shop before taking a permanent position with the Post Office. In 1954, he designed and built his first home in what is now Elizabeth City's expanded historic district. Dixon was contracted by others who admired his work to design their homes and buildings. He did this at nights and on the weekends until he retired from the Post Office in 1977. He then took on architecture full time until he designed his last project in 1998 at the age of 75. In addition to conventional residential construction, Dixon completed remodeling plans for several churches, nursing homes, law offices and other buildings in the area. Despite his lack of formal training, Dixon's exceptional creativity allowed him to have a significant impact on architecture in the Albemarle region.

The Special Collections Department of J.Y. Joyner Library is a major historical research facility containing a wide variety of archival, manuscript and published materials with a focus on the history of Eastern North Carolina, East Carolina University and naval, military and maritime history subjects. The department provides the most extensive repository for historical research materials east of Raleigh and it ranks among the five largest such collections in North Carolina. For more information or for access to the Melvin T. Dixon Papers, please contact Dr. Jonathan Dembo at 252.328.6671 or visit the Special Collections Department online at <http://www.lib.ecu.edu/spclcoll>.

J.Y. Joyner Library at East Carolina University is the largest library east of Raleigh and includes significant collections of government documents, microforms, media resources and North Carolina materials. It holds an impressive manuscript collection and the university archives, and is known for its extensive special collections and rare materials.

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For More Information:

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