

## Resources for Researching Asheville's African American History

### United States

1. **Library of Congress**, <https://www.loc.gov/>

On their website search for "Asheville African Americans." Results: 1,663. Includes photographs, and oral histories, papers, etc. Includes audio items like "Conversation with 67 year old black female, Asheville, North Carolina."

### North Carolina

1. **University of North Carolina Chapel Hill**

*Photograph Collection:* <https://library.unc.edu/wilson/photos/>

Contains many collections. Involves searching various databases. Clicking on digital photographs collection and searching "Asheville African Americans" eventually brings up photographs and oral interviews.

<https://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/search/searchterm/asheville%20african%20americans/field/all/mod e/all/conn/and>

This site contains all of the SOHP interviews:

<https://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/sohp>

2. **NC African American Heritage Commission files:** <https://aahc.nc.gov/>

Green Book Project: <https://aahc.nc.gov/green-book-project>

3. **North Carolina State Archives Raleigh**, <https://archives.ncdcr.gov/>

At top bar, click on three dots at far right for search. A search for "Asheville African Americans brings up three pages of links. Needs more research to find other search terms. Items viewed, including photographs do not have linked images.

### Western North Carolina

1. **University of North Carolina at Cullowhee**

### Asheville

1. **University of North Carolina at Asheville**, <http://toto.lib.unca.edu/>

\*Of note: African Americans in WNC & Southern Appalachia Conference, <https://aawnc.unca.edu/>  
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A search box is at the bottom left of the home page. A search for "African Americans" brings up "About 237 results."

Highlights include:

## Highlanders of Black Highlanders Collection

"A committee of retired educators, chaired by Lucy S. Herring, working with the UNCA Southern Highlands Research Center: Mrs. Vivian C. Cooper, Mrs. Juanita H. Weaver, Mrs. Gertrude D. Jones, Mrs. Virginia H. Daniels, Mrs. Elynora M. Dargan, Mrs. Sadie D. Moore, Mrs. C. H. James, Mrs. Tommie P. White, and Mrs. Leona M. Owens." The materials they collected were presented to the public on August 28, 1977 at the auditorium of the YWCA. Collected 1978-1979: 5 manuscript boxes, 4 oversize boxes; 6 cu. ft.

Collection is divided by subject headings and includes schools, teachers, people, businesses and workers, churches, etc. most of which are scanned and available to view.

[http://toto.lib.unca.edu/findingaids/mss/blackhigh/default\\_blackhigh.html](http://toto.lib.unca.edu/findingaids/mss/blackhigh/default_blackhigh.html)

The Voices of Asheville Project: Interviews by Dorothy Joynes. Date [inclusive] 1989-1997; 17.0 Linear feet ; 17 boxes.

Searching the UNC Asheville Special Collections for "African Americans" will bring up the interviews with black Asheville residents. Several include interviews with faculty of Stephens-Lee High School.

Description of the collection: "Comprising almost 180 histories, but a higher number of interviewees since some histories involve two or more people, the Voices of Asheville Project was created by, and is essentially the work of, Dorothy Joynes. Joynes moved to Asheville from Santa Barbara, where she had collected oral histories, and decided to "show the tapestry of the city over the last hundred years" through oral histories of people "from all walks of life, backgrounds, races and ages". Joynes initially concentrated on people born in the early 20th century, so the collection is particularly rich in stories about life in Asheville during the Depression, but histories also cover both World Wars, the racial divide and integration, the exodus of downtown stores, and the redevelopment of Asheville. The focus is Asheville and the people of Asheville, so although there are some mentions of national events and organizations, these tend to be in the minority.

\*There are very few full transcripts included, but there are abstracts of the interviews. These abstracts were likely written by Joynes, and are extensively cross referenced to other interviews, and sometimes include written asides and comments by Joynes. For these reasons, abstracts have been included even when there is a full transcript available. Interviews generally also include interview notes / tape index likely handwritten by Joynes and these often form the basis of the abstract.

Most interviews also include additional materials such as photographs of the interviewee and places referred to in the interview, programs and pamphlets for relevant organizations and/or events, and newspaper clippings related to the interview. In some instances, these additional materials are quite extensive.

A small number of the interviews were undertaken in the late 1980s as part of a history of the American Association of University Women. Dorothy Joynes subsequently prepared abstracts for

these interviews, and incorporated them into the Voices of Asheville project, and they are included in this collection.”

2. **The North Carolina Room, Pack Memorial Library**, [ncroom.buncombecounty.org](http://ncroom.buncombecounty.org),  
<https://ncroom.buncombecounty.org/Presto/home/home.aspx>

On homepage at the bottom left is “Finding Aid to our African-American Collections” that includes live links to the various collections which include photographs, manuscript collections, and oral interviews. Of importance are the Stephens-Lee Yearbooks and the Black Asheville History Project of Oral Interviews. Also the Andrea Clark Photograph Collection containing hundreds of photographs of East End prior to urban renewal.

Also available are the Buncombe County Newspaper Clipping files/African American Community-2 that contains pertinent articles in chronological order. There is a bound file, as well as a folder of articles collected later. Included in the later is a document “Afro-American History: A Collection of Newspaper Articles,” compiled by Helen R. Baldwin, Old Buncombe County Genealogical Society 1962-1992. Ask a librarian to see these later files.

3. **Western Regional Archives**, <https://archives.ncdcr.gov/researchers/western-regional-archives>

Click on “Finding Aids” on home page. Search box is at top of page. A search for “African Americans” takes you to this page:

[https://archives.ncdcr.gov/search?search\\_api\\_views\\_fulltext=african%20americans](https://archives.ncdcr.gov/search?search_api_views_fulltext=african%20americans) Links appear to include collections at the NC State Archives in their Mars Catalog.

4. **Buncombe County Register of Deeds**,

All property deeds, which have been collected since the late 1700s have been scanned and available online. <https://www.buncombecounty.org/Governing/Depts/register-of-deeds/> Then click on “Online Record Lookup.” Birth, marriage and death records can be viewed only at the Register of Deeds office, or in the North Carolina Room. Many early deeds recorded African American grantees by race.

Slave deeds (property records) have been scanned as well and can be searched at this site. <https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/register-of-deeds/genealogy.aspx>. This page also has a link to Cohabitation Records. People who survived slavery, then came to the Buncombe County Courthouse in 1866 to record their marriage.