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Japanese Reconstruction Records of Archie Tillman McDaniel, Jr. : A Collection Guide

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The Japanese Reconstruction Records of Archie Tillman McDaniel, Jr.



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Introduction to the Collection

Doris J. (Jeannie) McDaniel-Pappas, a Florida native and student in Eckerd College's Program for Experienced Learners, donated this collection of family records to the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library on 30 July 2007. These materials document the activities of her father, Archie Tillman McDaniel II, a veteran of the Second World War who served in Japan after the war came to an end and became an early advocate for civil rights.

Preservation Note

The materials in this collection occupy four folders in an acid-free document box. While preservation measures may slow the physical deterioration of such items, these steps cannot prevent damage from occurring. To prevent further damage to the fragile materials in this collection, avoid exposing them to light for an extended period of time. Please report any tears or other damage so that library staff may take appropriate preservation or conservation measures. Protective gloves should be worn when handling all photographs and fragile documents. Please use preservation photocopies when they are provided. While no restrictions limit access to this collection, library staff will evaluate photocopying or digitization requests on an individual basis to ensure the long-term preservation of this unique collection. Patrons using this collection must adhere to copyright and fair-use guidelines and provide proper citation of sources appearing in their research.

Provenance of the Records of Archie T. McDaniel, Jr.

This collection falls under the Local and Regional History provenance of the Special Collections and Archives department, Nelson Poynter Memorial Library, USF St. Petersburg.

Biographical Background Note: Archie T. McDaniel, Jr.

**Composed by Doris J. (Jeannie) McDaniel-Pappas, Jeannette Esther McDaniel,
And Archie Tillman McDaniel III, with assistance from Kathy McDaniel**

(22 April 1926-8 April 2007)

Archie Tillman McDaniel, Jr., was the son of Leola McMillan and Archie T. McDaniel, Sr. He was also the nephew of Henry W. McMillan, an Adjutant General of the United States Army National Guard in Florida. During his lifetime as an ordinary citizen of Florida he contributed to the lives of those less fortunate. He enlisted in the U.S. Army as a young man ready to fight for his country, but the time he served in Japan after World War II became a humanitarian mission filled with great admiration and respect for the people of Japan and their culture. During the few years he lived in Mississippi, this Presbyterian minister spoke out on Civil Rights which nearly cost and he and his family their lives. His interests and hobbies were as varied and diverse as the people he served. His contributions left a lasting impression on those who knew him.

Archie graduated from Leon High School. At age 17, he tried to enlist in the U.S. Army, but was too young. His mother signed an age restriction waiver and Archie took a test that year (1943). He scored high enough that he became one of the youngest ever to attend Officer Candidate School (OCS). Archie served as a 1st Lieutenant and Paratrooper of in an airborne division in 1946. He was stationed in Japan and placed in charge of re-building areas of a prefecture as part of a peace keeping mission. He learned Judo from a local Japanese Master and earned a black belt

in the 3rd degree. He kept his relationship with the Japanese people after returning to his residence at 1566 Rankin Avenue, in Tallahassee. He attended the former Florida State College for Women (now Florida State University) as that institution became coeducational. Archie received a Bachelor of Science degree from Florida State University in music with a minor in philosophy; he was the first male student to enroll in a dance class at FSU. Archie paid tuition by working as a photographer at a local studio and a by holding down a second job of washing school buses. He played string bass in a local Tallahassee band and he learned to play the clarinet while enrolled at FSU.



Wedding Ceremony, Vero Beach 1949

Archie married fellow student Doris Ellen Martin of Vero Beach, daughter to Ronald Marion Martin and Gladys Esther Cole, in 1949. Doris gave birth to five children, a son in 1951, daughter in 1957, daughter in 1961, son in 1967, and a son in 1969. In 1957, Archie enrolled his eldest son in first grade at the FSU Demonstration School, where they taught basic reading and math; multiplication and Spanish were taught in the second grade. Archie took his son to work with him on several occasions. His son remembers that his dad maintained the university's mainframe computer system which operated by using 80 column punch cards. "Dad unloaded and loaded the card decks and pushed some buttons," his son said.

In 1958, the family moved to Decatur, Georgia. Archie received his Ph.D. in Divinity from Columbia Theological Seminary in 1961, after a residency at the Westminster Presbyterian Church on U.S. Hwy. 27 South in Tallahassee.

During this time, he maintained his connections with some of the people in Japan and he offered Judo lessons to anyone who wished to learn. Family members remember a Japanese friend of their father's who came to visit Archie while attended seminary in Decatur. Archie gave his children lessons in the Japanese culture and customs before the visitor arrived.

On October 21, 1961 at 3pm, Archie was ordained and installed as the minister for the First Presbyterian Church in Morton, Mississippi. He volunteered for service in the community and became the Civil Defense official for Morton during the 'Cuban Missile Crisis,' during which

time he was placed in charge of the town's 'fallout shelter.' He maintained a license to operate a nuclear shelter in the case of an attack on U.S. soil.

Archie and Doris built a greenhouse in the back yard with wood and plastic. Archie grew beautiful orchids right through the harsh winter months with the help of a portable heater. In 1962, Archie and Doris welcomed an African-American female child who came to live with the family for an entire summer because her own family's home collapsed. Archie and Doris never discussed race with their children or made derogatory comments about other races; they cared about all people and taught their children the same.

While residing in Morton, Archie obtained his Federal Communications Commission license and became an active member with Amateur Radio and the Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) world-wide Radio Network, and assisted people around the world via the MARS HF/UHF radio network. He continued this work until his death in 2007.

He believed his children as well as others should be ready for anything so he volunteered as the local Boy Scout leader. He believed children should be physically fit and thus required push-ups from the boy scouts as part of the scout meetings. The punishment he used with his own children mirrored the physical activity with the scouts. He required his own children to perform push-ups when they misbehaved.

In 1963, he relocated the family to a small town of New Augusta, Mississippi, where his assignment as the Presbyterian Church minister began his attempt to help the community understand and accept the Civil Rights Movement. He also ministered to a remote area in an old country Bethel church every other Sunday. Doris taught art in the local African-American school and the separate school for 'whites' only. In 1964, the Archie and Doris received death threats on their children if Doris did not stop teaching at the 'Negro' school. Their son drove a motor scooter and one evening, a pick-up truck deliberately ran their twelve-year-old son off the road; the men were overheard laughing. Archie tried to help the community understand tolerance by explaining to the congregation that God made everyone, including the 'people of color' and he believed all people should be welcomed in God's church. It seemed that the entire town came to the residence one evening and watched silently as the KKK burned a cross in the front yard of the minister's residence. Archie stood outside to try and talk with the town's people, but he realized the danger and moved his family to Beaumont, Mississippi, the next morning.

Beaumont was located about eight miles from New Augusta; he did not preach to another congregation in Mississippi. Archie took a job as a history teacher and band director for the school in Beaumont and kids of all ages were welcome. He required his children to play musical instruments and on most evenings, Archie and his wife played instruments with their children as a family. He believed children in elementary school were capable of playing instruments so he started the elementary grade band. Apparently, Beaumont was not far enough away from New Augusta and death threats soon followed them there.

In 1967, Archie and his family left Mississippi for the Florida, which by that time appeared to be "more civilized" than he had remembered from earlier days. Doris gave birth to another child in the doctor's office in the nearby town of New Augusta and the family left for Florida the next morning in an old Oldsmobile. The car broke down in Mobile, Alabama, and a Good Samaritan gave the family a ride to Marianna where Archie found work as the chaplain for the Marianna School for Boys. While in Marianna, he became a charter member of the Civil Air Patrol chapter in Marianna. He assisted in securing an old Piper cub, 'tail-dragger' which the members along with the young cadets learned to fly. Archie flew a fixed wing and he transported supplies to

victims of hurricane Camille in Gulfport/ Biloxi. He maintained his FCC license and placed more antennae throughout the trees around his home and on the rooftop to better communicate with disaster officials and victims using his HAM radio. He maintained his volunteer work with the Civil Defense. He became a commercial pilot and flew corpses to and from the airport in Marianna. He later became an instructor pilot and taught people to fly and he also taught ground school. Archie taught ground school to Wayne Mixon, a State Representative who became Lieutenant Governor under Governor Robert “Bob” Graham.

Archie enlisted many volunteers to assist with not only multi-religious services and activities at the ‘boys’ school, but civic activities as well. A few such occasions, he enlisted the help of his uncle, Henry W McMillan, Adj. Gen. of Florida’s Army National Guard, to provide the boys a day of survival training. The Green Beret provided training in survival techniques from education in edible plants and indigenous creatures of the Florida swamps to milking venomous snakes, after which, the soldiers demonstrated parachuting from aircraft.

In 1974, he and Doris divorced and he remarried Kathy Wright, a volunteer for the chapel. In 1976, he resigned from the ‘boys’ school and moved to Bonifay, where he provided counseling to alcoholics in Holmes, Washington and Calhoun counties. In Bonifay, he flew sheriff deputies around to search for moon shine stills and marijuana fields.

He and Kathy moved to Lakeland in 1980 where Archie found work as a vocational instructor for the Polk County Correctional facility. While there, he taught radio and television repair and, later, computer repair. He became a member of the Messiah Association and the Bach festival until 1995. He kept the church organ repaired for a local Trinity church where he and Kathy attended services. Archie played an active role during Hurricane Andrew in 1992 by relaying messages to and from families and disaster officials.

During his lifetime, Archie’s hobbies included growing orchids, repairing radios and televisions, communicating via HAM radio, flying and volunteering in his community. He encouraged his children to think for themselves and to not blindly follow the masses or believe in something because a religious leader claims to be an expert. He patiently and deliberately provoked philosophical discussions with his children. Archie’s favorite subject was philosophy and welcomed any and all conversation regarding the questions that began as, “what if... is it possible... and have you ever thought of...”

Archie’s first wife, Doris passed away on her favorite holiday, Easter Sunday 1995. Archie passed away suddenly from a massive coronary on Easter Sunday 2007. Archie always said, “A hundred years from now, nobody will ever know the difference.” He said this to anyone who worried about making correct decisions, those who made mistakes or to anyone who sweated small stuff. His family decided to publish some of Archie’s contributions he made to the people of the State of Florida and other individuals fortunate enough to know him and benefit from his wisdom so that a hundred years from now, someone will know the difference he made to humanity.

Scope and Contents

The contents occupy one document box (approximately 0.22 linear ft.). Many materials in this collection include text composed in the Japanese language. Staff cannot provide assistance in translating these items into English.

Container Listing

Folder 1: Personal Materials

In addition to a ration card, driver's license, and educational documents, this folder also contains business cards, receipts, correspondence, and other records largely from the period 1946-1947.

Folder 2: Post-War Reconstruction of Japan

Primarily correspondence and working papers from his tenure in post-war Japan.

Folder 3: Judo

A variety of papers and materials related to his learning of Judo while stationed in Japan.

Folder 4: Maps and Translations

Includes materials he used to learn and/or teach the Japanese language.