

# Billy Graham Center Archives

## Donation Guidelines for Organizational Records

The BGC Archives collects, preserves, and makes available materials related to the history of Protestant, nondenominational evangelism and missions efforts. The Archives welcomes material documenting the origins, development, and administration of nondenominational and parachurch organizations dedicated to the many activities associated with evangelism and global missions, including Bible translation, youth ministry, medical missions, political advocacy, Christian education, mass evangelism, and many others.

The BGC Archives accepts a wide range of materials into the collections. An item relevant to the collections does not have to be a letter signed by a famous figure or a diary entry detailing a news-making event. It could just as well be an interoffice memo that illustrates how or why the staff of an organization goes about doing its work. The Archives prefers to as complete a record from an organization as possible rather than just selections from its files.

A sampling of the types of materials the BGC Archives collects includes from parachurch organizations includes:

- Correspondence, diaries
- Memos & minutes of meetings
- Press kits
- Ledgers & statistic sheets,
- Procedure books
- Audio tapes & phonograph records
- Photographs & photo albums
- Slides & negatives
- Films & videos
- Maps & posters
- Brochures & scrapbooks
- Proceedings of consultations
- Microforms
- Personnel files

The BGC Archives does not keep organizational records such as: housekeeping records, blank applications, purchase orders, slips, tickets, vouchers, invoices, more than one copy of duplicate material such as form letters. We are prepared to weed donations ourselves to remove any items outside our collecting policy. The Archives is happy to return any unused or duplicate material to the donor.

Materials accepted into the collections are stored in a secure, climate-controlled storage location. Archival materials can only be accessed in the manuscripts reading room under the supervision of the Archives staff.

Only files which are no longer in regular use should be sent to the Archives. If an item is used weekly or even monthly, it should not be considered appropriate for archival storage. If an item is only used a couple of times a year, it should be considered appropriate for archival storage. The staff of the donating organization should determine when a record becomes inactive.

There is a charge of \$50 per cubic foot for material the Archives accepts. The charge is based on the volume of material actually added to the Archives. If fourteen cubic feet of material are sent and the Archives accessions ten of that fourteen, then the charge is \$500. The Archives will send the donor an invoice after the material has been inventoried.

**When submitting a donation to the BGC Archives, the following steps must be observed:**

- a. Records should be sent in their original filing order if possible. Archives staff will maintain records in their original order.
- b. Each box must be numbered on the side, indicating the number of that particular box in relation to the total number boxes, e.g. Box 2 of 18.
- c. When labeling boxes of files, identify materials by office rather than personal name. Thus label materials “Executive director’s office” rather than “Joe Smith.” This is more informative to people who do not know that Joe Smith was executive director.
- d. The donation must include an inventory of every box in the shipment, giving the box number, the office that the files are from, a line of description, and the dates covered. The inventory do not need to be elaborate but should give a general idea of the Contents (**Please note:** The Archives can send you archival record cartons to ship the materials in. The amount you owe on the shipment you send will then be reduced by the amount equal to the cost of the number of boxes you return to the Archives. If you request ten boxes, and return eight, the fee would be \$400 less the cost of the eight boxes; the fee will only be deducted by the cost of the number of record cartons you return. Contact the staff to arrange for boxes).
- e. Descriptions of boxes on inventories should not be so general as to be useless. A list saying Box 1 contains “files” or “materials” is not informative.

**Example Inventory:**

- Box 1 Executive director’s office, Trip reports, 1980-1985
  - Box 2 Executive director’s office, Correspondence with board members, 1980-1982
  - Box 3 Personal office, Inactive Personnel files A-F, 1950-1980
  - Box 4 Business Office, Foundations files; 1970-1992
- f. In the inventory, please include the name and phone number of the person preparing the inventory and the name and phone number of the person who is the organization’s liaison with the Archives.
  - g. Please send the completed inventory to the BGC Archives at [bgc.archives@wheaton.edu](mailto:bgc.archives@wheaton.edu) or fax at 630.752x5910). Once we receive the inventory, we will contact the liaison to discuss shipment details and approve the shipment. If the BGC Archives has not granted approval before the shipment is sent, the shipment will not be accepted.

- h. Before shipping the records, the donor should determine what restrictions, if any, should be placed on the records; what items these restrictions should apply to; how long these restrictions should last; and what person has the authority to grant special permission to use the records. For example, a group of records may come from the executive director's office with the restriction that folders 14 through 30 in box 22 may not be used for 10 years without the written permission of the executive director.

**BGC Archives Shipping Address:** Billy Graham Center Archives  
500 College Avenue  
Wheaton College,  
Wheaton, IL 60187

Once the materials are received, they will be placed in acid-free boxes and stored in a controlled environment. The materials will be listed and described in a collection guide before the materials are made available for use. The originating office will receive a copy of the collection guide.