Searching For Answers
Librarian Takes on Genealogy to Unlock Past

“I wanted to pursue my genealogy because I was interested in knowing where I fit in to nature.”

About twenty years ago when Donna Gunter wanted to find out where she came from, the answers led her on a path from which she has since never strayed. And when this Mooresville, NC native discovered what digging into her past really meant—she learned that genealogy was the key to opening doors to answers that would give her a clear understanding of her place in history. “I wanted to pursue my genealogy because I was interested in knowing where I fit in to nature. We all come from nature and through my research, when I discover who my ancestors are and where they came from, it helps me to understand who I am and how I am connected to my family history,” says Gunter, Humanities Librarian.

A visit to the Public Library in Wilmington, North Carolina ignited Gunter’s interest in her family history. After following a few leads and taking research tips from a co-worker and seasoned genealogist, Gunter started exploring pieces of information on her grandfather. When she found what she was looking for—it was a big win, and that made her efforts all worthwhile, forcing her to continue searching for more. One could say that her research was actually an addicting task, making it very difficult for her to stop with just the information she had, something Gunter found captivating.

“For me, getting questions answered is one of the most rewarding things about genealogy. When you are invested in the discovery, you are looking for the truth about your past. You learn where

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Dr. Anne Cooper Moore  
Dean of the Library

Hope you are enjoying the quiet library while we can! Sooner, rather than later, 29,000 students will arrive on campus. That will represent another 500 additional students than last fall. You can see the incoming freshmen as they visit for SOAR all over campus with their parents. They seem to all be in line at Peet’s when we need a pick-me-up.

Personnel Updates

Welcome Jessica Barton as our new Business Manager, Thomas Wilson as our new Library Maintenance Assistant, and Ryan Harris who begins August 7 as Head of RIS. Searches are nearly complete for the Digital Archivist and Health and Human Services Librarian. We still have several on-going searches for Head of Assessment, Graphic and UX Designer, Patron Services and Accounts Coordinator, Technology Services Coordinator, and Instruction & Curriculum Engagement Coordinator. Our search committees are still very busy, but they are doing an excellent job. We gain new insights from each presentation.

We were sad when Rachael Winterling departed to become a usability expert at TIAA in early June, but hope she will enjoy it thoroughly. We will be sad to lose Donna Gunter to retirement on June 30. Donna Lanclos will be enjoying life in Kingston, UK, while her husband Dennis serves as Resident Director and will return in fall 2018.

Outreach

We held our first Board of Advisors meeting on May 16 and had 21 community board members join Betty, Dawn, Sharon, Todd Mars (our Advancement/Development Officer assigned by the Foundation), and myself for a delightful lunch meeting in the 10th Floor Lounge. After the meeting, many of the attendees examined several rare items from our Special Collections and University Archives collections and learned about them from Tricia Kent, Lolita Rowe, and Dawn Schmitz. The Board approved two programs now described on the website: Oral History Philanthropy Program and Rare Book Philanthropy Program. The Board members offered many suggestions for exhibits, programs, events, and collaborations we are currently exploring.

LifeSaver Awards

Please remember to submit a LifeSaver Award when a co-worker does something awesome! Everyone needs a little encouragement for the extra effort we put in every day!

Staff Development

Please let Denelle know if you find out about a Webinar you would like to view. Denelle will schedule a room and promote it to the library. If there is a charge, Ana will pay for it. All you as the requestor have to do is set up the webinar in the scheduled room. Webinars are an extremely easy and valuable way for everyone in the library to learn something new. And don’t forget that if you have a special skill or expertise you would like to share with the library, you can schedule a Brown Bag through Denelle and the Staff Development & Activities Committee.

Welcome to our Atkins Fellows: Erin Gallagher, LaQuanda Onyemeh, Natalie Ornat, Whitney Ray, and Beth Caruso. We are glad you are here!

—Anne
New Employees Join Library Staff

I am excited to join the Atkins Library staff in my new position as the Collection Development Specialist. I began my new job on May 8 working closely with Sophia Timberlake and Liz Siler to transition into my duties. Previously, I was the Acquisition Specialist in the Florida State University College of Law Research Center in Tallahassee, Florida. I received my Master of Science in Library and Information Studies (MSLIS) degree from FSU in 2012. I began my academic library career in Technical Services/Acquisitions, and it is a good fit for me. I am excited to join the Collection Services Department, assisting with collection development. My personal motto has been making order out of chaos. Acquisitions and collection development can be chaotic at times, tracking budgets, contacting vendors, and maintaining invoice files. I enjoy the problem-solving and the organizational part of my job, as well as acquiring new print and electronic resources for the library collection. One of the fun aspects of my new job is partnering with Annette Boston to write new blog posts for the Atkins Library E-Resources blog. When I’m not in the library, you can find me in the NC mountains hiking and camping or enjoying a local disc golf course with my husband, Tim.

I started my position as the Library Facilities Maintenance Assistant on May 8. I’m looking forward to all the things that I’ll be doing. I receive and deliver all mail and packages in the library. I assist with anything the building needs such as: painting, dry wall repair, installing library shelving, setting up for events, and repairing furniture. I also help vendors and contractors find their way around the library or on campus. I have an Electrical Technology degree from Rowan Cabarrus Community College. Prior to coming to the library I was working in the retail business at Lowes Foods. I worked in several departments in three different stores as an Assistant Department Manager. I had hopes of working on their maintenance team, but the opportunity was not available. I enjoy working on cars and doing any repairs at home or on equipment. I also like reading or studying articles so that I can learn a variety of information on new or different subjects. My new job will allow me take on various tasks from day to day and have the ability to move throughout the entire library on a daily basis. I am extremely excited about all the resources and opportunities that the campus provides. Everyone has been friendly, helpful, and positive.

I am originally from San Francisco, CA and moved to Charlotte ten years ago. I am the Business Officer for the Library and I will be working with the Finance Team on library budgets and personnel actions. I plan to begin working full-time in this position in July. I’m very excited to be joining the Atkins Library team and I look forward to working with new people. Prior to this position, I was working as the Accounting Manager for the Belk College of Business. I have been here for almost eight years and I love the UNC Charlotte campus. I earned my Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies from Sacramento State University, in California. As for hobbies, I have a six year old daughter who keeps me busy with her activities. I enjoy spending time with my family and exploring different places in North Carolina.
LifeSaver Awards

May Recipients

Lee Jefferson
Lee is a lifesaver to everyone in the library! Even though he has such a busy schedule, Lee is always so quick to respond to requests for assistance and always seems to have a solution to any problem. One recent event in particular comes to mind; when the lock to Marquita’s office broke the other week, he had identified the exact problem and had the issue resolved that same day. Lee, thank you for everything you’ve done for us up in Admin and for the library as a whole; we absolutely could NOT function without you!!

—Nominated by Chesney Klubert

Kim Looby
Our team was tasked with creating specialized Excel documents from instruction statistics and student data, a task that in the past took approximately one month for two people to compile. Kim Looby evaluated the process and devised a way to streamline it so that she was able to compile all the statistics in about a week, by herself. She demonstrated exceptional problem solving skills and teamwork. Her efforts shaved at least three weeks from a very detailed and time consuming project.

—Nominated by Beth Scarborough and Laura McShane

Derek Norton
This award is long overdue. Derek has gone above and beyond on several occasions for me. He is actually the one who made this awards program possible. Derek is special. I can go to him with an idea or a concept and he magically turns them into a reality—sometimes in a matter of minutes. Derek, I am really impressed with your knowledge and ability, your excellent interpersonal skills, and your positive attitude you display everyday. Thank you!

—Nominated by Denelle Eads
Judy Walker

I am the Education/Psychology Librarian.

I have worked for Atkins for 30 years as of May 15th of this year.

I am originally from New Jersey by way of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Kansas.

In my free time I go birding and enjoy gardening.

Most people don’t know that I showed Afghan dogs when I was a teenager.

The last book I read was *The Hour of Land: A Personal Topography of America's National Parks* by Terry Tempest Williams.

When I was younger I wanted to be a horse.

If I had three wishes they would be to be able to travel more; to buy new any and all the electronic gadgets I wanted; and to have a chef that would cook healthy meals for me.

Kim Looby

I am the Reference and Instruction Associate.

I have worked for Atkins for six months in this position plus three months as a Atkins Fellow.

I am originally from Charleston, Illinois.

In my free time I like to hike and visit state parks.

Most people don’t know that I’m trying to visit all of the North Carolina State Parks this year.

The last movie I saw was *Rogue One*.

When I was younger I wanted to be Laura Ingalls Wilder.

If I had three wishes they would be instant teleportation; have green ways everywhere; and to bike across Europe.

Shoko Tokoro

I am the Electronic & Continuing Resources Librarian.

I have worked for Atkins for nearly ten years.

I am originally from Japan.

In my free time I like to ice skate, net surf, and eat out with my friends.

Many people don’t know that I am hypermobile, also known as double jointed.

The last book I read was *High-Level Investing for Dummies*. I love the Dummies series of books.

When I was younger I wanted to become a kindergarten teacher which required an ability to play the piano in my country. It did not take a long time for me to realize that I was not musically talented.

If I had three wishes they would be:

1. Genie in the bottle;
2. another Genie in the bottle;
3. one more Genie in the bottle.
Wins Award

While “meeting the needs of users” has always been how Atkins Library designs its services, the Technology & Digital Strategies team is taking the statement even further as they put their ideas, skills, technological knowledge as well as innovation to the test—something they’re doing with the help of a LYRASIS award.

Derek Norton, Brad Spry and Bob Price were recently awarded $18,000 from the LYRASIS Catalyst Fund, an award program for LYRASIS members that funds new ideas and projects.

Their winning proposal, “Leverage IoT Devices to Aid in Discovery and Use of Collections,” was among five other universities receiving a total of $135,000 in funding.

The Internet of Things (IoT) is a system of interrelated computing devices, mechanical and digital machines, objects, animals or people that are provided with unique identifiers and the ability to transfer data over a network without requiring human-to-human or human-to-computer interaction. With this award, the team plans to use a number of IoT devices to explore other ways for patrons to access the library’s search and discovery system, booking study rooms and other services that are designed for the typical user. Derek Norton, Software Developer, says that moving to Ex Libris will provide a vast array of Application Programing Interfaces (APIs) which will allow the team to do more than they could do in the past with the previous system.

“Receiving funding for this project allows us to actually move forward with some of the things that we’ve been talking about doing for a while. When we received an Amazon Echo Dot a while back, our team instantly started working on ways that the device could be used to benefit our patrons. Now, with this funding, it changes our ideas to an actual project—something we can work on now,” says Norton.

“Our award will help us provide services to various patrons—even ones with disabilities. Right now, the online interface is tough for the visually impaired to navigate through and get what they need. Designing the technology for voice navigation by using devices like Amazon Echo Dot and Google Home, will help those patrons get the same things or information that someone would get by using a keyboard to type in what they want,” says Norton.

This award for the Technology & Digital Strategies team has multiple benefits. Not only does the team get the resources to implement their innovation, they also get the opportunity to claim a “first” with what they have designed.

“Receiving the LYRASIS award will give us the opportunity to share what we’ve done with other libraries and with others around the world. What our team is doing is ‘cutting-edge technology.’ It’s unique to design and develop applications to enhance and improve services. This project will require a great deal of usability testing and making adjustments to make sure the service is ready for the public to use. When everything is done, we look forward to writing papers and speaking at conferences about our work,” says Norton.
What Does Librarianship Mean to You?

Erin Gallagher
Librarianship is about opportunity. Entering this field grants me the opportunity to learn, to ask questions, to be innovative, to apply new skills in creative ways, and the opportunity to follow my interests.

LaQuanda Onyemeh
Librarianship gives me the opportunity to support members in my community in their very own pursuit in seeking information that one needs to make their lives better. Whether it is a first generation college student seeking articles to complete their first college research paper; or a person looking for a new book to read to pass time; a mother who wants to find information, in order to, educate herself about LGBTQ rights, so she can better advocate for her child. I am able to locate, assist, evaluate and interpret new information for all members of my community, and to me that means everything!

Natalie Ornat
I think librarianship in its broadest sense is all about empowerment, inclusivity, and community. Starting early in life, librarians encourage a love of reading that can expand horizons and provide the skills and confidence necessary to share one’s own voice with the world. Librarians connect people to resources, tools, and ideas that allow individuals to chase their passions, increase their education, and control the direction of their lives. We aim to create a shared space to do this where everyone, regardless of income, race, gender, sexual orientation, or ability will be welcome and supported with respect. Our spaces enable the community to freely gather, create, and share knowledge—within an academic library this is particularly resonant. Librarianship allows us to empower individuals which, in turn, lifts up our community.

Beth Caruso
Engaging with librarianship means that I have the honor of facilitating discovery, knowledge transfer, and innovation through reading, discussion, or hands-on interaction, no matter the reason or discipline. Though I may make my own discoveries, librarianship means that I must challenge myself to seek out alternative viewpoints and resources—those that might be most useful to the user’s inquiries. It may not always be about advancement or finding an answer, but rather assisting users as they develop their curiosities; consider the world in new ways; shape critical stances on issues, ideas, and conversations; or enter into specific discourse communities.

Whitney Ray
Librarianship is an ever-changing and evolving field led by passionate, talented, and supportive people who are committed to preserving knowledge and making meaning.
your position is in history and through all of this, you begin to recognize that your ancestors, the ones who came before you, are responsible for getting you to the place where you are today, in the present time. With genealogy, when you discover something new or you simply confirm what you believed, you get a feeling of ease and comfort as well as a sense of gratitude. Finding out about the interesting stories about your personal history changes your life,” says Gunter.

Although gathering information is a big part of what some librarians do, Gunter’s job and the interest she has in her personal history, has enhanced her genealogical research skills.

“Being a librarian has given me the tools that I needed to find information on my ancestors. I’ve found that genealogy has a lot to do with research and uncovering things that I didn’t know before. The journey for me started when I worked at UNC Wilmington. A co-worker helped me with the genealogy process. She gave me a lot of advice on searching techniques and information on where to look for information. I actually began my research by manually digging and searching for clues and connections the ‘old-fashioned way.’ I found a lot of information on my family history before all of the ancestry databases were popular. When I started, I went through ledgers and census records and old documents. Once I found something, I would write things down, keeping track of dates, names, and places. I later used my notes to make connections to my personal life. I started recording and keeping track of the information that I found on my grandfather, says Gunter.”

Her research strategies may be a bit primitive, but Gunter is quick to defend what ‘solid research’ is all about and she is a strong believer in using anything and everything that helps connect the dots to her past. In her research, she rolls up her sleeves and goes straight to the source to collect her information by using original, handwritten documents.

“Old newspapers are excellent sources of information. When I was doing research on my great-grandfather, I found an article published in the local newspaper from 1895 about his murder. I learned the truth as it was recorded long ago—I had access to the actual article. Reading the article answered many of the questions I had about the incident and raised many more questions,” says Gunter.

Gunter takes advantage of modern technology like Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org or even relying on DNA to verify a family line, which are gold mines of primary sources, the foundational documents of family history research.

“Using court records, marriage records, birth records as well as death records are helpful in genealogy, especially if you know how to use the material. Many of these documents are written in cursive handwriting, which makes the transcription difficult at times. For the younger generation, this kind of research will be hard to transcribe and understand, as cursive writing is no longer taught in the schools. This is just another way to show that

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we are living in an age where we are cutting ourselves off from the historical record,” says Gunter.

Whether she is chasing leads to discover her own family history or assisting with the genealogy of others, she has used her training as a librarian to help answer questions to making connections to family histories. The work she has done is not a secret. People who know her know how her dedication to genealogy has made her an expert on the subject. With years of experience, Gunter puts her skills to work by helping students and faculty. “As the liaison to English, I’ve helped several people with their genealogy research. People come to me for help when they are writing books or working on papers. My passion for genealogy has turned out to be rather academic. I’ve worked with a first year writing teacher who gave her students an assignment to work on their genealogy, so I’ve assisted students as well as faculty working on their own family history,” says Gunter.

As Gunter moves on to the next chapter in her life, one thing is for certain—she plans to continue on the path of discovery—opening more doors to her family history, a project that has a timeline of infinity.

--We wish Donna Gunter well as she retires from Atkins Library, June 30 after 16 years of service.

**Test Your Knowledge Answers:**

- (FLED) stands for Foreign Language Education. It was implemented to address the shortage of qualified foreign language teachers in the United States.
- Norm the Niner first appeared in 1949.
- The Victory Bell, gifted to Ms. Bonnie Cone in 1961 when Charlotte College moved from its old site at Central High School to the current UNC Charlotte location.

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**Breaking News**

**What Atkins Needs To Know**

**Important Notice re: Parking Permit for Center City**

Faculty and staff planning to visit Center City (CCB) for meetings and events in the fall will need to choose one of the "Center City" options when purchasing a 2017-2018 parking permit. PaTS will issue an additional window cling/decal to those who pick this type of parking permit; the decal must be displayed when parking at CCB. If the “Center City” option is not selected when ordering a permit, faculty/staff will need to visit PaTS for assistance prior to parking at CCB. Center City will not issue clings/decals on site. The decal will be used temporarily until the new CCB parking deck opens in early 2018. At that point, 49er ID cards will be used to access the CCB parking deck.