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
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Former professor gives Tulsa library branch her African-American literature collection

■ A library receives an ex-professor's African-American literature collection.

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Posted: Thursday, February 27, 2014 12:00 am | Updated: 5:15 am, Thu Feb 27, 2014.



By NOUR HABIB World Staff Writer |  3 comments

Doreen Wood's parents moved to Tulsa from England five years after the 1921 Tulsa Race Riot.

Yet growing up, Wood never heard about the riots. Neither did her sister. Neither did their friends.

"When we were in school, it had been kept a big, dark secret," she said.


But Wood, 86, always had an underlying interest in interracial work.

In the 1950s, she was among the earliest members of the First Wednesday Reading Club, an interracial group of women who gathered once a month to talk about what they read.

In the 1960s, after a University of Tulsa official said the college would like to have black faculty members but there were no

Doreen Wood, a former Tulsa Community College literature professor, is donating her collection of African-American literature to Rudisill Regional Library. Courtesy

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qualified candidates, Wood recommended a friend, who went on to become TU's first black faculty member.

And when she began working at Tulsa Community College as a literature professor and was asked to design her own course, she chose African-American literature.

During her 26 years teaching at the college, Wood accumulated more than 150 titles poetry, novels and nonfiction works.

Wood remembers an acquaintance once asking her whether there were enough African-American authors to fill up a whole semester.

"Part of my purpose (in creating the course) was simply to enlarge people's understanding and view of what was available in African-American literature," she said.

Wood is no longer teaching, and she has decided to pass the books on. She plans to donate the collection to Rudisill Regional Library.

Joyce Jackson, Wood's sister, said one of the reasons Wood chose Rudisill was because the library agreed to keep the collection together. Wood adds that her collection has titles the library does not own.

Several of Wood's books are signed by their authors, including Maya Angelou and James Baldwin.

The sisters hope the books will continue to teach people who read them, as they taught them.

While reading one of the books about the Tulsa Race Riot "The Burning," by Tim Madigan

Wood and Jackson discovered a piece of their own family history that had been hidden along with the other information about the riot.

Their mother's cousin recounts the story of her father, who owned a construction company in Tulsa at the time.

"We were worried that he would be on the wrong side," Jackson said.

But they discovered that their great uncle, Wilfred Dickinson, had rescued his black workers and their families, sheltering them in his own home.

"We were fortunate in that we had a broader view in people who were different from each other getting along," Jackson said.

Nour Habib 918-581-8369

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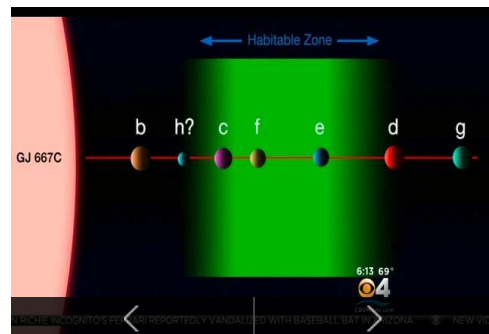
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Ann McWhortor posted at 11:49 am on Thu, Feb 27, 2014.



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Rudisill Regional Library is very lucky to get this collection. I think this is a great idea to donate this collection of books so others can have access to them.

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John Elwell posted at 9:23 am on Thu, Feb 27, 2014.



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Ms. Woods and all her friends must have lived in a closet. I didn't know a soul who didn't know about the 1921 race riot. I even seen pictures of it as a child back in the early 50s.

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Herbert Rogers posted at 6:57 am on Thu, Feb 27, 2014.

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MisDoreen..dear, you need to put down those books and go Sub-Teach in TPS.
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Rep. Dan Claitor, R-Edmond, said he would support a 10-cent cut in the state sales tax rate, which would save about \$100 million a year.

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