

MS-360

The Museum of Northern Arizona
Harold S. Colton Memorial Library
3101 N. Fort Valley Road
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
(928)774-5213 ext. 256

Title

W. James Burns collection

Dates

2009

Extent

4 audio cassettes, 1 cm textual material, 1 CD

Biographical History

Dr. W. James Burns holds a B.A. in History from the University of Arizona, an M.A. in Public History from Arizona State University, and a Ph.D. in Educational Policy Studies from Georgia State University. His M.A. thesis (1994), *Gateway to the Colorado Plateau: A Portrait of the Museum of Northern Arizona* was an institutional history of MNA. His dissertation, *We Must Grow Our Own Artists: Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton, Northern Arizona's Early Art Educator* (2010) focused on the contributions of Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton, cofounder of the Museum of Northern Arizona, to the progressive education movement and the Native American arts and crafts movement.

Burns is a graduate of the Museum Management Institute at the Getty and has worked in history, anthropology, and art museums since 1990 at museums in Arizona, Georgia, Virginia, and Louisiana, including the Museum of Northern Arizona, the Louisiana State Museum, the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, and the Atlanta History Center. From 2000-2007 he served as the founding curator and Director of Curatorial Services for the Booth Western Art Museum in Cartersville, Georgia.

Burns' research interests include the cultural, social, and environmental history of the American West. He has served on a number of state and regional museum association boards and currently serves as the Vice-Chair of the Curators' Committee of the American Association of Museums and as a peer reviewer for the Museum Assessment Program.

Burns is presently Executive Director of the Desert Caballeros Western Museum in Wickenburg, Arizona. Most recently he served as Curator of History at the Tempe History Museum.

Scope and Content

Collection consists of materials created by Burns in anticipation of his dissertation, *We Must Grow Our Own Artists: Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton, Northern Arizona's Early Art Educator*. Research is manifest in oral interviews with five narrators (Dr. William Breed,

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Barton Wright, Margaret Wright, Robin Colton, Richard F. Wilson), as well as written responses to a series of questions posed to Denise Colton. All questions and responses pertain to Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton and/or the Museum of Northern Arizona.

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Materials donated in 2010 by W. James Burns (Accession #MS-360)

Publication Note

Burns, William James. "We Must Grow Our Own Artists: Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton, Northern Arizona's Early Art Educator." Ph.D. diss., Georgia State University, 2010.

Description Control

Finding aid written by Jonathan Pringle using *DACS*, 9 June 2010

W. James Burns collection				
File #	File Description	Date(s)	Extent	Box/Folder
MS-360-1	Oral history interviews	2009	4 cassettes	1.1
MS-360-2	Oral history interview transcripts	2009	0.75 cm textual, 1 CD	1.2
MS-360-3	F. Denise Colton written responses	2009	0.25 cm textual	1.3

LCSH Access Points

Art – Study and teaching
Burns, William James
Colton, Mary-Russell Ferrell, 1889-1971
Education – Philosophy
Museum of Northern Arizona