



## Inventory of the Ronald McNair Collection, Box #5

### **Contact Information**

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### **Descriptive Summary**

#### **Repository**

F. D. Bluford Library Archives & Special Collections

#### **Creator**

McNair, Ronald

#### **Title**

Ronald McNair Box #5

#### **Language of Materials**

English

#### **Extent**

1 archival boxes, 97 items

#### **Abstract**

Born Ronald Erwin McNair on October 21, 1950 in Lake City, South Carolina. In 1971, he received a bachelor of science in Physics from North Carolina A&T State University. He received a doctor of philosophy in Physics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1976. He was presented with an honorary doctorate of Laws from NC A&T State University in 1978 and an honorary doctorate of Science from Morris College in 1980. He flew on a Challenger mission in February 1984. He died January 28, 1986, one of the astronauts in the Challenger disaster.

The collection contains newspaper articles, recognition programs and other papers relevant to his life, and the years and memorials following the Challenger disaster in 1986.

## **Administrative Information**

### **Restrictions to Access**

No Restrictions

### **Acquisitions Information**

Transferred from the Office of the Chancellor. Please consult Archives Staff for additional information.

### **Processing Information**

Collection processed by Edward Lee Love, 2017.

### **Preferred Citation**

[Identification of Item], Ronald McNair Box #5, Archives and Special Collections, Bluford Library, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Greensboro, NC.

### **Copyright Notice**

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### **Biographical Note**

Dr. Ronald E. McNair (1950-1986) was a native of Lake City, South Carolina. He attended North Carolina A&T State University and earned a degree in physics in 1971. He majored in music for a week before

deciding to pursue his degree in physics. He obtained his Ph.D in laser physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1976 and began a career as a research scientist. Dr. McNair applied for and was selected as an astronaut candidate by NASA in January 1978. He maintained a relationship with A&T, visiting and giving speeches inspiring future generations to pursue careers in the sciences.

On February 3, 1984, Dr. McNair made his first trip into space as a mission specialist on the space shuttle Challenger. He was the second African-American to go to space.

On January 28, 1986, he was on board the Challenger for his second trip when the space shuttle disintegrated just over a minute into its flight. Also lost were Ellison Onizuka, school teacher Christa McAuliffe, Gregory Jarvis, Judith Resnik, Michael J. Smith, and Francis "Dick" Scobee. Smith was a native of Beaufort, North Carolina.

McNair was also an accomplished jazz saxophonist and taught karate in which he held a black belt. Before his last mission he had worked with composer Jean Michael Jarre on a piece of music. It had been intended that McNair would record his saxophone solo on board the shuttle which would have been the first original music recorded in space. The piece now has the name of "Ron's piece".

He was married to Cheryl Moore and had two children, Reginald and Joy.

In 1987, the newly built engineering building at A&T University was dedicated and named Ronald E. McNair Hall. MIT named the building for astrophysics and space research after McNair. The U.S. Department of Education offers the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program for students with low income, first generation students, and/or under represented students in graduate education for doctorate education.

## **Collection Overview**

### **Container List**

- 5.1 Dedication Services for the Ronald E. McNair Engineering Building at N.C. A&T State University. Program. Pictured: Ronald McNair. NC A&T State University. June 12, 1987. 2 copies.
- 5.2 School of Engineering. Folder. Contains photo and biographical information on Ronald McNair. NC A&T State University. Post 1989.
- 5.3 Dr. Ronald McNair Engineering Building Dedication Committee Meeting. Typed notes. February 20, 1987. 11 copies.  
  
Dr. Ronald McNair Engineering Building Dedication Program. Typed copy. 1987. 2 copies.  
  
Ronald McNair Dedication Committees. Typed notes of different committees and people heading them. Circa 1987.  
  
Ronald McNair Dedication Committees. Handwritten notes of different committees and people heading them. Circa 1987.  
  
McNair Dedication. Handwritten notes on back of NC A&T State University stationery. 1987.  
  
McNair Dedication. Handwritten notes. 1987.
- 5.4 Dedication ceremony. One page of schedule and list of speakers. 1987. 11 copies.

- 5.5 Progress Report from Publicity and Promotion Committee to McNair Hall Dedication Committee. NC A&T State University. February 20, 1987. 10 copies.
- 5.6 Unveiling Ceremony of the statue of Ronald E. McNair. Program. June 12, 1987.
- 5.7 Chancellor's Pre-Dedication Breakfast. Schedule. NC A&T State University. June 12, 1987.
- 5.8 The Twenty-Second Annual Commemorative Celebration Honoring The Late Dr. Ronald E. McNair. Program. NC A&T State University. January 28, 2008.
- 5.9 Biographical sheet for Ronald McNair. No source. No date.
- 5.10 Ronald McNair quote. Quote is from a letter written after 1984 flight and was read at his memorial service at MIT February 12, 1986.
- 5.11 Papers relating to 1997 Commemorative Memorial Program.
- "A Genuine American Hero". Ronald McNair biography information. 2 copies.
- Letter to Dr. Fort (A&T Chancellor) from Nettie C. Rowland. Regarding live television interviews on WXII-TV 12 and WGHP/Fox 8. January 27, 1997.
- Memorial Program Honoring Dr. Ronald McNair To Be Held At A&T. Press Release. Office of University Relations. NC A&T State University. January 16, 1997.
- The Eleventh Annual Commemorative Memorial Program Honoring The Late Dr. Ronald E. McNair, Astronaut. Program. Pictured: Ronald McNair. January 28, 1997. NC A&T State University.
- 5.12 The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program. Photocopy of pamphlet outlining program. Pictured: Ronald McNair. NC A&T State University.
- 5.13 Statement of Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr. Explosion of the space shuttle. January 28, 1986. 11 copies.
- 5.14 Statement of Chancellor Edward B. Fort of North Carolina A&T State University. 1986. 14 copies.
- 5.15 Flyer for 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Commemorative Memorial Program for Ronald McNair. Pictured: Ronald McNair. NC A&T State University. January 1997. 20 copies.
- 5.16 Ronald McNair biographical information. Pictured: Ronald McNair. National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Post 1986.
- 5.17 Ronald McNair school name rejected. By Melde Rutledge. Pictured: Mug shots of Alan Duncan, Garth Hebert, Amos Quick. Carolina Peacemaker. July 5-11, 2007.
- 5.18 'Came Along At The Right Time' Says Bright A&T Aggie Astronaut. By Richard Moore. Pictured: Ronald McNair. A&T Today. Volume 68, No. 1. January 1978.
- 5.19 Fax from Gail Favors of F.D. Bluford Library Archives to Nettie Rowland regarding quote. NC A&T State University. February 5, 2003.