

Jones Memorial Library

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Finding Aid to the Braxton Family Papers

circa 1936–2011

NOTE: *This is an unprocessed collection. The following finding aid is based on a preliminary box-level assessment conducted on May 19, 2026, written with the assistance of ClaudeAI. Description is subject to change upon full processing.*

Accession Number: 2026-0012

Creator: Braxton, Myrtle W.

Title: Braxton Family Papers

Dates: circa 1936–2011

Volume of Collection: [To be determined upon full processing; preliminary estimate: approx. 6 boxes]

Language of Materials: English

Collection Summary:

The Braxton Family Papers (Accession No. 2026-0012) consist of materials documenting the religious, civic, and community activities of Myrtle W. Braxton and her family, primarily centered around Rose Chapel Baptist Church in Amherst County, Virginia, and the broader African American community of the Lynchburg/Amherst County region. Materials include cassette audio recordings, church programs, songbooks, music manuscripts, photographs, books, DVDs, and personal and organizational papers, spanning approximately 1936 to 2011.

Biographical Note:

Myrtle W. Braxton was an active member of Rose Chapel Baptist Church and a leader in its Gospel Choir, for which she maintained bylaws and an organized collection of music and lyrics. She was also involved in the Sisterhood Club, a women's organization associated with the church, and participated in community and civic organizations in Amherst County and the Lynchburg area. The collection also contains materials related to H.Q. Thompson, an individual associated with the Braxton family who was honored at a community event organized by Myrtle Braxton. Additional family members referenced in the collection include Gloria Braxton and her daughter Ayo Richardson. A small envelope of personal papers belonging to Mr. Braxton, including identification cards and funeral details, is also present.

[Note: Biographical information is preliminary and based solely on box-level assessment. Full processing may yield additional details.]

Collection Description:

This unprocessed collection was received in six boxes and contains a wide range of formats documenting African American religious, educational, and civic life in the Lynchburg and Amherst County, Virginia area. Materials include:

- 143 cassette audio tapes, including recordings labeled with names such as Dr. Mack Craighead, Rev. Leonard Harris, Mrs. Mary Pullen (Black History 1985), Mrs. F.G. Sandifer (Appreciation Program, 1984), and Christmas recordings from 1987. Approximately 24 tapes are housed in a blue zipper case dated 1985; 15 are in a plastic box; and 91 are loose.
- Songbooks, music binders, and lyric folders, including a black binder labeled "Myrtle W. Braxton" containing the Rose Chapel Church Gospel Choirs By-Laws and alpha-ordered music and lyric folders (circa 1998). Also includes bound volumes: one New Testament & Psalms and two hymnals dated 1936 and 1977.
- Printed and bound Rose Chapel Baptist Church programs, including Celebrations of Life, weddings, homecomings, and anniversary programs (2002–); materials related to the 1994 Miss Bronze Lynchburg pageant; and a manila envelope labeled "Amherst County."
- A DVD of the "All School Reunion" for Amherst County Training School, Madison Heights High School (1922–1956), and Central High School (1956–1969), recorded August 19–21, 2011. Also includes community center programs, obituaries organized by Black churches in the area, and materials from the "Sisterhood Club" and Home Extension.
- "Going Home" (funeral) services, Pioneer Days programs, and Pastor Installation programs. Includes a "PUSH 2000" (People Under Supernatural Hope) calendar with photos, events, and a youth activities list for 2000. Also a manila envelope of personal property records for Mr. Braxton, including a right-of-way agreement (1951) and a closing statement for Rt. 210 (1997).
- Books and printed materials including: "Reading Experiences in Negro History," The Book We Teach (reprint 1958), The Douglass Sunday School Lessons (1957), The Industrial History of the Negro Race of the United States (very poor condition), The Hope of the Race (Southern Publishing Association, 1960), and The Hemingses of Monticello. Also a memorial booklet from the Taubman Museum, event DVDs (including Harriet Wood Thompson's 90th Birthday), and a Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Breakfast program.
- VHS cassettes and DVDs including Roseland Singers, James Braxton, and a 2-DVD set "Small Schools" and "Central & Integration: African American Education Experience— Segregation & Integration Era Schools in Amherst County, VA" (2012 Amherst Glebe Arts Response / AGAR).
- Address books and pocket calendars (1999–2004), program guides (Easter, Christmas, children's materials), church service bulletins, and correspondence.
- A spiral notebook (1979) with Sisterhood circle notes; a red folder (1965–94) with Sunday school notes and news clippings, marked Henry/Thompson.
- A plastic bag of cassettes, CDs, and materials related to H.Q. Thompson; a plastic bag marked "Gloria" containing clipped articles about Gloria Braxton and her daughter Ayo Richardson; and a 1967 Sisterhood Record Book.
- A blue folder for the American Association for Family & Community Education.

[Note: Eleven books were separated from the collection at the time of assessment for condition review, cataloging, and possible repair: The Book We Teach, The Douglass Sunday School Lessons, The Industrial History of the Negro Race, and The Hope of the Race, The Hemingses of Monticello, Lynching in America: A Community Remembrance Project, Slavery in America: The Montgomery Slave Trade, Our Mothers Dresses An ancestry Tribute to my African, European and American Mothers, Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror, Begin with the Past Building the national Museum of African American History and Culture, and United States & Africa Relations The Obama Presidency]

Arrangement:

This collection has not yet been processed or formally arranged. Materials are currently housed in their original six boxes as received. Box-level contents are described above. Arrangement will be determined upon full processing.

Alternative Formats:

Some materials exist in multiple formats. The collection includes both VHS cassettes and DVDs of similar subject matter (African American education in Amherst County). See Access Restrictions below.

Digitized Copies:

This collection has not been digitized. For information about obtaining digital copies please contact the Jones Memorial Library reference desk at refdesk@jmlibrary.org.

Access Restrictions:

This is an unprocessed collection. Access may be limited pending full processing and staff review. The collection contains several obsolete formats that may complicate access, including:

- 143 cassette audio tapes
- VHS cassettes
- DVDs

Researchers wishing to access audio or video materials should contact library staff in advance to arrange playback equipment.

Use Restrictions:

Access to this collection is open, but some materials may be restricted under data protection laws.

Some materials may contain sensitive or confidential information protected under federal and/or state privacy laws and regulations. JML takes steps to identify and in some cases remove this kind of information. Therefore, materials may need to be reviewed by staff prior to access.

Patrons are advised that the disclosure of certain information pertaining to living individuals may have legal implications. **Patrons who find sensitive or confidential information in any collection agree to immediately notify a JML staff member.** Patrons also agree to make no notes or other record of privacy protected information if found within the collections and further agree not to publish, publicize, or disclose such information to any other party. Users assume all responsibility for infringement of right to privacy in use of these materials and agree to indemnify and hold harmless Jones Memorial Library and agents against all claims, demands, costs, and expenses arising from the use of JML materials.

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Preferred Citation:

George M. Jones Library Association (Lynchburg, Va.), "Finding aid to the Braxton Family Papers."

Works Used in Preparation of Inventory:

Box-level assessment notes prepared by Gwen Wells, May 19, 2026. No additional external sources were consulted at this stage of description. This finding aid was written with the assistance of Anthropic's Claude AI.

Separated Materials:

Eleven books were removed from the collection at the time of assessment for condition review, potential repair, and cataloging:

The Book We Teach (reprint 1958), The Douglass Sunday School Lessons (1957), The Industrial History of the Negro Race of the United States (School Edition, Negro Educational Association; very poor condition), and The Hope of the Race (Southern Publishing Association, 1960). The Hemingses of Monticello, Lynching in America: A Community Remembrance Project, Slavery in America: The Montgomery Slave Trade, Our Mothers Dresses An ancestry Tribute to my African, European and American Mothers, Lynching in America: Confronting the

Legacy of Racial Terror, Begin with the Past Building the national Museum of African American History and Culture, and United States & Africa Relations The Obama Presidency
Disposition of these volumes will be noted upon full processing.

Related Materials:

Materials related to African American education in Amherst County, Virginia may be found in other collections at Jones Memorial Library. Researchers are encouraged to consult library staff for related holdings.

Acquisition Note:

A deed of gift signed by [Gloria Braxton](#) dated May 1, 2026 accompanied the collection and was received and signed by Gwen Wells, Archivist on May 8, 2026 when the materials were delivered to the Library.

Processing Information:

A preliminary box-level assessment of this collection was conducted by Gwen Wells on May 19, 2026. This finding aid reflects that assessment only. The collection has not been fully processed; folders have not been created, materials have not been arranged or rehoused, and item-level description has not been completed. Full processing is pending.

Container List (Preliminary — Box Level):

The following is a preliminary box-level description based on the assessment of May 19, 2026. It is not a complete inventory.

Box 1: Cassette Audio Tapes (143 total)

- 3 in envelope, 1987 – Jennien & Ayo, Christmas
- 10 in small bag – one labeled Dr. Mack Craighead, Rose Chapel
- 24 in blue zipper case, 1985 (including one labeled “Mrs. Mary Pullen, Black History 1985”)
- 15 in plastic box (including labels: “Rev. Leonard Harris 1975,” “Mrs. F.G. Sandifer Appreciation Program 4-29-84,” “Chorus Program 2-16-75 Negro History Week”)
- 91 loose/remainder

Box 2: Songbooks, Music, Lyrics (3 cloth cases)

- Black binder labeled “Myrtle W. Braxton” — Rose Chapel Church Gospel Choirs By-Laws; alpha-ordered music & lyric folders, circa 1998
- 3 bound volumes: 1 New Testament & Psalms; 2 hymnals (1936, 1977)

- [Note: Some songbooks and 1 hymnal pulled from Box 6 and added here]

Box 3: Rose Chapel Baptist Church Programs

- Printed/bound programs: Celebrations of Life, weddings, homecomings, anniversaries (2002–)
- 1994 Miss Bronze Lynchburg materials
- Manila envelope labeled “Amherst County” with DVD
- DVD: “All School Reunion” — Amherst County Training School / Madison Heights High School (1922–1956) / Central H.S. (1956–1969); dated August 19–21, 2011
- Community center programs
- Obituaries organized by Black churches in the area
- “Sisterhood Club” and Home Extension materials

Box 4: “Going Home” Services and Related Programs

- Funeral (“Going Home”) services programs
- Pioneer Days programs
- Pastor Installation programs
- “PUSH 2000” (People Under Supernatural Hope) calendar with photos, events, youth activities list
- Manila envelope “Ma’s Comm. Papers, deed” — right-of-way agreement (1951); closing statement for Rt. 210 project (8-27-97, approx. \$55K)
- Small envelope: funeral details and ID cards of Mr. Braxton

Box 5: Books, Booklets, and DVDs

- “Reading Experiences in Negro History” booklet
- Memorial Delta from Taubman Museum; 1996 Extension Homemaker of the Year Award, Amherst Co.
- Event DVDs: Harriet Wood Thompson 90th Birthday; Patrick Henry Nat’l Memorial; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Breakfast
- 4 books (removed for review): The Book We Teach (reprint 1958); The Douglass Sunday School Lessons (1957); The Industrial History of the Negro Race of the United States (V. Poor condition); The Hope of the Race (Southern Publishing Association, 1960)

Box 6: Mixed Media and Miscellaneous

- VHS cassettes — Roseland Singers, James Braxton
- 2-DVD set: “Small Schools” and “Central & Integration: African American Education Experience—Segregation & Integration Era Schools in Amherst County, VA” (AGAR, 2012)
- 2012 Amherst Glebe Arts Response (AGAR) materials
- Address books and pocket calendars, 1999–2004
- Hymnal; program how-to guides (Easter, Christmas, children’s)
- Book: The Hemingses of Monticello
- Small manila envelope — homecoming & church service bulletins, correspondence

- Blue folder: American Association for Family & Community Education
- Spiral notebook, 1979 — Sisterhood circle notes
- Red folder, 1965–94 — Sunday school notes, news clippings; marked Henry/Thompson
- Plastic bag — cassettes, CDs, and materials related to/created by H.Q. Thompson [recommend sub-set]
- Plastic bag marked “Gloria” — clipped articles re: Gloria Braxton and daughter Ayo Richardson
- 1967 Sisterhood Record Book
- Seven more books, separated for assessment: The Hemingses of Monticello, Lynching in America: A Community Remembrance Project, Slavery in America: The Montgomery Slave Trade, Our Mothers Dresses An ancestry Tribute to my African, European and American Mothers, Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror, Begin with the Past Building the national Museum of African American History and Culture, and United States & Africa Relations The Obama Presidency

Names:

Braxton, Myrtle W.

Braxton, James

Braxton, Gloria

Braxton, Mr. [given name unknown]

Richardson, Ayo

Thompson, H.Q.

Thompson, Harriet Wood

Craighead, Dr. Mack

Harris, Rev. Leonard

Pullen, Mrs. Mary

Sandifer, Mrs. F.G.

Jennien [last name unknown]

Ayo [possibly Ayo Richardson; see also above]

Subjects:

African American churches — Virginia — Amherst County

African Americans — Education — Virginia — Amherst County

African Americans — Virginia — Lynchburg — Social life and customs

Baptist churches — Virginia — Amherst County

Church music — Gospel

Civil rights — Virginia

Community organizations — Virginia — Amherst County

Funeral rites and ceremonies — Virginia

Home extension programs — Virginia — Amherst County
Rose Chapel Baptist Church (Amherst County, Va.)
School integration — Virginia — Amherst County
Segregation in education — Virginia — Amherst County
Sisterhood Club (Rose Chapel Baptist Church)
Sound recordings — African American churches
Women — Religious life — Virginia — Amherst County
Amherst County Training School (Va.)
Central High School (Amherst County, Va.)
Madison Heights High School (Va.)