

# THE MAHARISHI GLOBAL ARCHIVES AND COLLECTION

finds a home at MIU



Memorabilia and recordings from the entire range of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's programs over 54 years, to bring enlightenment to every person on earth, have been donated and gathered from around the globe, then categorized, preserved, and protected.

Quietly, for some months now, the large, central room on the bottom floor of the MIU Library has been the gathering place for boxes, books, photographs, news articles, and personal memorabilia. Those of you who were part of Maharishi International University or Maharishi School theater productions in the 1970s through 1990s will remember that room as a repository of costumes and props, and the rehearsal site for Spayde Theater plays.

No more. The space, as well as its significance in MIU history, has been transformed. Items and memorabilia from the entire 54-year history of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's campaign to bring enlightenment to the world through the Transcendental Meditation program and related technologies from the Vedic tradition have been donated and gathered from around the world, then categorized, preserved, and protected (the most valuable items are in a safe).

At the center of this massive archiving endeavor are Gail Crotta and John Boncheff, co-directors of the newly formed Maharishi Global Archives and Collections (MGAC) at MIU. Both have backgrounds in Maharishi Vedic Science and are long-time TM teachers. They share a powerful commitment to this dauntingly enormous yet crucial project. John Boncheff's commitment arose from hearing Maharishi say, years ago, that it is very important that we document the

steps that transformed the darkness of life in ignorance into the light of heaven on earth, so that future generations will understand the contrast and be motivated to preserve Maharishi's programs. Gail Crotta's commitment is based on personal discussions she had with Maharishi about the need for an archive. Those discussions included a grand vision of majestic buildings to house the collections and offer active exhibits.

The potential benefits from pioneering a digital repository for academic research, broad outreach, dissemination, and historical preservation are huge. Director Crotta explains that, "In an information age, Maharishi's vision can be most efficiently accomplished through the creation of a global digital repository with websites containing high quality reproductions of the original material, which itself is housed in many collections and depositories around the world."

A permanent home of appropriate scale and grandeur for the collections at MIU has not yet been funded. Yet generous donations from MIU Trustees and several private citizens have allowed MGAC at MIU to acquire state-of-the-art scanning hardware and archival software with advanced word-searchable capabilities to begin the process.



The Historic Prints Archives include the 1962 Meditation Guide Course, Catalina Island, off the California coast.

The MIU archive is a physical treasure trove of tens of thousands of items, as well as digitally-recorded artifacts that remain in private hands. Some of these items were on public display in the fall of 2019 at the library's Unity Gallery, first for the MIU Alumni 40th Reunion (September 6-7) and then for the TM Movement Originals Reunion (September 20-22). Visits to the gallery were integrated into the course schedules and were cited as a high point of the entire weekend by many participants.

If you attended one of these courses or were lucky enough to have a private showing, you know that directors Crotta and Boncheff function not

only behind the scenes, but as adept tour guides, drawing attention to one fascinating artifact after another. For now, they and their growing squadron of volunteers will continue to be inspired and to inspire all of us, as they sift through, scan, categorize, archive, protect, and - periodically - share these items with everyone.

The Maharishi Global Archives and Collections Project operates under the supervision of MIU President John Hagelin and a board of long-time certified TM teachers who set policies and procedures. It is coordinated by the MIU Dean of Faculty's office and operates with the participation of both MIU and Maharishi Foundation. Co-Directors Gail Crotta and John Boncheff were appointed by President Hagelin and serve on a voluntary basis.

