

## Center for Adventist Research Celebrates 50 Years

CAR and Ellen White Estate Branch Office jointly recognized

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Merlin Burt, director of CAR, presents during the Friends Lunch anniversary celebration last month.

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The [Center for Adventist Research](#) (CAR), located in the [James White Library](#) on the campus of Andrews University, recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Adventist Heritage Center and the 55th anniversary of the [Ellen G. White Estate](#) Branch Office. A special recognition event took place during this year's annual Friends Lunch, held in February.

"The Cold War influenced the movement to preserve White materials in the case of a nuclear war," says Heidi Magesa, CAR project and event manager. "This led to the creation of the White Estate Branch Office in 1961."

The Ellen G. White Research Center's original director was T. Housel Jemison, who was succeeded by Hedwig Jemison, his wife. Faculty and students wished to access the valuable White materials, so Hedwig Jemison began allowing materials to be read by advanced graduate students, then MDiv students and, eventually, everyone.

The Adventist Heritage Center was initially a single room in the James White Library, approximately where the CAR lobby is currently located. Twenty-five years later, it has increased to include multiple storage and exhibit rooms, along with a reading area, reception area and vault. Library staff originally oversaw the Heritage Room until it received a full-time curator in 1966: Louise Dederen. In the 50 years since the collection has expanded, thanks to the librarians of Emmanuel Missionary College and resources from the Theological Seminary Library in Washington, D.C.

The Center for Adventist Research was formed shortly after the White Estate Branch Office was moved to the same floor of the James White Library as the Adventist Heritage Center.

“The two were administratively merged in 2003 under the direction of Merlin Burt, the current director,” explains Magesa.

To celebrate these anniversaries, the CAR invited former directors to attend the event. This included Bill Fagal, who presented about his experience as director of the White Estate Branch Office.

Jim Ford, a previous director of the Adventist Heritage Center and current associate director of CAR, also spoke, sharing his memories of Louise Dederen and his memories of the AHC.

The Friends Lunch marked the opening of a new exhibit in the CAR lobby, which will remain on display through the summer. The Center also hosts the annual Adventist History Tour, which takes place every August. For CAR hours, and for information about the 2017 history tour, [visit their website](#).

## Related Links

- [Center for Adventist Research](#) (CAR) at Andrews University
- [Ellen G. White Estate](#)
- [CAR photo galleries](#)
- [What was the Cold War?](#)

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