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Winthrop University

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Archives Turns to Alison Boulton '11 for Special Uniforms Exhibit

ROCK HILL, S.C. — Winthrop University’s first president D.B. Johnson believed in school uniforms, writing that a uniform requirement “promotes economy and does away with all distinctions that would otherwise exist from different conditions. The richest girl cannot be distinguished from the poorest by her dress.” The requirement began in 1895 and wasn’t dropped until the 1955 spring semester.

The Louise Pettus Archives and Special Collections’ current exhibit, “A Stitch in Time,” showcases the Winthrop uniforms from 1895-1910. With no tangible examples of uniforms from the early years at Winthrop, archives staff commissioned graduate student Alison Boulton ’11 to recreate them. Boulton received her bachelor’s degree in history from Winthrop.

Boulton, whose work was previously on display in the archives in 2012 and 2013 with her take on fashion looks from William Aiken’s Jehossee island plantation in the 1850s, took inspiration from era photographs, uniform specifications from the Winthrop catalogues and other documentation. Most of the uniforms were made with patterns Boulton fashioned herself.

“A Stitch in Time” will be on display until Jan. 31. Archives hours are 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Mondays; 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesdays-Thursdays; 8 a.m.-noon on Fridays; and noon-5 p.m. on Fridays by appointment. The archives will also be open on Saturday, Jan. 11, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

For more information on this exhibit or any of the collections of the Pettus Archives, please call 803/323-2334 or e-mail at archives@winthrop.edu.