

From: Carolyn Stevens <Carolyn@jjco.com>
Date: August 21, 2010 4:42:33 PM EDT
To: ldavis@hawaii.edu
Subject: A question about the Aitken archive

Dear Lynn Davis,

I am a zen student and have been reading the on-line material at ShimanoArchive.com. I am also a lover and user of libraries, and have some familiarity with how they work from past employment as a library clerk and graduate student in history. My curiosity has been picqued about how materials have gotten from the University of Hawaii archives to the internet in seeming lighting speed. For example, I just read a letter by Jiro Andy Afable, dated July 29, 2010, to the Zen Studies Society board of directors. This letter is already posted at the ShimanoArchive.com website with an authentication stamp from the University of Hawaii at Manoa Library Archives.

Based on my admittedly limited experience, items donated to an archive take time to reach circulation. Most libraries have limited staff, and each item has to go through a cataloging and indexing process. I'm also not used to seeing marks such as the authentication stamp added to archival material, as the originals are considered fragile, or potentially may become fragile as time goes on.

Finally, I am wondering if your library makes available information about who has donated particular items to your archives. Again, using Jiro Andy Afable's recent letter as an example, I'm wondering if he donated the letter to the library himself given the short time frame and the letter's limited circulation. Is that something you can confirm, and can I learn who donated other items in the Aitken Shimano file?

I would be very grateful to receive a response from you about the issues and questions I have raised in this email. The truthfulness of the materials published at the ShimanoArchive.com website matters to many American students of zen, and the University of Hawaii archives plays an important role in establishing that veracity.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Stevens