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Nearly 45 years after the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke at the University of Dayton Fieldhouse on a snowy November night, his words have once again returned to campus.

University of Dayton poet and professor emeritus Herbert Woodward Martin has donated a long-lost reel-to-reel audio recording of King's speech discovered earlier this year in a box in his Washington Twp. garage.

"Considering the University of Dayton has hosted a triumvirate of leaders from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, it seems right to have Dr. King's speech archived at the University," Martin said, referring to past University of Dayton lecture speakers Andrew Young, United Nations ambassador and friend of Martin Luther King Jr., and King's wife, Coretta Scott King.

"The University will treat it as a privilege to preserve Dr. King's speech and this piece of Dayton's history," said University of Dayton President Daniel J. Curran. "The University of Dayton shares the ideals that flowed from Dr. King's speech and his life's work, and we hope this discovery encourages related research and scholarship."

CBS Evening News is scheduled to broadcast a national story about King's speech in Dayton and the tape's discovery at 6:30 p.m. Sunday, April 5.

A CBS News producer visited the University of Dayton last week to film the old Fieldhouse, now called the Thomas J. Frericks Athletics and Convocation Center. The producer also interviewed Martin; University of Dayton alum Ted Clark, who attended the speech; and former University of Dayton president Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M.

The tape surfaced in late January following the premiere of Jump Back, Honey, a documentary about Martin by independent filmmaker David Schock.

After a visit to Dayton last spring to gather footage and materials for the film, Schock agreed to help Martin sort and load boxes from his garage for possible inclusion in the project.

Among the materials were recordings of poetry readings and presentations from the 1972 Dunbar Centennial in Dayton Martin organized. There were also recordings of his performances, many of which were used in the documentary.

There was one reel-to-reel tape, however, that just didn't fit in with the project. The recording begins with a narrator who introduces the speakers: "The tape which you are about to hear was made in the University of Dayton Fieldhouse on Sunday, November the 29th, nineteen-hundred and sixty-four. The first voice that you will hear is that of (Dayton) Commissioner (Don) Crawford, and then that of that of President Charles Wesley of Central State College."

"It was definitely not Dunbar," Schock said, describing his first time listening to the recording. "Still, I rolled in on the tape to make sure I wasn't dealing with an audio palimpsest — a reused tape. I wasn't, but I remembered thinking that Dr. Wesley sounded very familiar. He had a certain preacherly cadence."

Schock did hear a voice he recognized, but it wasn't Charles Wesley. It was Martin Luther King Jr.

King was on campus on the night of Nov. 29, 1964, for Dayton's Freedom Forum, sponsored by the Rev. George Lucas of the Bethel Baptist Church in Dayton. He spoke to a crowd of more than 6,200 for about an hour on the state of race relations in America, his commitment to nonviolence and the power of unconditional love.

Schock converted the old audio into a digital file, enhanced the quality and posted the entire recording on his Web site, www.jumpbackhoney.com.

The University welcomes people who have photographs, memories, programs or any other mementos from King's visit to share them with University Archives, 937-229-4267.