

Over half a century ago when I was introduced to Spiritualism having read Arthur Findlay's classic book *On the Edge of the Etheric*, I could not possibly have known what lay ahead of me. Had I not read that book chances are my life would have been very different. For example, in all probability I would not have gone on to develop mediumship and educate myself in respect of the history of Psychical Research and the Spiritualist Movement. I would not have sat in the same Home Circle for almost forty years. I would not have attended many Spiritual Conferences both in the UK and abroad and for almost twenty years held my own twice yearly residential Seminars. I think of all the people who I have met upon my journey, many of whom I have come to regard as friends. I would not have written my book: *An Extraordinary Journey: The Memoirs of a Physical Medium* and I would not, in past years, have interviewed senior Spiritualists who sat with Physical Mediums who today we can only read about. As a direct result of those interviews, I created and made available to interested parties a double CD Album entitled 'Physical Séance Room Recollections' which contains their extraordinary accounts. Today none of the contributors are at this side of life, but through those CD's their stories will live on.

Yes my life would have – or may have been - so very different.

Throughout my journey I amassed almost three hundred books regarding Spiritualism and Psychical Research plus several historic priceless artefacts and hundreds of recordings of sittings with my Home Circle, at my occasional small Guest Circles and at Seminar séances. In addition, as a part of the Collection, I had a life size statue of my principal Spiritual Guide 'White Feather' from the waist upwards. This was created many years ago shortly after I visited a special sculpture exhibition at a local art gallery. I was so impressed that I spoke to the creator of the exhibits and asked if he could create a sculpture for me working from a drawing that I would provide. (The drawing had been presented to me a few months earlier by a Psychic Artiste who assured me that it was of my principal guide. Shortly afterwards at a meeting of my Home Circle White Feather himself confirmed that the drawing had accurately captured his likeness). Thankfully he accepted my request and a few weeks later he delivered the sculpture to my home where it sat in my study for over forty years.

Moving forward in time, I had, this past few years, found myself contemplating my highly valued and treasured Collections future. With the realisation that there are now far more years behind me than in front of me, I took the extremely difficult decision to try and arrange for its long term future. Facing reality I knew that if I was to depart this Earth without making such an arrangement it would place my family in a most difficult situation in not knowing what to do with it. So I felt that I had to act now. My principal hope was that everything in it should be kept together as a united whole as against being divided up.

So, with that in mind, I advertised it widely. Sadly, with a single exception, no interest in the UK was shown. One Spiritualist organisation was only interested in obtaining particular items within the Collection and this was not acceptable to me.

However, sometime later an organisation in the Netherlands also expressed an interest, but unfortunately – for various reasons – this also failed to be realised. Therefore I was left thinking that to secure the Collections future as a united whole was unlikely. However, sometime later, Leslie Kean (American investigative journalist and best-selling author), whom I had connected with about six years earlier as a direct result of her sincere/genuine interest in Survival and Potential Communication (see her book *Surviving Death*), expressed an interest. She wrote the epilogue for my recently revised memoir *An Extraordinary Journey*. Leslie informed me that if she was to acquire the Collection she would arrange for the books, correspondence, recordings etc. to be housed as a united whole at the Rice University archives in Houston, Texas which had just set up a new department entitled ‘The Archives of the Impossible’. The curator was excited to receive the Collection and assured us that it would be housed as ‘The Stewart Alexander Collection’ and would always be available for interested parties to consult. Eventually everything in it will be digitized, catalogued and numbered to provide easy access for researchers. The remainder of the Collection - a few historic artefacts plus particular books - are being housed personally with Leslie, but she assured me that eventually they will join the rest of the Collection at Rice University. So – with the single exception of the White Feather sculpture - I recently shipped my Collection to America. In all honesty I could not have wished for a better outcome.

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A guide to the Collection at Rice can be accessed at:  
(<http://archives.library.rice.edu/repositories/2/resources/1479>)

And related Collections at: (<https://libguides.rice.edu/impossiblearchives>).

**In the words of the University:**

The Stewart Alexander Collection, containing hundreds of unique recordings of his seances, other archival materials, and over 300 books and journals, is located at Rice University's Fondren Library, Houston, Texas. This collection forms part of the Archives of the Impossible. Inquiries are welcome at the library's special collections department, the Woodson Research Centre, via [woodson@rice.edu](mailto:woodson@rice.edu) or 713-348-2586.

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And finally, people who have read my book will recall that the Craghead Spiritualist Church in the North East of England has a very special place in my heart.

Graciously the Committee agreed to my wish to bequeath the White Feather sculpture to the Church. Today it is displayed there within a wooden cabinet with a glass front and can be viewed by all their members and visitors. However, having been surrounded in my study (office) by the Collection for so many years, I must say that it was and still is strange (to say the very least) to find myself gazing at empty shelves. But then I continually remind myself that it is for 'the greater good'. And White Feather, having been seen over the years mainly by myself, can now be seen by a great many people and to me that is indeed wonderful.