

James Ford

Today, the recipient of the John Nevins Andrews Medallion is James Ford, whose faithful commitment to preserving and promoting Adventist heritage and identity has distinguished him among his colleagues.

Ford earned his Bachelor of Arts in history from Andrews University in 1980. He went on to study at the University of Maryland, College Park, receiving both a Master of Arts in American history and a Master of Library Science with an emphasis in archival management in 1982. He married Diane Arnold in 1983, and they have three children: Heather, Jonathan and Karen.

After completing his studies, Ford devoted his life to building and promoting Adventist archives. His career began at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, where he worked for nine years. He spent his first year reorganizing their central library and then worked in the archives and records center with responsibilities in records management.

In 1991, Ford joined the Andrews University faculty as curator of the Adventist Heritage Center. Between 2000 and 2003, the Adventist Heritage Center formally merged with the Branch Office of the Ellen G. White Estate to create the Center for Adventist Research. Ford served as associate director of the Center for Adventist Research until his retirement on June 30, 2025.

During his tenure, Ford guided the center into the digital age. In 1991, the center held approximately 62,000 items and collections accessible through a card catalog system, which he helped computerize. In 1998, Ford launched a digitization program so that the center's material could be preserved and freely accessed online. By his retirement, the center's holdings had nearly tripled in size. Containing the largest collection of Adventist historical materials in the world, the center now serves more than 80,000 patrons annually, in person and online.

Throughout his years of service, Ford developed numerous policies to ensure that the center was managed and operated according to best practices in the industry. Ford's work was rewarded in September 2019 and again in January 2025, when the Center for Adventist Research was awarded with the Center of Excellence certification from the General Conference. The center was the first archive to be awarded this certificate—the

highest-level certification—and continues to serve as a model for Adventist archives around the world.

Over Ford's 42 years of service in Adventist archives, many publications on the history of Adventism have been produced, in part, because he faithfully preserved, organized and made accessible their source material. His legacy will continue to shape the church's collective memory for generations to come.

For his dedication to preserving the history of the Seventh-day Adventist movement and to sharing that knowledge with hundreds of students, the faculty of Andrews University are proud to present James Ford with the John Nevins Andrews Medallion.