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Before the selfie, before YouTube, before GoPro, and even before the camcorder, there were home movies. Shot on 8 mm, Super 8 or 16 mm gauge film, home movies captured everything from daily family life to graduations and weddings. The Home Movie Archive, housed in Special Collections & University Archives, includes over 900 plus segments of film acquired from 50 plus donors between 2008 and 2013.

This collection highlights the rich history of Central Florida and Floridians – from everyday activities such as yard work and children at school to unique Florida events such as the 1955 Orange Bowl Parade and President Richard M. Nixon at the 1973 UCF Commencement ceremony. Florida tourist destinations documented include the Rocket Gardens at Kennedy Space Center, Marineland in St Augustine, alligator wrestling at the Aquaglades Everglades Showplace, and performing seals at the Miami Seaquarium.

From Julie Andrews rehearsing for the 1971 television special celebrating the grand opening of Walt Disney World to a piano-playing monkey, billed as the “Liberace of the Monkey World,” performing in the Monkey Jungle Theater in Vero Beach, the Home Movie Archive brings the past alive in ways books and still photography cannot.

To learn more about or view films in the Home Movie Archive, contact Special Collections & University Archives—5th floor of the John C. Hitt Library.