

University Museum collection

Finding aid prepared by Sandy George

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

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University Archives, Texas State University

2005

Alkek Library Room 580

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Summary Information

Repository	University Archives, Texas State University
Title	University Museum collection
Date [bulk]	Bulk, 1940-1949
Date [inclusive]	1907-1951
Extent	2.0 Linear feet
Location note	Materials may be stored off-site. Advance notice may be required for use.
Language	English

Preferred Citation note

University Museum collection. (1907-1951). Series 80.300.UnivMuseum. University Archives, Texas State University.

Biographical/Historical note

The University Museum of Art and History opened its doors in 1937 under the supervision of Professor H.H. Goodman and A.C. Burkholder. Originally housed in a small room in the Science building, the museum displayed items including World War I guns, helmets, swords, American rifles, and revolvers, as well as Native American articles and an old graphophone. A few years later, display cases were set up in the hall of the Science building to better display the collection.

Around 1939, Minnie Sanford took over as the curator and moved the growing museum to room 304 in the library. Though the museum continued to acquire more relics from Texas history, the museum was still very modest, having only saw horses and boards as display cases. In September of 1941 Dudley R. Dobie became the museum director and added his own collection of Native American artifacts and pioneer Texas relics.

In 1943, the museum expanded into room 303 of the library. It housed articles including, saddles, whips, a buggy, whale oil lamps, and a Native American headdress. The archives department of the museum had various items like the historical papers of Stephen F. Austin from 1828, photographs, maps, scrapbooks of Texas History, and journals. Though some of the museum collection was purchased, ex-students, faculty members, and citizens of San Marcos donated many items in the collection. Acquisitions records were kept in detail through 1940, and less precisely in subsequent years.

In 1965, the State Legislature cut off funding for the maintenance and upkeep of the museum. The University Museum of Art and History was then handed over to the Hays County Historical Survey Committee (presently known as the Hays County Historical Commission). Once the museum had switched hands it was renamed the "Texas Museum of History." The new name never helped the museum establish a place in the community of San Marcos. In fact, the name was considered by many to have "too grandiose a ring for the rather modest collection of historical artifacts."

Finding storage space for the collection of artifacts appraised at \$13,000 was a constant battle that was finally lost in April of 1983. The artifacts were initially stored in the National Guard Armory in 1965, over the years they were moved to storage space in Henry Kyle office building, then to a warehouse at the Gary Job Corp, to the old City Hall Building. It was here in 1976 that the museum opened as part of the bicentennial celebration. This success lasted almost two years but was forced to move so that the city could sell the old City Hall building. Finally, the museum artifacts were moved to a storage unit until the old Fish Hatchery could be restored and turned into the new museum.

Due to a lack of funding and the inability of the University or the Heritage Association to assist in the cost of building restoration, the Hays County Historical Survey Committee, now known as the Hays County Historical Commission, had no choice but to drop the museum project. The most prosperous years of the museum were between the late 1930s and the early 1960s.

Source: "Texas Museum of History: Going Down for the Last Time, A San Marcos Daily Record Special Report," Sunday, April 17, 1983.

Scope and Contents note

The collection is arranged into eleven series, Acquisitions, Artist Files, Events, Correspondence, Newspaper Clippings, Photographs, Poems, Printed Material, Artifacts, Display Cases, and Financial Material.

Correspondence, accession records books, exhibited artists' biographical information and art work information, newspaper clippings, photographs, artifacts, display cases information, printed material, and financial records, document the history of the defunct University Museum of Art and History. More in-depth descriptions of the series are listed in the Series Scope and Contents Notes.

The correspondence and accession records, combined with biographical information about a few of the featured artists, trace the growth and change of the University Museum's exhibition scope from the first acquisition of art in 1940 to the last recorded attempt in 1950. Noteworthy is correspondence and information related to Texas visual artists and printmakers of the time period.

The news clippings contain news articles that further trace the activities and development of the museum, and reveal exhibitions and events held at other Texas museums during this time period.

The photographs series consists of early photos of the University and students.

The printed materials series contains brochures and newsletters from Southwest Texas State Teachers College and other universities and cultural heritage organizations in Texas.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

University Archives, Texas State University 2005

Revision Description

Additional museum information discovered in 2016. Revision to finding aid made by Tracey Howerton. 11/2016

Conditions Governing Access note

Open to researchers without restriction.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Southwest Texas State Normal College.
- Southwest Texas State Normal School.
- Southwest Texas State Teachers College.

Bibliography

Medford, Betty. "Museum Failure Leaves a Sad Legacy." The Daily Record. April 17, 1983. University Museum Collection. Series IV. Texas State University Special Collections.

"Chronological History of Museum's Plight." The Daily Record. April 17, 1983. University Museum Collection. Series IV. Texas State University Special Collections.

Watkins, Jeff. "People Behind the Scenes Felt Frustrations." The Daily Record. April 17, 1983. University Museum Collection. Series IV. Texas State University Special Collections.

Hildebrant, Gene. "Money: Lack of Funds Closed the Door." The Daily Record. April 17, 1983. University Museum Collection. Series IV. Texas State University Special Collections.

Collection Inventory

Acquisitions 1937-1957	Box 1	Folder 1-10
<p>Scope and Contents note</p> <p>The Acquisitions series contains accession record books dating from January 1937 to December 1940. These handwritten record books list the names of contributors, dates of accession, description of items received, painting titles, location shipped from, shipping cost, and price paid for each item.</p> <p>Also found are handwritten and typed memos, notes and correspondence about acquisitions, and purchases and loans made in the 1940s and 1950s. Documents providing brief overviews of the University Museum's history are also included.</p> <p>The Correspondence and Financial material series also contain information relating to acquisitions.</p>		
Artist files	Box 1	Folder 11
<p>Scope and Contents note</p> <p>The Artist files series contains a small number of items describing visual artists and the exhibition of their works at area museums. Arranged alphabetically, they include artists Addison Burbank, Merritt Mauzey, and a catalog list for the traveling show of water colors by Walter Buckingham Swan.</p>		
Events circa 1945	Box 1	Folder 12
<p>Scope and Contents note</p>		

Correspondence

This folder consists of a description of the feature length film Cavalcade of Texas by Garland Adair, and a memo announcing the day, time and place of the film showing on the university campus (Nov. 14 @ 7:30 p.m. in the Science building).

Correspondence 1941-1950**Box****Folder**

1

13-20

Scope and Contents note

The Correspondence series is arranged chronologically and consists of typewritten and handwritten letters between Museum Director Dudley Dobie, and visual artists, area cultural organizations, university officials and potential donors.

During his tenure, Dobie sought to exhibit on campus materials from visual artists such as Addison Burbank, Frank Callcott, Merritt Mauzey, and Leon Pescheret. He also communicated with organizations like the Dallas Print Society, the Elizabet Ney Museum, the Lone Star Printmakers, the Printmaker's Guild, the Witte Museum, and others regarding exhibitions and acquisitions. In 1946, Dobie hoped to acquire campaign materials from Texas state gubernatorial candidates, and Texas industrial corporations such as railroads.

Formal correspondence regarding acquisitions and purchases is also included in the Correspondence series.

News clippings 1940-1946**Box****Folder**

2

1-3

Scope and Contents note

The News clippings series contains articles printed in the College Star about University Museum exhibits, newly acquired art, important donors, and the museum's growth since its establishment in 1937.

Photographs

Also found are articles from Austin, Dallas, and San Antonio newspapers pertaining to art exhibitions at other Texas museums like the Witte Museum in San Antonio, and a Lone Star Printmakers exhibition in Dallas.

A clipping on the Texas governor's race first primary results in 1946 is also included.

Photographs	Box	Folder
	2	4

Scope and Contents note

The Photographs series contains eight photographs of the Southwest Texas State Normal School campus in the early 1900s. Four of the photographs are of Old Main, one of which shows the incomplete gables on Old Main, and another labelled as, "Old Normal." There is also a hand colored view of campus and Old Main taken from a distance. Four photographs shows groups of people. One photo shows a group of women and men standing on rocks, and is labeled "Chautauqua Hill" and "The main building of the college stands on this site." One photo is a group of men seated in front of Old Main, circa 1910. The final two photos are of groups of women seated in front of a house, possible the Sevey Boarding House, circa the early 1900s.

Poems 1941-1942 C. E. Chamberlain	Box	Folder
	2	5

Printed material	Box	Folder
	2	6

Scope and Contents note

The Printed material series consists of brochures, bulletins, programs and newsletters from universities and cultural institutions in Texas.

Artifacts 1941	Oversize	Box	Folder
	Box 3	2	7

Display cases

Scope and Contents note

The Artifacts series contains items that were displayed in the museum -- two pieces of textile. May be related to the blue ribbon from the 1941 Texas State Fair in Dallas. The two pieces of textile are stored in a flat oversize box.

Display cases**Box****Folder**

2

8

Scope and Contents note

The Display cases series holds catalogs, advertisements and photographs of different cases with and without lighting from display case manufacturers.

Financial material 1942-1949**Box****Folder**

2

9-15

Scope and Contents note

The Financial material series is arranged chronologically and contains receipts for expenditures and purchases made by the museum. The receipts include payments for acquisitions, magazine subscriptions to Texas magazines, and shipping and insurance charges for art exhibits. A 1949 memorandum reminding all university departments to prepare their budgets and complete an inventory are also included.