



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Virginia "Jimmie" Booth collection

NMAH.AC.0729

Anne Jones

2003

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Virginia "Jimmie" Booth collection
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0729
Date:	1936 - 1998
Extent:	3 Cubic feet (6 boxes, 3 oversize folders)
Creator:	Booth, Virginia
Language:	English
Summary:	Papers relating to Virginia "Jimmie" Booth's career as a buyer for Lord and Taylor, where she worked for Dorothy Shaver. Papers include correspondence; photographs; original drawings by designer Clare Potter; printed material including articles, magazine advertising and catalogs; a scrapbook of clippings and memorabilia.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated by Virginia "Jimmie" Booth, in May 2000.

Related Materials

Materials in the Archives Center

Henry Booth Collection, 1948-1974, AC0726

Dorothy Shaver Papers, circa 1922-1959, AC0631

Processing Information

Processed by Anne Jones (volunteer), 2003.

Preferred Citation

Virginia "Jimmie" Booth Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

The collection is open for research use.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning intellectual property rights. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Biographical / Historical

Virginia Wagoner Booth, known as Jimmie Booth, studied printing and engineering at Syracuse University. An engineer with Pratt & Whitney during World War II, she entered the fashion world as a bridal consultant at G. Fox in Hartford in 1945.

In 1952 Dorothy Shaver, of Lord & Taylor, hired Booth for the Hartford store and asked her to develop and manage The Country Clothes Shop in the 5th Avenue store in New York. There, Booth collaborated with and promoted such American designers as Clare Potter, Bonnie Cashin, and Claire McCardell. Booth also worked extensively with European designers.

Married to Bob Booth of Hillandale Weavers, Jimmie promoted the use of both American and European hand-loomed fabrics by her designers. She frequently modeled the fashions herself. Her casual, yet elegant, style is the epitome of "the American Look" still popular today.

In 1998, Jimmie Booth, Dorothy Shaver, and other creators of The American Look were saluted in the exhibition, "Designing Women: American Style 1940-1960" at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford.

In addition to her design work, Booth was a violinist with the Hartford Symphony in the 1940s, and later became the chef at the Brooklyn, Connecticut, Golden Lamb Buttery, which she and her husband, Bob, owned and operated.

Scope and Contents

The Virginia "Jimmie" Booth Collection, 1936-1998, focuses primarily on Booth's career as a buyer for Lord & Taylor. The collection includes correspondence, photographs, drawings, clippings, and a scrapbook, and is arranged into seven series.

Series 1: Personal Papers, Photos, and Memorabilia, 1936-1998, includes materials dating from Booth's college days and recent years.

Series 2: Hillandale Business, 1948, 1949, 1972, n.d., consists of advertisements, articles, and correspondence. Hillandale Handweavers was the company founded by Booth's father-in-law, Henry Booth.

Series 3: Lord & Taylor Country Clothes Shop, 1952-1960s, contains photographs of the store, advertising, news articles, original illustrations and catalogues.

Series 4: Irish Materials, 1950s-1960s, is made up of articles and photographs of the weavers at work.

Series 5: European Designers, 1955, 1967, 1997, n.d., includes articles and photographs related to Donald Davies and Von Eckerman.

Series 6: American Designers, 1948, 1951-1957, n.d. The bulk of this series consists of a large number of original sketches by Clare Potter, including fabric swatches. There is also a large scrapbook of Potter's featuring articles and advertisements.

Series 7: Miscellaneous, 1962, consists of an issue of the trade publication, *The Ambassador*.

Arrangement

Collection is organized into seven series:

Series 1: Personal Papers, Photos, and Memorabilia, 1936-1998

Series 2: Hillandale Business, 1948, 1949, 1972, n.d.

Series 3: Lord & Taylor Country Clothes Shop, 1952-1960s

Series 4: Irish Materials, 1950s-1960s

Series 5: European Designers, 1955, 1967, 1997, n.d.

Series 6: American Designers, 1948, 1951-1957, n.d.

Series 7: Miscellaneous, 1962

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Costume design

Types of Materials:

Correspondence -- 20th century

Design drawings

Photographs -- 1940-1970

Scrapbooks -- 20th century

Names:

Davies, Donald

Lord & Taylor

McCardell, Claire

Potter, Clare

Container Listing

Series 1: Personal Papers, Photos, and Memorabilia, 1936 - 1998

Box 1, Folder 1	College-related materials and correspondence , 1999 January 28, 1944 January 26, 1944 September 14, 1947 April, 1944 September 26, undated
Box 1, Folder 2	Syracuse University publications , 1942 February 1, undated
Box 1, Folder 3	Souvenir theatre programs , 1930s
Box 1, Folder 4	Horse show programs , 1953
Box 1, Folder 5	Photographs of Jimmie and Robert Booth and wedding announcement , 1956 November 1, undated
Box 1, Folder 6	Newspaper articles , 1951 June 14, 1956 August 16, undated
Box 1, Folder 7	Miscellaneous photographs of Jimmie , 1958, undated
Box 1, Folder 8	Photographs of Jimmie modeling, undated
Box 2, Folder 4	Photographs of Jimmie modeling , undated
Box 1, Folder 9	<i>Glamour</i> magazine , 1959 July
Box 1, Folder 10	Biography of Jimmie done as school project , 1997
Box 1, Folder 11	Gallery guide, "Designing Women" show , 1998
Box 1, Folder 12	Photographs: Jimmie at "Designing Women" show , 1998
Box 2, Folder 1	Articles from <i>This Week</i> , 1950 - 1952
Box 2, Folder 2	Article about Jimmie from <i>This Week</i> , 1952 June 15
Box 2, Folder 3	Jimmie in Sligo Ltd. advertisement in <i>Town & Country</i> , 1955 September

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Series 2: Hillandale Business, 1948, 1949, 1972, undated

Box 1, Folder 13	PhotoMetriC article, <i>Time</i> magazine , 1958 June 7
Box 1, Folder 14	<i>New England Homestead</i> , 1949 October
Box 1, Folder 15	Article about Hillandale , undated
Box 1, Folder 16	<i>Yankee</i> magazine , 1972 September
Box 1, Folder 17	<i>Connecticut</i> magazine , 1972 October
Box 1, Folder 18	Hillandale Handweavers, correspondence , 1969, 1970 November 8, undated
Box 1, Folder 19	Hillandale advertising , undated
Box 1, Folder 20	Hillandale Barn/Golden Lamb Buttery, 1997 May 7, 1975 September 14, undated

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Series 3: Lord & Taylor Country Clothes Shop, 1952-1960s

Box 1, Folder 21	Country Clothes Shop - interiors , undated
Box 1, Folder 22	Window displays , 1950s
Box 1, Folder 23	Window displays , 1960s
Box 1, Folder 24	Window displays, 1960s
Box 1, Folder 25	Fashion photographs , undated
Box 1, Folder 26	Lord & Taylor advertising, "Pride of Ireland" , 1963 October 6
Box 1, Folder 27	News articles about the "Pride of Ireland" campaign , 1963 October 9, 1963 October 4
Box 2, Folder 5	Lord & Taylor/Clare Potter advertisement , 1955 April 15
Box 2, Folder 6	<i>Vogue</i> - Lord & Taylor dress shown, 1952 July
Box 2, Folder 7	Lord & Taylor Christmas catalogue - Country Clothes Shop featured , 1956
Box 2, Folder 8	Lord & Taylor "British Fortnight", 1958
Map-case 3, Drawer 19, Folder 1-3	Original Dorothy Hood illustrations for advertisements, 1957 - 1958

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Series 4: Irish Materials, 1950s-1960s

- Box 1, Folder 28 *Time* magazine , 1963
- Box 1, Folder 29 *Ireland* magazine , 1960s
- Box 1, Folder 30 General-interest magazines , 1966 , 1958 - 1999, 1969
Telefood Magazine, Fine Foods from Ireland issue, 1966 September
Cara: the travel magazine of Aer Lingus-Irish Airlines, Volume 2, Number 1, 1969 January-March
Village Life in Ireland, Syracuse University Alumni Association, Inc., 1999 April 18-26
Irish edition catalog from Scottish Lion Import Shop, 1998 Fall/1999 Winter
Sports Illustrated, 1958 August 25
Northeast: the Hartford Courant, 1988 September 11
Queen, 1965 December 1
- Box 2, Folder 9 Photographs - clothing manufacturing, Shannon, Ireland [Probably Sligo, Ltd.] , undated
- Box 2, Folder 10 Photographs - clothing manufacturing, Ireland , undated
- Box 2, Folder 11 Photographs - Edward Doughty & Sons (Drogheda, Ltd.) handweavers, Donegal , undated
- Box 2, Folder 12 Photographs - handweavers, Enniskerry, County Wicklow , undated
- Box 2, Folder 13 Photographs - Irish linen workers , undated
- Box 3, Folder 1 Photographs - Irish craftsmen , undated
- Box 3, Folder 2 Photographs - Irish women in Woolshop, Irish village , undated
- Box 3, Folder 3 Photographs - Irish scenes: Blarney Castle, County Cork, and James Joyce's Tower, Dublin , undated
- Box 3, Folder 4 News articles about Irish crafts, 1960s
- Box 3, Folder 5 News articles about Ireland - general, 1960s

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Series 6: American Designers, 1948, 1951 - 1957, undated

- Box 3, Folder 20 Claire McCardell: article in *Life* magazine, page 103 , 1948 June 7
- Box 4, Folder 1 Clare Potter: sketches - resort , 1951 - 1952
- Box 4, Folder 2 Clare Potter: sketches - resort and holiday , 1953
- Box 4, Folder 3 Clare Potter: sketches , 1954 Fall
- Box 4, Folder 4 Clare Potter: Lord & Taylor advertisement , 1955 April 15
- Box 4, Folder 5 Clare Potter: news article and Clare Potter obituary from the *New York Times*, 1999 January 11, undated
- Box 4, Folder 6 Clare Potter: photographs - Clare Potter and her home, includes Halsman contact sheet , undated
- [Fashion portraits of Clare Potter : photographs.]
1 Item (10 x 8 in.)
Halsman, Philippe, Photographer
Contact sheet of 11 exposures on #120 film, with one frame cut out.
- When processing is completed, unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.
- Silver gelatin on paper.
- | | |
|--------|--|
| Names: | Potter, Clare |
| Topic: | Costume design |
| Genre/ | Contact sheets |
| Form: | Photographs -- 1950-2000 -- Black-and-white photoprints
-- Silver gelatin |
- Box 6 Clare Potter: scrapbook of articles and advertisements , 1955 - 1957
- Box 4, Folder 7 Phelps Leather Goods (William and Elizabeth Phelps) , 1944 - 1948, 1989, 1956 May 27
- Box 4, Folder 8 Other American designers, 2000 February 5, 1959 - 1964

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Series 5: European Designers, 1967, 1955, 1997, undated

- Box 3, Folder 6 Subil Conally: article in *Victoria* magazine , 1997 March
- Box 3, Folder 7 Donald Davies: advertising and promotion , 1965, 1967, undated
- Box 3, Folder 8 Donald Davies: fabric swatches , undated
- Box 3, Folder 9 Donald Davies: photographs of Davies' designs , 1963 September 20
- Box 3, Folder 10 Davies shopping bag and photograph and drawing of store , undated
- Box 3, Folder 11 Donald Davies: advertisements in American newspapers , 1966 - 1968
- Box 5, Folder 2 Donald Davies: advertisement for Lord & Taylor, *New York Times*, 1967
- Box 3, Folder 12 Donald Davies: articles in British newspapers , 1968 May 27, 1966 September 23
- Box 3, Folder 13 Donald Davies: featured in magazines , 1962, 1968, undated
- Box 3, Folder 14 Donald Davies: management consultants report , 1955
- Box 5, Folder 1 Donald Davies: photograph of estate, Enmskerry , undated
- Box 3, Folder 15 Donald Davies: miscellaneous photographs of Davies and others , 1958, undated
- Box 3, Folder 16 Countess Von Eckermann and weavers, Ripsa, Sweden , undated
- Box 3, Folder 17 Countess Von Eckermann: photographs of Von Eckermann designs , undated
- Box 3, Folder 18 Countess Von Eckermann: newspaper articles , 1972 November 29, 1962 December 17
- Box 3, Folder 19 Photographs of models in Irish fashions, undated

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Series 7: Miscellaneous, 1962

Box 4, Folder 9

The Ambassador, British trade publication, number 9, 1962

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