



Smithsonian Institution Archives

Records, circa 1955-1977 and undated

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., <a href="mailto:osiaref@si.edu">osiaref@si.edu</a>
<b>Title:</b>	Records
<b>Identifier:</b>	Record Unit 261
<b>Date:</b>	circa 1955-1977 and undated
<b>Extent:</b>	4 cu. ft. (8 document boxes)
<b>Creator::</b>	National Museum of History and Technology. Division of Domestic Life
<b>Language:</b>	English

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## Administrative Information

### Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 261, National Museum of History and Technology. Division of Domestic Life, Records

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## Historical Note

The earliest domestic life artifacts received by the Institution consisted of relics of George Washington and items of ethnologic importance. Some objects were assigned to the Department of Ethnology, United States National Museum (USNM). Others were curated by the Section of Historical Relics and its various successors through to the Division of History, under the direction of A. Howard Clark until 1918 and Theodore T. Belote, 1919-1948.

From 1943 to 1957, the Civil Section of the Division of History and its successors cared for the furnishings collections, as part of the political history and costumes collections. Charles Dorman assisted Margaret Brown Klapthor and Anne Wood Murray with this responsibility. In 1957 the domestic life collections were assigned to the new Division of Cultural History, along with staff and collections from the former Division of Ethnology. C. Malcolm Watkins became Curator of Cultural History and Rodris C. Roth became Assistant and, subsequently, Associate Curator. In 1969, Cultural History was given departmental status. The Department featured a new Division of Costume and Furnishings, which now curated the furnishings collections from the former Division of Cultural History. It also included a new Division of Preindustrial Cultural History, with collections from the defunct Growth of the United States (GOUS) unit. Watkins served as Curator for the latter Division and Anne C. Golovin, from GOUS, was Associate Curator.

In 1977, the Division of Domestic Life was established, where domestic life artifacts from the Divisions of Costume and Furnishings and Preindustrial Cultural History were combined. Roth was made Curator of the new Division, and Golovin became Associate Curator.

Research of the Division of Domestic Life mainly focuses on American household artifacts such as furniture, lighting devices, and modern appliances; or metalware and small wooden objects commonly used in the home, which date from the early seventeenth century. The Division staff and their

predecessors have acquired a variety of items formerly owned by leading American statesmen, as well as handmade objects from average households illustrating the development of the American home.

Curators and staff of domestic life collections have included C. Malcolm Watkins, Curator of Cultural History, 1957-1968, Chairman of the Department of Cultural History and Curator of Preindustrial Cultural History, 1969-1972, Senior Curator, 1973- ; Rodris C. Roth, Assistant Curator of Ethnology, 1957, Assistant Curator, 1958-1959, Associate Curator, 1960-1968, of Cultural History, Associate Curator, 1969-1972, Curator, 1972-1977, of Costume and Furnishings, Curator of Domestic Life, 1977- ; John N. Pearce, Assistant Curator of Cultural History, 1960-1963, Associate Curator, 1964; G. Carroll Lindsay, Assistant Curator of Ethnology, 1956-1957, Associate Curator of Cultural History, 1958; Anne C. Golovin, Assistant Curator of Growth of the United States, 1963-1968, Associate Curator of Preindustrial Cultural History, 1969-1977, Associate Curator of Domestic Life, 1977- ; Richard E. Ahlborn, Associate Curator of Cultural History, 1966-1968; Susan H. Myers, museum technician, 1971-1974, museum specialist, 1975-1977, of Preindustrial Cultural History; Richard H. Howland, Head Curator, 1961-1964, Chairman, 1964-1967 , of the Department of Civil History; Peter C. Welsh, Associate Curator, 1961-1962, Curator, 1963-1968, of Growth of the United States; and Wilcomb E. Washburn, Acting Curator of Political History, 1958, Curator, 1959-1965.

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## Descriptive Entry

These records, primarily from the Division of Preindustrial Cultural History and, to an extent, its predecessors, as well as the Department of Cultural History and the Division of Domestic Life, include administrative files consisting of annual reports for some of the above administrative units; a fourth floor plan of NMHT; memoranda concerning policies and activities of the Division of Preindustrial Cultural History and predecessors and the Museum; committee files; inventories of the furnishings of several historic houses in Washington, D. C.; identification reports of objects submitted for historical documentation; and scripts for public relation projects of the Division of Preindustrial Cultural History and the Museum. Also included are reading files and copies of outgoing correspondence to public inquiries concerning objects in the national collections or the examination of objects for historical authentication.

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Costume -- History
- Historical museums
- House furnishings
- Household appliances
- Households -- United States
- Museum curators
- Museums -- Public relations
- Women museum curators

Types of Materials:

- Manuscripts

Names:

- Ahlborn, Richard E.

Belote, Theodore T.  
Clark, A. Howard  
Dorman, Charles G.  
Golovin, Anne Castrodale  
Growth of the United States (Exhibition)  
Howland, Richard Hubbard  
Klapthor, Margaret Brown  
Lindsay, G. Carroll  
Murray, Anne Wood  
Myers, Susan H.  
National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.) Department of Cultural History  
National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.). Department of Civil History  
National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.). Division of Costume and Furnishings  
National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.). Division of Cultural History  
National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.). Division of Political History  
National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.). Division of Preindustrial Cultural History  
Pearce, John N.  
Roth, Rodris  
United States National Museum. Division of Ethnology  
United States National Museum. Division of History  
United States National Museum. Section of Historical Relics  
Washburn, Wilcomb E.  
Watkins, C. Malcolm  
Welsh, Peter C.

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: ADMINISTRATIVE FILES, 1955-1977 AND UNDATED.

#### Box 1

- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 1 Acting Chairman Memos (Also Supervisor), 1969-1977.
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 2 American Folk Craft Survivals, 1968.
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 3 Anacostia Neighborhood Museum, 1966-1968, 1972. Includes "A Proposal to Establish An Experimental Neighborhood Museum."
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 4 Annual Reports, Growth of the United States, 1961-1965.
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 5 Annual Reports, 1966-1969. Includes Plan of Operations for Growth of the United States, 1967; Annual Report, Division of Preindustrial Cultural History, 1969; and Annual Report, Department of Cultural History, 1969.
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 6 Annual Reports, 1970-1974.
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 7 Barney House, 1961-1965 and undated. Includes an inventory of paintings and furnishings.
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 8 Belmont, 1964.
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 9 Blair House, 1962-1964, 1971.
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 10 BMD, 1970-1972.
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 11 Committee: American Cultural History, 1971.
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 12 Committee: American Studies, 1963-1969. Includes syllabus for Smithsonian Institution Seminar on Material Culture of the United States, 1967.
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 13 Committee: Appalachia, 1965-1966.
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 14 Committee: Archives, 1972.
- Box 1 of 8                      Folder 15 Committee: Craft Assistance, 1965.

- Box 1 of 8 Folder 16 Committee: Curators' Association Council, 1963-1969. See also folder 23 below.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 17 Committee: Curators' Association - E & P, 1965.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 18 Committee: Education Advisory, 1964-1966. Includes minutes of meetings, 1964-1965.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 19 Committee: Exhibits, 1972, 1976.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 20 Committee: Independence Hall Furnishings, 1957, 1962-1964.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 21 Committee: Pentagon Dining Room, 1963.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 22 Committee: Presidential Gift, 1969.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 23 Committee: Professional Accomplishments Evaluation, 1964-1966. Includes copies of the Charter of the Association of Curators and the Professional Accomplishments Evaluation Plan. See also folder 16 above.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 24 Committee: Public Relations, 1964.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 25 Committee: Publications Advisory Committee, 1967-1968.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 26 Committee: Rare Book Consultant, Golovin, 1972-1973.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 27 Committee: Research Awards Administration, 1965.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 28 Committee: White House Advisory, 1961-1967.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 29 Computerization, 1968-1969, 1974.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 30 Conference Room Furnishings, NMHT, 1964.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 31 Departmental Reorganization, 1974.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 32 Directors' Meeting: Minutes, 1970-1972.
- Box 1 of 8 Folder 33 Docents, 1959-1971. Includes copies of "America Was Settled By Brave People Who Worked Hard and Endured Incredible Difficulties," a manuscript by C. Malcolm Watkins, and "Everyday Life in Early America."

Box 2

- Box 2 of 8 Folder 1 Duplicating, 1962, 1965, 1969-1976. Includes copies of bibliographies prepared for public inquiries.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 2 Educational Programs, 1967-1972.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 3 Fund: Smithsonian Research Grant 3324, 1966-1972. Also includes data on fund #5176 and schedule 87718.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 4 Fund: 50440 and 50470, 1969.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 5 Identification Reports, 1957-1969 and undated. Includes examinations and reports and correspondence regarding objects submitted by the public for examination by curators.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 6 Library Committee - Museum of History and Technology, 1955 and undated.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 7 Mailing List, 1964, 1967.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 8 Museum Shops, 1964-1965, 1971-1972 and undated.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 9 NMHT Coloring Book, 1965-1966.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 10 NMHT Guidebook, 1964-1966 and undated. Includes drafts of scripts for "Everyday Life in Early America."
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 11 National Geographic, 1970-1971.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 12 Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1970-1971.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 13 Policy, Museum, 1960-1969. Includes room assignment plan for fourth floor, NMHT, 1960.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 14 Public Relations, 1958, 1964-1970. Includes script for "Yesterday's People," a production of the Smithsonian Adventures series.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 15 Restoration Lab: Requests, 1961-1974.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 16 Smithson Bicentennial (200th Anniversary of James Smithson's birth), 1964-1968.
- Box 2 of 8 Folder 17 Smithsonian Institution Journal of History, 1965-1966.



- Box 2 of 8                      Folder 18 Special Events, HTB, Cultural History, 1962-1972 and undated. Routine memoranda indicating nature and sponsor of special events in NMHT.
- Box 2 of 8                      Folder 19 Symposium: Esthetics of Man's Environment (1966-1967 Program of Events), 1966-1967.
- Box 2 of 8                      Folder 20 Table Decorations: Miscellaneous, 1964-1966.
- Box 2 of 8                      Folder 21 Thank You Acknowledgments, 1969-1977.
- Box 2 of 8                      Folder 22 A Tour Guide: Colonial Living, 1966, 1971.

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## Series 2: PUBLIC INQUIRIES, 1970-1977.

### Box 3

- Box 3 of 8                      Folder 1 Public Inquiries, 1970.
- Box 3 of 8                      Folder 2 Public Inquiries, A-J, 1971.
- Box 3 of 8                      Folder 3 Public Inquiries, K-Z, 1971.
- Box 3 of 8                      Folder 4 Public Inquiries, 1972.
- Box 3 of 8                      Folder 5 Public Inquiries, 1973.
- Box 3 of 8                      Folder 6 Public Inquiries, 1974.
- Box 3 of 8                      Folder 7 Public Inquiries, 1975.

### Box 4

- Box 4 of 8                      Folder 1 Public Inquiries, 1976.
- Box 4 of 8                      Folder 2 Pending Public Inquiries, 1975-1977.

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## Series 3: READING FILES, 1968-1977.

### Box 4

Box 4 of 8                      Folders 3-6 Reading Files, September 1968 - June 1969.

### Box 5

Box 5 of 8                      Folders 1-7 Reading Files, July 1969 - December 1970.

### Box 6

Box 6 of 8                      Folders 1-8 Reading Files, January 1971 - December 1973.

### Box 7

Box 7 of 8                      Folders 1-2 Reading Files, January - August 1974.

Box 7 of 8                      Folders 3-4 Reading File - American Museums, June - July 1974. Outgoing correspondence soliciting museum objects appropriate for the Smithsonian's 1876 exhibition.

Box 7 of 8                      Folders 5-6 Reading File - Foreign Museums, July - August 1974. Outgoing correspondence soliciting museum objects appropriate for the Smithsonian's 1876 exhibition.

Box 7 of 8                      Folders 7-9 Reading Files, September 1974 - May 1975.

### Box 8

Box 8 of 8                      Folders 1-7 Reading Files, June 1975 - December 1977.

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