



Smithsonian Institution Archives

Subject Files, circa 1937-1992

Finding aid prepared by Smithsonian Institution Archives

Smithsonian Institution Archives
Washington, D.C.
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Collection Overview

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| Repository: | Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu |
| Title: | Subject Files |
| Identifier: | Record Unit 540 |
| Date: | circa 1937-1992 |
| Extent: | 2.5 cu. ft. (2 record storage boxes) (1 document box) |
| Creator:: | Cooper-Hewitt Museum. Office of the Registrar |
| Language: | Language of Materials: English |

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 540, Cooper-Hewitt Museum. Office of the Registrar, Subject Files

Historical Note

Soon after he was hired as assistant curator in 1933, Calvin Hathaway introduced a new system for accessioning and cataloging the collections of the Cooper Union Museum. By 1942 Hathaway had become associate curator, and his system was maintained by secretarial staff under the supervision of Mary A. Noon, assistant to the curator for collections. Noon became acting head of the Museum in 1945, and in 1947 Dorothea C. Shipley was appointed catalog supervisor. Paul Dreschler replaced her in 1951, and Mary Fonner Blackwelder was named to the post in 1956.

Shortly after the Museum was transferred to the Smithsonian Institution, Blackwelder assumed the position of registrar, where she remained until February 1975. Elizabeth Burnham was registrar from FY 1976 through FY 1978, and Albina De Meio served in that function from FY 1980 through FY 1981. Cordelia Rose was appointed registrar in FY 1982.

Introduction

This finding aid was digitized with funds generously provided by the Smithsonian Institution Women's Committee.

Descriptive Entry

These records document the administrative and program activities of the Office of the Registrar from 1973 to 1992, with some files dating from 1959. Records consist of staff meeting notes, administrative memoranda, quarterly reports, and annual reports to the Smithsonian's central Office of the Registrar in response to Office Memorandum 808, "Collections Management Policy." Also included are reports and budgets for the Museum's acquisitions fund; memoranda and correspondence concerning the Smithsonian Institution Registrar's Council and its predecessors, the Registrarial Council of the Smithsonian Institution and the Council of Registrars, from its inception in January 1973 through 1987; and insurance registers, projections, and claims. The records also contain labels describing various objects on exhibition, circa 1937 to 1968; accession card corrections and changes from 1959 and undated; contracts from the 1960s; lists of income and object purchases; and the correspondence of Mary Blackwelder from 1970 to 1971.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Art museums
- Museum registrars
- Museums -- Collection management

Types of Materials:

- Manuscripts

Names:

- Blackwelder, Mary
- Burnham, Elizabeth
- Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration
- De Meio, Albina
- Dreschler, Paul
- Hathaway, Calvin S.
- Noon, Mary A.
- Rose, Cordelia
- Shipley, Dorothea C.
- Smithsonian Institution. Council of Registrars
- Smithsonian Institution. Office of the Registrar
- Smithsonian Institution. Registrarial Council

Container Listing

Box 1

- Box 1 of 3 Staff Meetings, Miscellaneous memos, Etc.: 1983-1989, 1990, 1991 (3 folders)
- Box 1 of 3 Acquisitions Fund Budget FY 1989
- Box 1 of 3 Acquisitions Funding Report Notes (To Do)
- Box 1 of 3 Acquisitions Funding Reports 1988
- Box 1 of 3 Acquisitions Funds: Notes
- Box 1 of 3 Registrar's Procedures, General
- Box 1 of 3 SI Registrar's Council: 1976, 1977-1978, 1979, 1982-November 1984, December 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987 (8 folders)
- Box 1 of 3 Registrar's Council of SI: 1973, 1974, 1975 (3 folders)
- Box 1 of 3 Registrar's Council Report to Mr. Perrot
- Box 1 of 3 Study of Loans Forms for Registrar's Council
- Box 1 of 3 Insurance Registers: 1975-1982 (8 folders)

Box 2

- Box 2 of 3 Insurance Registers: 1983-1989 (7 folders)
- Box 2 of 3 Insurance Projections FY: 1974-1978, 1979-1989 (12 folders)
- Box 2 of 3 Insurance: Claims Closed: 1983-1989 (7 folders)
- Box 2 of 3 Exhibitions Department: 1979-1984, 1985-1987 (2 folders)
- Box 2 of 3 Annual Report: SI: OM808: CY 1987-CY 1989 (3 folders)
- Box 2 of 3 Registrar's Quarterly Reports: CY 1985-CY 1989 (5 folders)

Box 3

- Box 3 of 3 Crefs, CIS
- Box 3 of 3 CHM Contracts
- Box 3 of 3 Museum: Objects Sold Copy 1; List by Donors: Working Copy
- Box 3 of 3 Registrar's Area, Proposed Plans for Architect

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| Box 3 of 3 | Accession Books: (a) incomplete material; (b) procedures for entering info. |
| Box 3 of 3 | Corrections & Changes to be Made |
| Box 3 of 3 | Miscellaneous correspondence, 1970-1971, of Mary (Mrs. John J.) Blackwelder, Registrar |
| Box 3 of 3 | Exhibition Labels, c. 1937-1968 (6 folders) |