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Collection Overview

Repository: Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title: Margaret B. Klapthor Papers
Identifier: Record Unit 7466
Date: circa 1952-1982
Extent: 5 cu. ft. (5 record storage boxes)
Creator: Klapthor, Margaret Brown
Language: English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation
Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7466, Margaret B. Klapthor Papers

Historical Note
Margaret B. Klapthor (1922-1994) was born in Henderson, Kentucky. She graduated from the University of Maryland, B.A., 1943, and shortly thereafter was employed by the Smithsonian Institution as a scientific aide in the Civil Section of the Division of History, United States National Museum. Klapthor was assigned to restoring the First Ladies' dresses, the collection of White House gowns, which eventually became the First Ladies Hall exhibition at the Museum of History and Technology in 1964. Her positions later included Assistant Curator, 1947-1948, in the Section of Civil History, Division of History; Assistant Curator, 1949-1951, and Associate Curator, 1952-1957, in the Division of Civil History; and Associate Curator, 1957-1970, Curator, 1971-1983, and Curator Emeritus, 1984-1994, in the Division of Political History. Klapthor published many articles and several books during her tenure, including *The Dresses of the First Ladies of the White House* and *Official White House China: 1789 to the Present*.

Introduction

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

Descriptive Entry

These papers consist of exhibition scripts for the Hall of Political History; correspondence pertaining to publications, lectures, educational activities, and planning of the First Ladies Hall; research notes and drafts to the publications *Official White House China: 1789 to the Present*, *The First Ladies Cook Book*: 
**Favorite Recipes of All the Presidents of the United States, and The Dresses of the First Ladies of the White House;** photographs of Klapthor; annual reports for the Division of Political History; published articles by Klapthor; and biographical information on the First Ladies.

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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:**
- First ladies
- Museum curators
- Museum exhibits
- White House china

**Names:**
- Klapthor, Margaret Brown
- National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.) Hall of Political History
- National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.). Division of Civil History
- National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.). Division of Political History
- United States National Museum. Division of History
- University of Maryland at College Park

**Geographic Names:**
- United States -- History

**Preferred Titles:**
- *The Dresses of the First Ladies of the White House* (Monograph : 1952)
- *The First Ladies Cook Book: Favorite Recipes of All the Presidents of the United States* (Monograph : 1965)