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Capitol Arts Center - Bowling Green, Kentucky (MSS 538)

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Department of Library Special Collections
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Descriptive Inventory

MSS 538 CAPITOL Arts Center – Bowling Green, Kentucky

2 boxes. 25 folders. 618 items. 1977-2008. Originals, photocopies.

SC2012.114.2

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY

The Capitol Arts Center is a performing arts theater that also features two art galleries located at 416 East Main Street in downtown Bowling Green, Kentucky. The Crescent Amusement Company of Nashville opened the Columbia Theater in a building at this location in 1911. It seated 200 in folding cane-bottomed opera chairs. The theater offered daily matinees and evening shows. In the late-1920s, two additional buildings near the Columbia were remodeled and the resulting three-building business was named the Capitol Theatre. This facility was razed in the late-1930s and a new theater constructed, which opened in March 1939.

Movies were shown at the Capitol, but the facility was also used for minstrels, recitals, musicals and other special events. The theater closed in the early-1970s and remained empty for over a decade. It was purchased in 1979 to house a performing arts center for Bowling Green. The Bowling Green-Warren County Arts Commission, a quasi-governmental body orchestrated the purchase, fundraising and renovation work. Over \$900,000 was raised in a three year period by this group of hard working volunteers. The total cost of renovations was \$1.2 million. Local banks loaned the commission the \$300,000 needed to complete the facility. The renovated facility opened on 22 September 1981 to a full week of arts activities.

The facility served well for over twenty years, but then began to show its age and wear, even closing during one season because of a partial ceiling collapse. The facility was updated, but it was becoming clear that to host larger and more complicated shows would require a new building. A group of concerned civic leaders, not only interested in creating a new, larger venue for the performing arts, but also creating an attraction that would help stimulate downtown development, sought support for such a center. In July 2000, Warren County created the Southern Kentucky Performing Arts Center, Inc. (SKYPAC) to accept a \$6.77 million dollar appropriation from the Commonwealth of Kentucky designed to fund early architectural and feasibility studies, acquire land, hire architects and fund early operating costs. Fortuitously, the construction contract for the Center was bid in January 2009 which coincided with the bottom of the construction market when steel and concrete were at an all-time low; accordingly SKYPAC was able to take advantage of these significantly lower building costs. SKYPAC was completed

and opened in the fall of 2012; it also has operational responsibility for the Capitol Arts Center on Fountain Square.

COLLECTION NOTE

This collection contains material related to the Capitol Arts Center in Bowling Green, Kentucky. It should not be construed as a complete archive for the organization, because there are many gaps. However, it does contain many items associated with an archive including administrative papers, correspondence, minutes, historical information, financial records, etc. Most of these items are found in Box 1. The collection is particularly strong for the early years of the facility, 1977-1985.

Box 2 contains information about fundraisers, such as the Picnic Pops event and the annual Gala, both of which the Bowling Green community enjoyed for decades. The remainder of the collection includes information about performing and visual arts programming.

SHELF LIST

BOX 1	Capitol Arts Center	1977-2007	309 items
Folder 1	Inventory		1 item
Folder 2	Administrative papers – By-laws, policy manual, etc.	1977-2001	8 items
Folder 3	Minutes – Bowling Green-Warren County Arts Commission	1977-1990	38 items
Folder 4	Minutes – Arts Alliance	1990	13 items
Folder 5	Agendas – Bowling Green-Warren County Arts Commission	1977-1990	29 items
Folder 6	Historical information and summaries	1977-2001	14 items
Folder 7	Correspondence	1987-2006	35 items
Folder 8	Correspondence	1977-1985	47 items
Folder 9	Committee Reports	1977-1991	51 items
Folder 10	Membership lists	1977-1981	3 items

Folder 11	Financial papers	1977-1982	29 items
Folder 12	Financial papers	1989-2007	22 items
Folder 13	Annual fund drive – Information	1989-2000	19 items
BOX 2	Capitol Arts Center	1981-2008	309 items
Folder 1	Job descriptions, organizational chart	1981-2007	8 items
Folder 2	Opening day printed material	1981	8 items
Folder 3	Gala – Fundraising event	1998-1999	32 items
Folder 4	Picnic Pops	1989-1999	12 items
Folder 5	Picnic Pops	2000	51 items
Folder 6	Season programs	1989-2000	8 items
Folder 7	Season programs	2001-2007	10 items
Folder 8	Information about individual programs	1992-2001	72 items
Folder 9	Information about individual programs	2003-2007	57 items
Folder 10	Children’s programming	1990-2007	23 items
Folder 11	Art exhibits	1981-2006	17 items
Folder 12	Miscellaneous – certificates, maps, seating chart, etc.	2005-2008	11 items

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

MSS 538 CAPITOL Arts Center – Bowling Green, KY 1977-2008

Administrative papers, correspondence, financial records, fundraising material, minutes and membership lists for the Capitol Arts Center in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Also includes information about performing and visual arts programming at the Center.

2 boxes. 25 folders. 618 items. Originals, photos, and photocopies.

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SUBJECT ANALYTICS

Arts Alliance – Bowling Green – Minutes, 1990 B1,F4
Arts facilities – Bowling Green
Atlanta Rhythm Section (Band) B2,F8
Bishop, Stephen – Relating to B2,F8
Bowling Green Warren County Arts Commission, 1977-1990 B1,F3,5,7
Buckberry, Ray B., Jr., b. 1934 B1,F2
Burch, Curtis, b. 1945 – Relating to B2,F9
Bush, Sam, b. 1952 – Relating to B2,F9
Capitol Arts Center – Bowling Green – History B1,F6
Capitol Theatre – Bowling Green – History B1,F6
Certificates B2,F12
Combs, Geraldine D. – Correspondence B1,F7-8,9
Handy, Riley Dean, 1941-2010 B1,F7
Huddleston, Walter Darlington “Dee,” b. 1926 – Letter to B1,F7
Jack E. Lunt Memorial Invitational Exhibit – Relating to B2,F11
Martin, Cornelius Allen, 1948-2006 B2,F8
Moran, Erin Marie, b. 1960 – Relating to B2,F8
Morris, Tracy B1,F8
Newell, Regina (Crissy), b. 1942 B1,F7
Payne, Clyde B1,F7
Performing arts centers – Bowling Green
Petrocelli, Carrie B1,F8
Picnic Pops – Bowling Green – Relating to B2,F4-5
Riders in the Sky (Band) – Relating to B2,F9
Rodgers, Johna B1,F8
Sledge, Percy Tyrone, 1940-2015 – Relating to B2,F8
Soulgrass (Band) – Relating to B2,F9
Spiller, Cora Jane (Morningstar), 1928-2020 – Correspondence B1,F8

They're Playing Our Song (Drama) B2,F8
Thomas, Mike B1,F8
Williams, Barry, b. 1954 – Relating to B2,F8
Williams, Rick B1,F8
Willock, Mary Frances (Byars), 1936-2011 B1,F7
Winston, George – Relating to B2,F9
Teague, Molly (Womack) – Correspondence B1,F7

SEE and SEE ALSO

Blenkhorn, Barry William, b. 1954
See:
Williams, Barry, b. 1954

Combs, Gerri
See:
Combs, Geraldine D.

Womack, Molly
See:
Teague, Molly (Womack)

Jeffrey 05/11/2015