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Lissauer, Mildred Wallis (Potter), 1897-1998 (MSS 544)

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Mildred Wallis Potter, the daughter of Martha (Woods) Potter and William J. Potter, was born in Bowling Green, Kentucky on 30 August 1897. She was educated at Bowling Green’s Center Street School and WKU’s Training School. After teaching school in Paducah, Kentucky in the mid-1920s, she married William G. Grace on 16 February 1926 and gave birth to a son, Eugene Rogers “Ted” Grace, on 24 November 1927. Mildred and William Grace divorced in February 1929. On 7 September 1931, she married Arthur W. “Artie” Lissauer; in 1932 he adopted her son Ted, who took his name. Arthur Lissauer was a successful industrialist and inventor, and the couple spent their time between homes in Louisville (called “Green Pastures”) and Florida, including a Winter Park home purchased in 1950 called “Muchado” (“much ado”). Both houses were extensively renovated—the Louisville home was featured in House Beautiful in 1945 and the Courier-Journal Magazine in 1948—and Mildred’s decorating skills were widely admired; Mildred was also popular in social circles for her talents as a hostess and imaginative party-giver. Mildred (Potter) Lissauer died in Louisville, Kentucky on 25 January 1998 at age 100. She is buried in Bowling Green’s Fairview Cemetery.

COLLECTION NOTE

This collection documents the construction of the Godey Quilt, which is owned by the Kentucky Museum at Western Kentucky University. The quilt includes 15 squares featuring portraits of men and women clothed in fashionable mid-nineteenth century attire. The squares were designed by Mildred Lissauer. The quilt’s was constructed in 1934 and won several prizes for its workmanship and design. Lissauer had the quilt in her possession until she donated to the Kentucky Museum in 1990. Sandra Staebell, registrar of the Kentucky Museum, wrote an article about the quilt’s design and execution titled “The Godey Quilt: One Woman’s Dream Becomes a Reality” in Uncoverings: The Research Papers of [the] American Quilt Study Group 2016 (KLRC TT835 .U52)

The collection contains several folders of clippings from newspapers and magazines that featured individuals in mid-nineteenth century costumes. Other ephemera, with similar designs, represented in the collection include playing cards, bridge tally cards, greeting cards—chiefly
Christmas cards, and advertisements. These items can be found in Folders 3-6. Folder 5 includes Mrs. Lissauer’s drawings on tracing paper and on cardboard panels. Folder 2 includes correspondence with Ollie Rigsby of Bowling Green, Kentucky, who did a great deal of the sewing on the quilt squares. Folder 7 includes several photographs of the quilt on a bed at Green Acres and some of the quilt’s details; Mrs. Lissauer is featured in several of them. Folders 8 and 9 contain Sandra Staebell’s correspondence related to publication of an article about the quilt and several early drafts. Folder 10 contains biographical clippings about Lissauer and her penchant for interior decorating.

SHELF LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOX 1</th>
<th>LISSAUER, Mildred</th>
<th>1933-1992</th>
<th>274 items</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Folder 1</td>
<td>Inventory</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 item</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 2</td>
<td>Correspondence and clippings related to construction of the Godey Quilt</td>
<td>1933-1934</td>
<td>27 items</td>
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<td>Folder 3</td>
<td>Christmas cards and other ephemera kept for designs</td>
<td>1930s</td>
<td>64 items</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 4</td>
<td>Clippings from newspapers and magazines of graphics related to Godey Quilt</td>
<td>1930s</td>
<td>53 Items</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 5</td>
<td>Oversized newspaper and magazine clippings with graphics related to Godey Quilt</td>
<td>1930s</td>
<td>60 Items</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 6</td>
<td>Drawing and patterns for the Godey Quilt</td>
<td>1930s</td>
<td>15 Items</td>
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<td>Folder 7</td>
<td>Photos</td>
<td>1930s</td>
<td>10 Items</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 8</td>
<td>Correspondence of Sandra Staebell related to publication of an article about the Godey Quilt</td>
<td>1976-1992</td>
<td>31 Items</td>
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<td>Folder 9</td>
<td>Articles in various stages about the Godey Quilt by Sandra Staebell</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>3 Items</td>
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<td>Folder 10</td>
<td>News clippings and Magazine articles about Lissauer and her penchant for interior decorating</td>
<td>1940-1959</td>
<td>10 Items</td>
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</table>
BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

MSS LISSAUER, Mildred Wallis (Potter), 1933-1992
544 1897-1998

Materials related to the construction of the Godey Quilt by Mildred Lissauer, Louisville, Kentucky in 1934. Includes graphic items gleaned from newspaper, magazines, and other paper ephemera, correspondence with the seamstress responsible for much of the sewing on the quilt, research correspondence of Sandra Statebell related to the quilt and an article that she wrote about it. News clippings and magazine articles about Lissauer’s penchant for interior decorating.

½ box. 10 folders. 274 items. Originals or photocopies.
1990.6.200

SUBJECT ANALYTICS

Godey’s Lady’s Book (magazine) – Relating to
Historic houses – Louisville – “Green Acres”
Quilts and quilting
Rigsby, Ollie, 1888-1986
Staebell, Sandra L., b. 1958

Jeffrey 02/10/2017