

Committee of 1926 of Pennsylvania records

02

**Finding aid prepared by Celia Caust-Ellenbogen and Michael
Gubicza through the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's Hidden
Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories.**

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Strawberry Mansion

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Summary Information

Repository	Strawberry Mansion
Creator	Committee of 1926 of Pennsylvania.
Title	Committee of 1926 of Pennsylvania records
Call number	02
Date [inclusive]	1926-1995
Extent	26.5 linear feet
Language	English
Abstract	<p>Soon after the Sesqui-Centennial International Exposition, the Committee of 1926 was granted stewardship of historic Strawberry Mansion in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The all-women's group continues to operate the mansion as a museum space with decorated period rooms as of 2012. The Committee of 1926 of Pennsylvania records, 1926-1995, include financial and administrative records, photographs, scrapbooks, and newspaper clippings. A highlight of the collection is "The Book of Honor," an illuminated manuscript with biographies of influential Pennsylvania women executed by famed children's author Carolyn Haywood.</p>

Biography/History

"After Strawberry Mansion was sold to the Fairmount Park Commission in 1867, its rich history lay dormant under various new cloaks, including a dining establishment. It wouldn't be until 1926 when a group of leading city women, headed by Mrs. J. Willis Martin interceded on its behalf. Mrs. Martin was a civic leader in the city of Philadelphia. She was made a Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society of Great Britain for her work with Bartram's Gardens. She was even named as one of "The Nation's Twelve Greatest Women" by the New York newspapers in 1922.

"Mrs. Martin, along with women from various other women's committees in the city, formed a unified committee, The Committee of 1926, to act as the stewards of the house and restore it to its former glory. They were given an initial grant of \$36,000.00 from Joseph V. Horn, owner of Horn and Hardart Baking Company and later famous for the Automat restaurant. Each room in the house was conceived of as a museum space and the decorations and artifacts were collected by the various women's groups who were in charge of specific rooms. Certain rooms were also designed with a functional purpose in mind. In these rooms parties, teas, luncheons and weddings could be held. The women of the Committee of 1926 thenceforth dedicated themselves to the preservation of the history and heritage of Strawberry Mansion and do so to this day."

Bibliography:

"The Committee of 1926." Accessed December 22, 2011. <http://www.historicstrawberrymansion.org/>.

Scope and Contents

The Committee of 1926 of Pennsylvania records, 1926-1995, include financial and administrative records, photographs, scrapbooks, and newspaper clippings.

The administrative records of the Committee of 1926 include leases, by-laws, insurance, antiques inventories and research, and event plans, including a report on the Bicentennial at Strawberry Mansion (1976). Membership records include member cards (1929-1976), membership proposals, and resignations. Records relating to Strawberry Mansion tours include guest books from the 1930s to the 1980s, as well as docent training materials and docent sign-in books from the 1970s and 1980s. There is some correspondence in the collection, including a small amount of correspondence from Mrs. Walter Shipley Penn Jr. (President of the Committee), circa 1950s-1960s. Minutes of the Committee span from 1930 to 1985. There are approximately four architectural drawings and blueprints of Strawberry Mansion, 1930 and 1967.

The financial records of the Committee of 1926 include receipts, check stubs, bank statements, treasurer's reports, audits and auditor reports, finance committee minutes, admission receipts, and account ledgers.

The photographs, scrapbooks, and newspaper clippings in this collection mostly depict Strawberry Mansion. There are several scrapbooks of photographs, newspaper clippings, and letters relating to Strawberry Mansion and Committee of 1926 events, 1962-1975; there are also scattered photographs and a carousel for a slide show about the mansion, circa 1970s. In addition to newspaper clippings about the mansion, there is small number of clippings about dolls, circa 1960s; a large number of pamphlets and catalogs about building restoration and preservation, circa 1990; and many articles by Sarah Dickson Lowrie. The collection also features an original manuscript by Sarah Dickson Lowrie, 1930.

A highlight of the Committee of 1926 of Pennsylvania records is "The Book of Honor," an illuminated manuscript with biographies of influential Pennsylvania women commissioned by the Committee in 1930-1931, and updated over the next 55 years. The calligraphy and illumination for the volume was executed by Carolyn Haywood (1898-1990), mural artist who apprenticed with Violet Oakley, portrait painter, and children's book author well-known for 1939's *'B' Is for Betsy*. In addition to the finished volume, this collection includes the rough draft manuscript, which is made up of typed biographies and newspaper clippings of the *Evening Public Ledger* column "Notable Women of Pennsylvania," circa 1935. There are additional handwritten notes, correspondence, and manuscripts for The Book of Honor, including newspaper clippings and research, 1930-1985.

Administrative Information

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Sponsor

This preliminary finding aid was created as part of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories. The HCI-PSAR project was made possible by a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Access Restrictions

Contact Strawberry Mansion for information about accessing this collection.

Immediate Source of Acquisition Note

Materials collected by and produced by the Committee of 1926, the administrators of Strawberry Mansion.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials Note

Historical Society of Pennsylvania: Barney, Davisson, Derr, Dickson, Early, Lowrie, and Stoever family papers, Collection 1259.

Controlled Access Headings

Geographic Name(s)

- Philadelphia (Pa.)
- Strawberry Mansion (Philadelphia, Pa.)

Personal Name(s)

- Haywood, Carolyn, 1898-1990
- Lowrie, Sarah Dickson, 1870-1957

Subject(s)

- Historic buildings--Conservation and restoration
- Historic preservation
- Philanthropy
- Women--Societies and clubs