George Kirgo Papers

Finding aid created by Writers Guild Foundation Archive staff using RecordEXPRESS
Writers Guild Foundation Archive
7000 West Third Street
Los Angeles, California 90048
(323) 782-4680
hswett@wgfoundation.org
https://www.wgfoundation.org/archive/
2019
Descriptive Summary
Title: George Kirgo Papers
Collection Number: WGF-MS-104
Creator/Collector: George Kirgo
Extent: 8.75 linear feet, 10 boxes
Repository: Writers Guild Foundation Archive
Los Angeles, California 90048
Abstract: The George Kirgo Papers consist of feature film and television scripts written by Kirgo throughout his career as a screen and television writer, as well as personal and professional papers, particularly related to his time as President of the Writers Guild of America during the strike of 1988.
Language of Material: English
Access
Available by appointment only. Most materials stored offsite. One week advance notice required for retrieval.
Publication Rights
The responsibility to secure copyright and publication permission rests with the researcher.
Preferred Citation
George Kirgo Papers. Writers Guild Foundation Archive
Acquisition Information
Donated by Angela Wales Kirgo on 9/13/2005
Biography/Administrative History
Screenwriter George Kirgo was born George Blumenthal in Hartford, Connecticut on March 26, 1926 and was educated at Wesleyan University. He served in the Army Air Forces in Japan and the Philippines during World War II. After the war he moved to New York, began his writing career, and adopted the surname Kirgo. He married Terry Newell, and the couple had three children. She died in 1986. In 1958, Kirgo wrote a satirical Hollywood novel called "Hercules: The Big Greek Story." The novel was not successful, but gained the attention of Jack Paar, who invited Kirgo on his show. Kirgo became a regular on The Jack Paar Show and in 1962 he moved to Hollywood, where he began writing episodic television and feature films. Kirgo co-wrote "Red Line 7000" in 1965 with director Howard Hawks. His other credits include "Spinout," an Elvis Presley comedy co-written with Theodore J. Flicker, and "Don't Make Waves," a comedy starring Tony Curtis. Kirgo wrote more than a dozen movies for television, including "Get Christie Love!," "Angel on My Shoulder" and scripts for television series such as "Adam's Rib" and "The Mary Tyler Moore Show." In 1989 he married Angela Wales, who then was the executive director of the Australian Writers Guild. He served two terms as President of the Writers Guild of America west from 1987-1991, leading the union through a bitter strike in 1988, its longest ever. He was given the Writers Guild of America's Morgan Cox Award in 2001, which recognizes personal sacrifice best exemplifying the ideal of service to the guild. He died on August 22, 2004 in Santa Monica. Kirgo is survived by his second wife, Angela Wales, and the three children from his first marriage, Julie, Dinah and Nick.
Scope and Content of Collection
The George Kirgo Papers are arranged into Series I: Film and TV Projects, 1957-1983 and Series II: Personal and Professional Papers, 1943-2001. Series I consists of scripts for film and television written by Kirgo and other writers. Major works include (film) Don't Make Waves, Spinout, Voices, Red Line 7000 and (TV) Adam's Rib, Angel on My Shoulder, Another Day, Arlene Francis Show, Brenda Starr, Home Show, Kid with the 200 IQ, Kraft Suspense Theatre, Love American Style, Man in the Santa Claus Suit, Maserati and the Brain, Movin' On, Norby, Sideshow, Terraces, and Young Dr. Kildare. Also in this series are unproduced or unaired scripts by Kirgo including A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court adapted for TV and A Night with Mae West, a variety special produced by Robert Wise and starring West. Series II contains personal and professional papers from throughout Kirgo's life. From his early life, this series contains school records, correspondence with old friends during the war and clippings and correspondence related to his appearances on the Jack Paar Show. Notable correspondents include Jay Raeben and poet Jose Garcia Villa. Professional papers relate to Kirgo's writing projects and include legal documents such as contracts, deal memos, notices of writing credits and arbitration rulings for projects Kirgo worked on. Of note, there are nine promotional magazines published by NBC called "Home in Review," created for the Home Show. These contain recipes and other domestic matters related to each episode. A subseries of records pertain to the Writers Guild of America: Clippings and correspondence from the 1988 strike as well as correspondence and speeches Kirgo gave during this time; election candidate statements; paper copies of electronic bulletin board messages from the
WGA's private system, implemented when Kirgo was President; Kirgo's remarks in tribute to former Executive Director Brian Walton; WGA Awards show scripts to which Kirgo contributed; Kirgo's awards plaques and commemorative pins from WGA. Lastly, this subseries contains documents related to Kirgo's work on the WGA Blacklist Credits Committee, which was tasked with investigating and restoring the credits of blacklisted writers. Correspondence and committee memos pertain to The Robe (Albert Maltz), Bernard Gordon, Ivanhoe (Marguerite Roberts), Odds Against Tomorrow (Abraham Polonsky), Defiant Ones and Inherit the Wind (Nedrick Young), Cry the Beloved Country (John Howard Lawson) and others.