

---

## **Guide to the Dan Dickey Collection MS 308**

Finding aid prepared by Samantha Mills

San Diego History Center Document Collection

1649 El Prado, Suite 3

San Diego, CA, 92101

619-232-6203

August 22, 2016

---

**Title:** Dan Dickey Collection

**Identifier/Call Number:** MS 308

**Contributing Institution:** San Diego History Center Document Collection

**Language of Material:** English

**Physical Description:** 5.0 Linear feet(10 boxes)

**Date (bulk):** Bulk, 1920-1962

**Date (inclusive):** 1865-1990

**Abstract:** This collection contains the personal papers and family papers of Dan Dickey, a San Diego painter, sculptor, and muralist partly known for his work under the WPA Federal Art Project.

**creator:** Dickey, Daniel

### **Biographical / Historical Notes**

Dan Dickey was born in New York on March 17, 1910 to parents Roy Dickey (1878-1953) and Ellen Rose Dickey (d. 1952). The family moved to Chicago when Dickey was very young, and his parents divorced in 1914. Dan was raised in Chicago by his father (who was a commercial artist working in advertising) and stepmother, Alice Manning Dickey, who married Roy Dickey in 1916. He majored in English at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, graduating in 1932. In the years following his graduation, he studied art in New York at the National Academy of Design and the Art Students' League and traveled in Europe with his family.

In 1935, during the California-Pacific International Exposition, Dickey and two college friends, Malcolm McDowell ("Mac") and Paul Swartz traveled to San Diego, where Dickey would spend the rest of his life. He painted portraits at the Exposition, where he met artist Foster Jewell and his wife Melisse, also an artist and a trained nurse (b. 1896). In 1937, Melisse divorced her husband, and she and Dickey became lifelong partners. Their relationship went through a period of turmoil when, in 1950, Dickey married former student and fellow local artist Ethel Greene, but they divorced in 1952, and Dickey and Jewell formally married in 1955.

From 1937-1939, Dickey worked for the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project. In 1944, he joined San Diego muralist Belle Baranceanu in painting six murals for a World War II bond drive. During 1944-1945 he wrote a column called "The Visual Arts" for the San Diego Journal. He was a member of the San Diego Art Guild and the La Jolla Art Center, and his paintings and sculptures appeared in exhibitions at the Fine Arts Gallery of San Diego, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the California State Fair. His first solo exhibition was held at the Fine Arts Gallery of San Diego in 1948.

Dickey died in San Diego on November 2, 1961.

### **Scope and Content**

The collection contains material related to Dickey's family, his elementary and secondary education and class notes, and other material from his time at Carleton College. Dickey's art career is documented by clippings, writings, correspondence, and exhibition catalogs. Of particular significance is the voluminous correspondence that survives between Dickey and his parents, spanning from the 1920s to the 1950s. A scrapbook (compiled by Roy Dickey) documents family activities during the first decades of the 1900s. Many of the photographs feature Dan Dickey as a child.

Correspondence and family papers include those of his wife, Melisse Jewell Dickey; his father, Roy Dickey; his mother, Ellen Rose Dickey; his step-mother, Alice Manning; and his maternal grandmother, Rose Higgins.

### **Arrangement**

This collection is arranged in two series:

Series I: Dan Dickey Papers;

Series II: Dickey Family Papers.

### **Preferred Citation**

Dan Dickey Collection, MS 308, San Diego History Center Document Archives, San Diego, CA.

### **Conditions Governing Access**

This collection is open for research.

### **Conditions Governing Use**

The San Diego History Center (SDHC) holds the copyright to any unpublished materials. SDHC Library regulations do apply.

### **Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements**

Scrapbooks are extremely fragile. Many of the letters are very soiled and some are brittle.

### **Comments**

---

All original artwork has been removed to the Curatorial department. Most of original photographs have been removed to the Photographs department.

**Immediate Source of Acquisition**

The collection was donated by Ettilie Wallace, a San Diego journalist and close friend of the Dickey's. Wallace assumed ownership of the collection after Melisse Dickey's death in 1963.

**Processing Information**

Collection processed by Amy Fry in September 2008.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Dickey, Alice Manning

Dickey, Ellen Rose Higgins

Dickey, Roy

Dickey, Velma Melisse Holben Jewell

Greene, Ethel J.

Ilan-Lael Foundation.

Ruocco, Lloyd, 1907-1981

Wallace, Ettilie

Art, American--California--San Diego--20th century

Artists

Artists--California--San Diego

---

Series I: **Dan Dickey Papers**

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Box-folder 1:1 | <b>Biographical information, 1956-1962</b><br><b>Includes</b><br>Eulogy; Who's Who in California; Dickey's European summer trip itinerary (1931). |
| Box-folder 1:2 | <b>Art Career: Art, 1938-1978</b><br><b>Includes</b><br>Correspondence, awards, price lists.  |
| Box-folder 1:3 | <b>Art Career: California-Pacific International Exposition, 1936</b><br><b>Includes</b><br>ID cards and participation medal.                      |
| Box-folder 1:4 | <b>Art Career: Exhibition catalogs, 1936-1942</b>   |
| Box-folder 1:5 | <b>Art Career: Exhibition catalogs, 1944-1953</b>   |
| Box-folder 1:6 | <b>Art Career: Exhibition catalogs, 1960-1964</b>   |
| Box-folder 1:7 | <b>Art Career: "The Visual Arts," 1944-1945</b><br><b>Includes</b><br>Drafts, clippings, and copies of a newspaper column written by Dan Dickey.  |
| Box-folder 1:8 | <b>Art Career: Newspaper articles, 1935-1978</b>  |
| Box-folder 1:9 | <b>Art Career: San Diego Magazine articles, 1950-1957</b><br><b>Includes</b><br>Book of San Diego interview with Dickey and four other artists.   |
| Box-folder 2:1 | <b>Art Career: Point Magazine articles, 1951-1954</b>   |

---

Box-folder 2:2	<p><b>Art Career: Miscellaneous publications, 1941-1963</b></p> <p><b>Includes</b></p> <p>Spanish Village Art Quarterly (spring 1941); Voice of the Carleton Alumni (May 1962); Omni Art (Feb. 1962, Jan. 1963).</p>
Box-folder 2:3	<p><b>Art Career: Allied Artists' Council, 1947-1948</b></p> <p><b>Includes</b></p> <p>Letter by Dickey to San Diego Fine Arts Society.</p>
Box-folder 2:4	<p><b>Art Career: Miscellanea, 1936-1973</b></p> <p><b>Includes</b></p> <p>Newspaper articles; 1952 Art Guild Calendar; photo of Betty C. Dennis.</p>
Box-folder 2:5	<p><b>Education: Elementary and Secondary schools, 1921-1930</b></p> <p><b>Includes</b></p> <p>Grade reports; class notes; certificate from American Academy of Art (Chicago).</p>
Box-folder 2:6	<p><b>Education: Carleton College class notes and exams, undated</b></p> <p><b>Education: Carleton College class notes, 1932</b></p> <p><b>Education: Carleton College class notes, 1932</b></p> <p><b>Education: Carleton College compositions by Dickey, 1928-1932</b></p> <p><b>Education: Carleton College yearbook, 1929</b></p> <p><b>Education: Miscellanea, 1928-1932</b></p> <p><b>Includes</b></p> <p>Pictures of Carleton College campus; 1932 literary magazine; Carleton yearbook page; Article on Shakespeare's play "Pericles" and script of the play "The Frogs of Aristophanes."</p>
Box-folder 2:7	
Box-folder 2:8	
Box-folder 2:9	
Box-folder 2:10	
Box-folder 3:1	
Box-folder 3:2	<p><b>Correspondence: Dan Dickey to Roy and Alice Dickey, 1910-1955</b></p>
Box-folder 3:3	<p><b>Correspondence: Roy Dickey to Alice Manning, c.1913-1916</b></p> <p><b>Includes</b></p> <p>Note and sketch from Dan Dickey.</p>
Box-folder 3:4	<p><b>Correspondence: Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, undated</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1918-1929</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1930-1936</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1937-1939</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1940-1941</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1942-1946</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1947-1952</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Alice Manning and Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1920-1929 and undated</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Alice Manning and Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1930-1935</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Alice Manning and Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1936-1937</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Alice Manning Dickey and Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1938-1939</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Alice Manning Dickey and Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1940</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Alice Manning Dickey and Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1941</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Alice Manning Dickey and Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1942</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Alice Manning Dickey and Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1943-1944</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Alice Manning Dickey and Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1945-1946</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Alice Manning Dickey and Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1947-1950</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Alice Manning Dickey and Roy Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1951-1956</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence: Dan Dickey to Melisse Jewell Dickey, 1936-1948 and undated</b></p>
Box-folder 3:5	
Box-folder 3:6	
Box-folder 3:7	
Box-folder 4:1	
Box-folder 4:2	
Box-folder 4:3	
Box-folder 4:4	
Box-folder 4:5	
Box-folder 4:6	
Box-folder 5:1	
Box-folder 5:2	
Box-folder 5:3	
Box-folder 5:4	
Box-folder 5:5	
Box-folder 5:6	
Box-folder 6:1	
Box-folder 6:2	
Box-folder 6:3	

---

- Box-folder 6:4                   **Correspondence: Dan Dickey to Melisse Jewell Dickey 1956**  
  **Scope and Content**  
  Correspondence after the death of Alice Dickey.
- Box-folder 6:5                   **Correspondence: Melisse Jewell Dickey to Dan Dickey, 1940 and undated**  
Box-folder 6:6                   **Correspondence: Ellen Rose Dickey to Dan and Melisse Dickey, 1910-1952 and undated**
- Box-folder 7:1                   **Correspondence: Rose Higgins to Dan Dickey, 1917-1925 and undated**  
Box-folder 7:2                   **Correspondence: Dan Dickey to various recipients, 1919-1955**  
Box-folder 7:3                   **Correspondence: Malcolm McDowell to Dan and Melisse Dickey, 1937-1963 and undated**
- Box-folder 7:4                   **Correspondence: Ethel Greene to Dan Dickey, 1948-1949**  
Box-folder 7:5                   **Correspondence: Miscellanea 1918-1962**  
  **Includes**  
  Letters from Rawson J. Pickard and Lorse Feitelson.
- Box-folder 7:6                   **Miscellaneous personal documents, 1923-1938 and undated**  
  **Includes**  
  Clippings about Paul Dickey.
- Box-folder 7:7                   **Personal notes and writings, c.1940-1962?**  
Series II: **Dickey Family Papers**
- Box-folder 7:8                   **Roy Dickey: Personal Papers 1909-1953**  
  **Includes**  
  Correspondence; retirement tribute; postcards from 1933-1934 Chicago World's Fair; writings and sketches; death certificate.
- Box-folder 7:9                   **Roy Dickey: Correspondence c.1916-1930?**  
  **Includes**  
  Family correspondence; Roy Dickey to Alice Manning Dickey.
- Box-folder 7:10                  **Alice Manning Dickey, 1864-1953**  
  **Includes**  
  Personal and professional correspondence, signed letters from Carl Sandburg and Edna Ferber; copy of letter from Eleanor Roosevelt; family papers; wedding invitation.
- Box-folder 7:11                  **Ellen Rose Higgins Dickey, c.1909-1941**  
  **Includes**  
  Higgins family papers and correspondence; resume; letter from Roy Dickey before their marriage.
- Box-folder 7:12                  **Melisse Jewell Dickey: Personal Papers, 1914-1937**  
  **Scope and Content**  
  Diplomas; Balboa Mounted Troop items; clippings; photo scrapbook pages; divorce papers; miscellaneous papers concerning Foster Jewell (Melisse Dickey's first husband).
- Box-folder 7:13                  **Melisse Jewell Dickey: Correspondence, 1913-1955**  
  **Includes**  
  Letters from Foster Jewell; from Roy and Alice Dickey; to Reginald Poland.
- Box-folder 8:1                   **Melisse Jewell Dickey: Correspondence 1961-1962**  
  **Includes**  
  Correspondence following Dan Dickey's death.
-

- Box-folder 8:2           **Melisse Jewell Dickey: Correspondence 1962-1963**  
                                  **Includes**  
                                  Correspondence during her final illness, from Baranceanu, Cummings, Dennis, Fair, Foster, McGaughey, McGee, Messenger, Porter.
- Box-folder 8:3           **Miscellanea, 1864-1960**  
                                  **Includes**  
                                  Correspondence and papers pertaining to Roy and Alice Dickey's estate; clippings; family letters; souvenir postcards and photos.
- Box-folder 9:1           **Family Scrapbook: copy (part 1 of 2)**  
Box-folder 9:2           **Family Scrapbook: copy (part 2 of 2)**  
Box-folder 9:3           **Family Scrapbook: original (part 1 of 2)**  
Box-folder 9:4           **Family Scrapbook: original (part 2 of 2)**  
Box-folder 10:1          **Family Scrapbook: loose photographs from pages 1 - 49**  
Box-folder 10:2          **Family Scrapbook: loose photographs from pages 50 - 89**  
Box-folder 10:3          **Family Scrapbook: loose photographs from pages 90 - 119**  
Box-folder 10:4          **Family Scrapbook: loose photographs from pages 120 - 171**  
Box-folder 10:5          **Family Scrapbook: loose photographs, original locations unknown**  
Box-folder 10:6          **Family Scrapbook: loose photographs, original locations unknown**  
Box-folder 10:7          **Dan Dickey loose leaf binder from Carleton College**