Guide to the White Deer Memorial Collection MS 32

San Diego History Center Document Collection
1649 El Prado, Suite 3
San Diego, CA, 92101
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January 10, 2017
**Title:** White Deer Memorial Collection

**Identifier/Call Number:** MS 32

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

**Language of Material:** English

**Physical Description:** 0.25 Linear feet (1 box)

**Date (inclusive):** 1975-1979

**Abstract:** This is a collection of material retained by artist Margaret Price regarding the death of the beloved white deer of Mission Hills in 1975, and records of the memorial established after its death.

**creator:** Price, Margaret

**Biographical / Historical Notes**

Margaret Rose Taylor Price (1911-1992) was a local San Diego artist. Married to Herbert Price, she was the founding president of the “Allied Craftsmen” art movement, and was involved in converting Spanish Village in Balboa Park to an artists’ enclave after it was released by the Navy at the close of WWII. In the late 1970s, she became a part of the San Diego Museum of Art’s project to conduct a series of oral histories with prominent San Diego artists and architects. She taught ceramics at San Diego State University and the San Diego Museum of Art.

“Lucy” the white fallow doe was born in the San Diego Zoo. The zoo was overpopulated with deer at the time, so she was sold along with a buck to an individual in Mission Hills. The deer soon escaped their confines. The buck was never seen again, but Lucy became a local celebrity for the next 10 years. On Dec. 13, 1975, animal control received many calls about Lucy trying to cross busy Taylor Street. She was shot with a tranquilizer dart by animal regulation officer Paul Coplin, and later died due to an adverse reaction. After Lucy’s death, the public was outraged and an investigation was put into effect on the officer who fired the deadly shot. Citizens raised over $800 for a memorial for the doe. A year later a monument was dedicated to Lucy at Inspiration Point in Presidio Park. Designed by Charles Faust, the monument is three native rocks near a shallow drinking pool.

**Scope and Content**

This is a collection of material retained by artist Margaret Price regarding the death of the beloved white deer of Mission Hills in 1975, and records of the memorial established after its death. Materials include reports, correspondence, and petitions. They document the activities of the officers involved in the shooting of the doe and a timeline of its death, letters from community members expressing their anguish, and local efforts to establish the memorial.

**Arrangement**

This collection is arranged by material type and subject.

**Related Archival Materials**

SB 28 Margaret Price White Deer Scrapbook

**Preferred Citation**

White Deer Memorial Collection, MS 32, 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.

**Processing Information**

Collection processed by Samantha Mills on January 10, 2017.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Bates, Jim

Coplin, Paul

DiGrazia, Art

Miller, Judy

Mission Hills (San Diego, Calif.)

Presidio Park

White Deer Memorial
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<th>Box-folder 1:1</th>
<th>Official Reports and Correspondence, 1975 December 15 - 1975 December 29</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Necropsy, Officer Coplin’s statement, and letters regarding reports</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>between Supervisor Jim Bates, the Chief Administrative Officer, and</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the Director of Animal Control.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1:2</td>
<td>Correspondence: Condolences and Memorial Donations, 1975-1976</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1:3</td>
<td>Correspondence: Condolences and Memorial Donations, 1975-1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1:4</td>
<td>Correspondence: White Deer Memorial, 1976</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1:5</td>
<td>Envelopes and Contact Cards: Memorial Planning and Donations, 1975-1976</td>
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<td>Notebook: Memorial Planning , 1976</td>
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<td>Box-folder 1:8</td>
<td>Petitions for resignation of Paul Coplin (copies), 1975</td>
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<td>Documents re: Coplin vs. Copley Press lawsuit, 1979</td>
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