Guide to the Geraldine McGrady Jones Collection

SJSSU Library Special Collections & Archives
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library
San José State University
One Washington Square
San José, CA 95192-0028
Phone: (408) 808-2062
Fax: (408) 808-2063
Email: special.collections@sjsu.edu
URL: http://library.sjsu.edu/sjsu-special-collections/sjsu-special-collections-and-archives
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Collection number: MSS-2007-11-18

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Processed by:
R. Schuyler Selden
Date Completed:
2011
Encoded by:
R. Schuyler Selden
reviewed by:
Danelle Moon

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Geraldine McGrady Jones Collection
Dates: 1870-1947
Bulk Dates: 1900-1930
Collection number: MSS-2007-11-18
Creator: San Jose State University
Collection Size: 1 box,.21 linear feet
Repository: San José State University. Library.
San José, California 95192-0028

Abstract: The Geraldine McGrady Jones Collection is a small 20th century family collection that documents ordinary family life in Los Gatos, California. This collection consists of typed and handwritten creative writing works by Geraldine McGrady Jones, family photographs, a collection of digitized photographs and an informal oral history interview with the two surviving daughters, Geraldine (Gerri) Peters and Betty Emrett.

Physical location: Vault 1, Range 21A
Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English
Access
The collection is open for research.

Publication Rights
Personal History
Geraldine McGrady Jones (1892-1952) was born in San Francisco and five years later moved with her family to Los Gatos. She attended the San Jose Normal School where she graduated in 1914, after which she worked as a school teacher at the Wright's Station School in the Santa Cruz Mountains. It was there that she met her husband William 'Billy' Jones who worked as an engineer for the Union Pacific railroad. The couple lived in converted boxcars for the first several years of their marriage and eventually settled in Los Gatos where they raised their four children Betty, Geraldine, Robert and Neal. Geraldine Jones recorded vignettes of her family life in the form of short stories and poems, several of these poems honor her sons' sacrifices and commitment in World War II; both were killed in the war. Following World War II, Geraldine Jones worked as an aid in the San Jose Hospital and the Dibble Hospital in Menlo Park.

William 'Billy' Jones became a popular local figure after installing a small gauge railroad called 'the Wildcat Railroad' in 1943, on his Los Gatos property. The railroad became a popular amusement for local children. The popularity of this small gauge railroad attracted the attention of Walt Disney who later consulted with Billy Jones during the construction of the train system in Disneyland in Anaheim California. The Billy Jones Railroad remains a popular attraction in the Vasona Regional Park.

Bibliography

Related Material
Billy Jones Wildcat Railroad and W.E. Mason Carousel Los Gatos California http://www.los-gatos.ca.us/los_gatos/parks_and_rec/billy_jones_rr/billyjones.html

Scope and Content
The Geraldine McGrady Jones Collection is a small family 20th century collection that documents ordinary family life in Los Gatos, California. This collection consists of typed and handwritten creative writing works by Geraldine McGrady Jones, family photographs, a collection of digitized photographs and an informal oral history interview with the two surviving daughters, Geraldine (Gerri) Peters and Betty Emrett.

Arrangement
This collection is arranged into one series: Geraldine McGrady Jones Collection, 1870-1947 (bulk 1900-1930)

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.
Los Gatos -- (Calif.) -- History
Los Gatos (Calif.) -- Social life and customs -- Pictorial works
Railroads -- California -- Los Gatos -- History
Series I Geraldine McGrady Jones Collection 1870-1947 (bulk 1900-1930)

Handwritten and typed creative writings, Black and white photographic prints; digital, 1870-1947

Physical Description: 1 box

Series Scope and Content Summary

This local family collection is a good example of the ordinary experiences of a family during World War II. This series consists of hand-written and typed copies of creative writings by Geraldine McGrady Jones, representing her reflections on domestic life, children, and the loss of her two sons in World War II. Part of this collection includes digital images that were produced from the original family photographic album, which the family maintains. The album documents the history of the family from 1850 through the 1940s. As part of the original gift, daughters Geraldine (Gerri) Peters and Betty Emrett recorded a brief narrative of their personal experiences growing-up in Los Gatos. The audio file and transcripts included in this series provide an overview of their early family life.

Arrangement

This series is arranged by format.

Box 1

Handwritten and typed creative writings, Black and white photographic prints; digital, 1870-1947