Guide to the Women's Heritage Museum/International Museum of Women Records MSS.2010.02.18

Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: SJSU Special Collections & Archives
Title: Women's Heritage Museum/International Museum of Women Records
Identifier/Call Number: MSS.2010.02.18
Physical Description: 53 boxes, 4 flat file drawers (87.58 linear feet)
Date (inclusive): 1887-2005 (bulk 1970-1997)
Abstract: The Women's Heritage Museum/International Museum of Women Records document the formation of this museum, which was organized to promote women's history. The records consist of administrative documents, newspaper clippings, photographs, video tapes, and materials from exhibits.
Access
Collection is open for research, with the exception of the following materials: financial documents in Boxes 1, 2, 3, and 4.
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Preferred Citation
Women's Heritage Museum/International Museum of Women Records, MSS-2010-02-18, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.
Processing Information
Organizational History
The International Museum of Women (I.M.O.W.), originally called the Women's Heritage Museum (W.H.M.), was founded in 1985 when Jeanne McDonnell, Anne Murray, and Jane Van Dusen signed the papers of incorporation. The mission of this social change museum was to value the lives of women around the world. The museum documented women's history through exhibits and sponsored a variety of programs focused on educating the public and improving the status of women. The first public program held by the museum provided historical information on the California suffragist Sarah Wallis, and was held in a park named for her. In 1985, the museum also published the Women's Heritage Museum News, a quarterly newsletter that was eventually distributed nationally. After its inception, the museum created several exhibits documenting women's history. Since the museum lacked a permanent building, the exhibits were loaned to various museums and venues for display. California Woman Suffrage 1870-1911 opened in 1986 and was shown in the California State Capitol and the National Women's Hall of Fame in Senca Falls, New York. Progress of the Women's World featured the works of 70 artists from over 50 countries and was displayed in the visitors lobby of the United Nations in 2000. The museum also sponsored local events, including an annual book fair, a program to provide educators with resources for Women's History Month, tours of the Juana Briones House, and the reenactment of historical events. In addition, the museum organized tours to sites of interest in women's history.
At a 1997 board meeting hosted by Elizabeth Colton, the members decided to take the museum in a new direction. Along with changing the name to the International Museum of Women (I.M.O.W.), the board began plans to secure a permanent exhibit space in San Francisco. The Presidio Project was a plan to convert a building at Presidio Park into a museum space for the I.M.O.W. The board also attempted to build a museum site at Pier 26 in San Francisco. These projects ultimately failed due to lack of funding and the economic downturn. In addition, the I.M.O.W. initiated a speaker series, sponsoring lectures from authors, artists, and political figures.
In 2005, the institution decided to "focus on creating a new kind of museum that would engage and impact women around the world" through a digital environment (International Museum of Women, 2010). They supported this initiative through the creation of several online exhibits, including the 2006 exhibit Imagining Ourselves: A Global Generation of Women, which won the Anita Borg Social Impact Award. The I.M.O.W. also built strategic relationships with organizations that shared similar goals.
Scope and Content of Collection
Records in this collection consist of administrative documents, newspaper clippings, photographs, and video tapes. The collection contains information on museum exhibits, including California Woman Suffrage 1870-1911, which opened in 1986 and was shown in the California State Capitol and the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, New York. Materials include artifacts that were used in museum exhibits, such as the petticoat of Sarah Bard Field, a California suffragist and poet.

**Arrangement**


**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

- Women's rights -- United States -- History -- 20th century
- Women's rights -- California
- Women -- Suffrage -- California -- History -- Exhibitions
- Women's rights -- California -- San Francisco Bay Area
- Museums and women
- Women -- Museums

**Administrative Files Series I: 1985-2004**

**Series Scope and Content Summary**

Materials in this series include general administrative files, board minutes, finances, correspondence, tour information, fundraising records, building project records, traveling exhibit information, and consulting proposals. These records document the organizational planning and financial operations of the Women's Heritage Museum/International Museum of Women (W.H.M./I.M.O.W.). Some of these documents date from 1985, the year the museum was founded. The material on the Board of Directors includes meeting minutes, reports, and agendas. Financial information includes budgets, bank statements, tax information, and receipts; however, these financial and tax records are restricted. This series also contains correspondence, information on other institutions, and files on individuals.

The first executive director of the museum was Jeanne McDonnell, who served from 1985 to 1995. Diana Coleman took on this role from 2002 to 2003, followed by Chris Yelton from 2003 to 2008. Corrina Marshal served as the interim director in 2008 until Clare Winterton took over the executive director post in 2009.

These records describe the organization's attempt to build a permanent museum. The Presidio Project was a plan to convert a building at Presidio Park into a museum space for the W.H.M./I.M.O.W. The records documenting that project include a proposal plan and correspondence. The W.H.M./I.M.O.W. also attempted to build a museum site at Pier 26 in San Francisco. The records documenting this project consist mostly of proposals from consulting firms to assist the W.H.M./I.M.O.W. in their capital campaign. There is also a design book for Chelsea Piers. Elevation drawings for this project are located in Series VII: Artwork, Posters, and Museum Plans. These projects ultimately failed due to lack of funding and the economic downturn.

Documentation in this series includes tour arrangements for sites such as New York and Washington. D.C. Jeanne McDonnell, Executive Director of the Women's Heritage Museum from 1985 to 1995, was involved in many of the tour arrangements, which included trips to women's museums and other sites of interest. The series also documents W.H.M./I.M.O.W.'s grant writing and fundraising activities.

**Arrangement**

This series is arranged chronologically.

Series Scope and Content Summary

Materials in this series include administrative documents, exhibit records, correspondence, educational packets for teachers, women's history publications, and news clippings. These records document exhibits, events and programs created by the Women's Heritage Museum/International Museum of Women (W.H.M/I.M.O.W.) and other institutions. Exhibit information includes records about planning exhibits and other administrative documentation, as well as information on specific exhibits created by the W.H.M/I.M.O.W. Documentation includes information on the Progress of the Women's World exhibit, which showcased artwork created by 70 artists from over 50 countries. The records on exhibit research include information on Sarah Bard Field, a California suffragist and poet. Her petticoat is located in Series III: Artifacts and Exhibit Materials.

This series also documents the educational programs sponsored by the W.H.M/I.M.O.W. The organization developed curricula and provided educators with resources for Women's History Month. The records on educational projects include school packets and women's history publications. In addition, the W.H.M/I.M.O.W. sponsored an annual book fair, which often included a book sale, awards ceremony, and lectures by various speakers. The documentation about the book fair includes administrative records, correspondence, and financial information. Also included in this series are records from the Last Monday Club, which was a networking group for professional women. These records include member profiles and newsletters.

Arrangement

This series is divided into two subseries and arranged chronologically within those subseries.

Series Scope and Content Summary

Materials in this series include posters, banners, buttons, exhibit panels, phonograph records, textiles, and a typewriter that was used as an exhibit prop. Many of these artifacts were used in Women's Heritage Museum/International Museum of Women (W.H.M./I.M.O.W.) exhibits.

The collection includes framed posters that were used in exhibits, including posters featuring historical figures such as Emma Goldman, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Jane Addams, and Isador Duncan. Many of the posters focus on women's suffrage, including a poster advertising the 75th anniversary exhibit of women's suffrage in California. Additional posters can be found in Series VII: Artwork, Posters, and Museum Plans.

Various clippings in this series have been covered in polyester sheets for display, including sections of The Women's Journal from 1887 and 1911. The collection has several banners, including scrolls from a United Nations event in 2000-2001 and a banner for the California Equal Suffrage Association. This group of banners also contains brainstorming notes and a wall scroll from the Women of the World exhibit, which appears to contain participant input.

The phonograph records in this series are recordings of women singers which were distributed by Rosetta Records as part of the Women's Heritage Series. The record covers contain descriptive information about the performers and music.

The collection contains several textiles, the most notable of which is the petticoat of California suffragist and poet Sarah Bard Field. There is also a prop typewriter that was used as an exhibit piece.

Arrangement

The series is arranged alphabetically by format.

Box 24-26

Banners and Scrolls 2000-2003, undated

Box 24 is located on the maps cabinet in Vault I

Box 27

Buttons circa 1990-1999

Box 28

Exhibit Panels and Guest Book 1988-1989

Box 29

Records 1981-1986

Posters (Framed) 1986-1988, undated

Wall of Vault I

Flat_File 29,
drawer 16-18

Box 30


Box 31

Textiles undated

Typewriter (Prop) undated


Series Scope and Content Summary

This series contains employment information focused on women's issues. The series is divided into six sections. The Government section includes job applications and information on government employers. The County section contains employment data from Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. Documents from the Legal section include pamphlets, articles, and handbooks with information on labor laws and other legislation. The Women in Careers section contains examples of women in different careers and statistics concerning women in various professions. The Re-Entry section contains information on women re-entering the job market or pursuing education after time away from those fields. Materials include a survey of re-entry women in California and a transcript of the hearing of the Joint Committee on Legal Equality. The Status section contains documents from the Santa Clara Commission on the Status of Women, as well as other reports on women in the workforce. The series also includes the Civil Rights Update newsletter published by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

Arrangement

The series is arranged chronologically.

Publications and Clippings Series V: 1954-2005

Series Scope and Content Summary

Materials in this series include magazines, newspapers, newsletters, articles, photographs, and slides. Many of these documents were published by women's groups or focus on issues and events related to women. The news clippings by subject are arranged alphabetically based on original subject headings. Topics include women's liberation, birth control/rate/defects, child care, and working women. The publicity clippings and newsletters were articles written about the Women's Heritage Museum/International Museum of Women (W.H.M./I.M.O.W.) that often highlighted their exhibits or events.

This series contains the Women's Heritage Museum News, a newsletter that the Women's Heritage Museum published four times per year. In addition to providing articles about female historical figures, these newsletters document museum developments, including exhibits and events. This box also contains photographs and slides.

Documentation in this series includes Holly Millar's research, which consists mainly of newspapers, newsletters, pamphlets, published materials, and documents detailing women's issues and legislation.

Arrangement

This series is arranged chronologically.

Box 32-33

Box 34-36

News Clippings by Subject 1954-1991

Box 37

News Clippings (Women-General) 1969-1992

Box 38

News Clippings and Notes 1970-1979

Box 39

Magazines and Pamphlets 1970-1989

Box 40-42

Holly Millar's Research 1976-1992

Box 43

Project on the Status and Education of Women, and Newspapers and Newspapers (includes slides) 1977-1982

Box 44

Publications 1978-2005

Box 45

Women's Heritage Museum Newsletters (includes photos and slides) 1985-1992

Box 46

Publicity for I.M.O.W. 1985-1993

Box 47


Series Scope and Content Summary

Materials in this series include VHS and master videotapes, photographs, negatives, and slides. Many of the videos were produced by Open Shutter Productions. Some videos focus on the museum, while others profile famous women. Titles include California Women's Suffrage, Women and the American Railroad, Margaret Jenkins, Red Emma Goldman, and the Julia Morgan Interview. While most of the tapes are VHS, some are master or broadcast versions.


The photographs and slides document Women's Heritage Museum/International Museum of Women (W.H.M./I.M.O.W.) events and exhibits. There are photographs of the W.H.M. Book Fair and the I.M.O.W. at the Feminist Expo.

Arrangement

This series is arranged alphabetically by format, and chronologically within formats.

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Box 48
Box 49-51
Box 53

Photographs, Negatives, and Slides 1995-2003, undated
Videotapes 1987-2004
Scrapbooks 1989-1996

Physical Description: 9 Folders


Series Scope and Content Summary
Materials in this series include posters, elevation drawings, architectural drawings, artistic museum drawings, and exhibit mock-ups. The series contains architectural and artistic drawings from the project to build a museum at Pier 26 in San Francisco. The architectural drawings, which include elevation drawings, were produced by the architectural team of Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects, who were working in association with Ai+Architecture. Other drawings in this series show an artistic vision of the museum building and interior.

This series contains posters for Women's Heritage Museum/International Museum of Women (W.H.M./I.M.O.W.) exhibits, including the California Woman Suffrage 1870-1911, Women of the World, and Celebrating Women exhibits. Some of these artifacts are printed on posterboard and appear to have been used for exhibit displays. One poster from the California Woman Suffrage 1870-1911 exhibit includes text which notes that it was displayed at the main lobby of the War Memorial Building in 1995. The collection also includes an undated war poster published by the National Woman Suffrage Publishing Company.

Arrangement
This series is arranged in its original order.

Flat_File 29, drawer 15
Flat_File 29, drawer 16
Flat_File 29, drawer 17

Posters and Pier 26 Drawings 1983-2003, undated
Exhibit Posters undated