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Sanoian Special Collections Library
Henry Madden Library
Fresno, California

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Descriptive Summary
Title: The Academy Records,
Date (inclusive): 1935-1991
Creator: Academy (Fresno, Calif.)
Extent: 2.25 linear feet
Repository: Henry Madden Library (California State University, Fresno).
Sanoian Special Collections Library.
Fresno, California
Language: English.

Acquisition
The records were donated by The Academy in 1991.

Access Restrictions
The collection is open for research.

Publication Rights
Copyright has not been transferred to California State University, Fresno.

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], The Academy Records, Sanoian Special Collections Library, California State University, Fresno.

History
On October 17, 1935, The Academy met at the Hotel Californian in Fresno, California, for the first time. Businessman Thomas Risley was the founder of The Academy. He and university president Frank Thomas selected fourteen men who were the first members. The name "The Academy" was suggested by Reverend James Dowling, a charter member. The Academy's purpose was "to discuss intelligently the problems of the time" (Box 1, History, constitution and by-laws, folder 1).

There have been prominent Fresnans among the Academy's members. Most were associated with Fresno State College (now California State University, Fresno). There were several presidents: Arnold Joyal, Frederic Ness, Frank Thomas, and Norman Baxter. There were also several distinguished professors: William Beatty, Jr., Mitchell Briggs, Jose Canales, Karl
Falk, Emory Ratcliffe, Edward Tenney, Jose Elgorriaga, and Clair Nelsen, to name a few. Other members were well known in the city of Fresno, for example, Reverend James Dowling, Rabbi David Greenberg, businessman and benefactor Leon Peters, justice Philip Conley, financier Thomas Risley and journalist Roger Tatarian.

The organization meets once a month from October to May, a total of eight times per year. Each meeting begins with a social hour where members have dinner and converse. After dinner the meeting is opened. One of the members presents a report on an area of personal interest. Comments are then made and discussion follows. The Academy continues to meet to this day.

**Scope and Content**

The Academy records date from 1935 to 1991 and measure 3.75 linear feet. The records are arranged in two series: History, constitution and by-laws, and Membership records and topical papers. The bulk of the collection consists of membership records and the topical papers presented by members over the years. The records document the issues and subjects which concerned these prominent Fresno citizens over the decades.

The **History, constitution and by-laws** series (1935-1976) includes a summary of general information: officers, speakers and paper titles, membership rosters and meeting locations, along with attendance records and financial information (checking account and bank statements). Also included is a history of the first thirty-four years, the following ten years, and various revisions of The Academy’s constitution and by-laws.

The **Membership records and topical papers** series (1935-1991) contains meeting announcements, minutes from Academy meetings, rosters, attendance sheets and correspondence (e.g., resignations, membership offers, condolences to and from members of The Academy). It also contains all topical papers kept from the oral presentations (one per meeting). Some folders contain only minutes, others only topical papers, and some contain minutes, topical papers and correspondence. Originally housed in binders, this series is arranged chronologically in the exact order in which The Academy’s secretary-treasurer kept them.

*Title: Arnold Joyal papers*
*Title: Frederic Ness papers*
*Title: Roger Tatarian papers*
*Title: Thomas Risley papers*

**History, constitution and by-laws, 1935-1976 (2 folders)**

**Box Box 1**  
General  
Membership records and topical papers

**Box Box 1**  
Minutes, 1935-1950  
**Box Box 2**  
Minutes and correspondence, 1950-1968 (2 folders)  
Minutes, correspondence and topical papers  
1950-1953  
1956-1958  
1958/59  
1959/60-1960/61  
1961/62-1963/64  
Topical papers  
1964/65  
1965/66  
**Box Box 3**  
1966/67  
1967/68  
Minutes, correspondence and topical papers  
1968/69  
1969/70  
1970/71  
1971/72  
1972/73  
**Box Box 4**  
1973/74  
1974/75  
1975/76-1976/77
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership records and topical papers</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Box Box 5</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1981/82-1982/83</td>
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<td>1983/84-1985/86</td>
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<td>1988/89</td>
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Guide to the The Academy