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## **Helen L. Markell and Esther V. Martin *Sacramento Bee* and KFBeeK Players collection**

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## Helen L. Markell and Esther V. Martin *Sacramento Bee* and KFBeeK Players collection

### Collection number: MS0095

Center for Sacramento History  
Sacramento, CA

Processed by:

Alex Guilbert

Date Completed:

2012

Encoded by:

Kim Hayden

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### Descriptive Summary

**Dates:** 1944-1998

**Bulk Dates:** 1950-1990

**Collection number:** MS0095

**Creator:** Markell, Helen L. (1914-2005)

**Creator:** Martin, Esther Virone (1918-2012)

**Collection Size:** 0.5 linear feet(1 box)

**Repository:** Center for Sacramento History  
Sacramento, California 95811-0229

**Abstract:** The collection documents Helen L. Markell and Esther Virone Martin's work for the *Sacramento Bee* and involvement with the KFBeeK Players. Material includes Markell's published columns and reader responses from the 1970s, and draft columns from the 1990s; items related to Eleanor McClatchy; Martin's photographs and ephemera; KFBeeK Players productions photographs and ephemera; history booklets documenting the Sacramento Civic Theater; and material pertaining to the *Sacramento Bee's* employee library, Beeline Book Alley. Items date from 1944 to 1998, with the bulk from 1950 to 1990.

**Languages:** Languages represented in the collection: English

### Access

Collection is open for research use.

### Publication Rights

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### Preferred Citation

[Identification of item and/or item number], [box and folder number], Helen L. Markell and Esther V. Martin *Sacramento Bee* and KFBeeK Players collection, MS0095, Center for Sacramento History.

### Acquisition Information

Donated by Joanne Virone, niece of Esther Virone Martin (accession number 2012/023)

### Processing Information

Processing and finding aid by Alex Guilbert, 2012. Finding aid edited by Kim Hayden, 2021.

### Biography / Administrative History

Helen L. "Marki" Markell was born in Portland, Oregon on March 15, 1914. Markell worked with Eleanor McClatchy at KFBK radio and the *Sacramento Bee*. She participated in the KFBeeK Players and directed many of their shows. She also operated the *Sacramento Bee's* Beeline Book Alley, a library and reference center for the staff of the newspaper. She wrote numerous columns for the *Sacramento Bee* from the 1970s into the 1990s. She passed away in Sacramento on July 3, 2005.

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Esther Virone Martin was born in Sacramento on July 7, 1918. She worked as private secretary to Eleanor McClatchy at the *Sacramento Bee* from early 1940s into the 1960s. She participated in the KFBeeK Players. She was married to Emil Martin until his death in 1991. She was very close friends with Markell and became executor of her estate. She acquired the material in this collection upon Markell's death. Martin passed away on January 23, 2012.

### **Scope and Content of Collection**

The collection documents Helen L. Markell and Esther Virone Martin's work for the *Sacramento Bee* and involvement with the KFBeeK Players. Material includes Markell's published columns and reader responses from the 1970s, and draft columns from the 1990s; items related to Eleanor McClatchy; photographs and ephemera from KFBeeK Players productions; history booklets documenting the Sacramento Civic Theater; *Sacramento Bee* employee newsletters; photographs and ephemera; and material pertaining to the *Sacramento Bee*'s employee library, Beeline Book Alley. Items date from 1944 to 1998, with the bulk from 1950 to 1990.

### **Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Sacramento Bee (Newspaper)

KFBK

Sacramento (Calif.)--Theater

McClatchy, Eleanor, 1895-1980

Sacramento (Calif.)--Journalism

Sacramento (Calif.)--Publishing

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Box 1, Folder 1	<b>Markell personal papers 1957-1998</b>
Mapcase 3:2, Folder 1	<b>Markell retirement card from <i>Sacramento Bee</i> staff undated</b>
Box 1, Folder 2	<b>Markell columns, published and responses 1973-1979</b> <b>General</b> Columns include "Why Not Impeachment" (1973); "Nixon's TV Memoirs: Capitalizing On Infamy" (1975); "Worry, Worry, Worry. Wanted: A Reliable Guru" (1975); "50 Years of 'Talkies': Not Always The Sound Of Music" (1977); "How To Spend The Sunset Years: How Does Hang Gliding Strike You?" (1979); "Anita And The Gays: Bigotry Or Christianity?"; "Phyllis Schlafly And The ERA: 'She Made A Believer Of Me'"; "To Each Her Own: Musings About Ms."
Box 1, Folder 3	<b>Markell columns, drafts 1992</b> <b>General</b> Columns include: "Great Decisions. Politics as Usual." (1992); "Who Is Calling Whom - What? RE: 'Hatchet Job on Reagan'"; "Didionitis"; "Is There Any Wonder... Why There Are Hesitations and Delays Over the Bush Clinton Debates?"; "Who's Fooling Whom?"; "A Word from Helen L. Markell"; "Draft Dodgers... Truth Dodgers"; "We Must Do This More Often; or, Tell Me All About Yourself, Dear"; "News a la Carte"; "So We Are Going to War to Maintain Peace and Build a New World Order"; "The Home Stretch. Dan Quayle - Ready or Not, Here I Come: A Review of His Performance"; "Dan Quayle - Running on Empty"
Box 1, Folder 4	<b>Markell script: "Oh Beautiful - Beautiful Friendship" undated</b>
Folder 2012/023	<b>Markell photographs undated</b> <b>General</b> Some photographs are related to a performance at a U.S. Army base
Box 1, Folder 5	<b>Eleanor McClatchy personal family history/genealogy of Feeney undated</b>

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- Box 1, Folder 6      **Eleanor McClatchy obituaries and eulogy 1980-1982**
- Box 1, Folder 7      **Eleanor McClatchy speech presented to UNIVAC undated**
- Box 1, Folder 8      **Eleanor McClatchy - Sacramento History Center 1985**
- Folder 2012/023      **Eleanor McClatchy Photographs undated**  
                                 **General**  
                                 Photographs are related to a performance at a U.S. Army base and note that Eleanor McClatchy was part of the makeup crew.
- Folder 2012/023      **KFBeeK Players - "Family Album" photographs undated**  
                                 **General**  
                                 Photos show cast and set at Southside Park.
- Folder 2012/023      **KFBeeK Players - "Lost in the Stars" 1967-1968**
- Folder 2012/023      **KFBeeK Players - "My Sister Eileen" photographs 1945**  
                                 **General**  
                                 Photos show cast and crew members, including Albert J. "Al" Bastian, Evert S. "Pete" Peterson, Ann Smith, and Ruth Ward; an awards night; and other images related to the production.
- Box 1, Folder 9      **KFBeeK Players - "My Sister Eileen" ephemera 1945**  
                                 **General**  
                                 Includes a playbill and *Sacramento Bee*/KFBK congratulations.
- Folder 2012/023      **KFBeeK Players - "Night Must Fall" photographs undated**
- Folder 2012/023      **KFBeeK Players - "On Borrowed Time" photographs 1948**  
                                 **General**  
                                 Photos show cast, crew, and production. Cast members shown include Frank McPeak and Ann Smith.
- Box 1, Folder 10      **KFBeeK Players - "On Borrowed Time" ephemera 1948**  
                                 **General**  
                                 Includes a playbill and a letter from the Oakland Veterans Administration Hospital to the KFBeeK Players.
- Folder 2012/023      **KFBeeK Players - "Prime Play" photographs undated**
- Folder 2012/023      **KFBeeK Players - "Suds in Your Eyes" photographs ca. 1947**  
                                 **General**  
                                 Photos show cast, crew, and production. Cast members shown include Betty Maloney and Claire Peterson.
- Box 1, Folder 11      **KFBeeK Players - "Suds in Your Eyes" ephemera ca. 1947**  
                                 **General**  
                                 Includes correspondence between Markell and the Dramatists Play Service.
- Folder 2012/023      **KFBeeK Players - "You Can't Take It with You" photographs 1944**  
                                 **General**  
                                 Photos show cast, crew, and production. Cast members shown include Clara Guilberce, Myron "Max" Depew, Ruth Ward, Leta, Bob, and Phyllis.
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- Box 1, Folder 12      **KFBeeK Players - "You Can't Take It with You" ephemera 1944**  
                            **General**  
                            Includes a playbill, clipping, and handwritten notes to cast by Markell.
- Folder 2012/023      **KFBeeK Players - photographs from unidentified productions undated**  
                            **General**  
                            Photos show unidentified productions. People identified in photos include Markell, Frances F., L. R. Matushak, Dick Rodda, and Myron "Max" Depew.
- Box 1, Folder 13      **Sacramento Civic Theater history booklets 1966-1976**
- Folder 2012/023      **Sacramento Bee Beeline Book Alley photographs 1955-1986**  
                            **General**  
                            One photograph shows Dr. John McKibbin.
- Box 1, Folder 14      **Sacramento Bee Beeline Book Alley spiral stenographer's notebooks 1955-1986**
- Box 1, Folder 15      **Sacramento Bee Beeline Book Alley ephemera 1985-1986**
- Folder 2012/023      **Unidentified photographs 1966**
- Folder 2012/023      **Martin photographs 1943-1977**  
                            **General**  
                            Included are photos of a 1943 *Sacramento Bee* Christmas party featuring Eleanor McClatchy, Gladys Cunningham, Mila Landis, and Esther Virone Martin; President John F. Kennedy; Walter P. Jones; an NBC convention; Martin and her husband Emil; and a "25-Year Club" party.
- Box 1, Folder 16      **Martin ephemera 1945-1971**  
                            **General**  
                            Includes an invitation from Eleanor McClatchy to a luncheon to welcome new members to the 25-Year Club; a 1971 issue of Beelines, the McClatchy Newspapers employee magazine; and 1945 memos from Eleanor McClatchy to *Bee* staff announcing a gift of war bonds to the staff and staff cost-of-living wage adjustments.