Finding Aid for the Harry L. Lewis and De Sacia Mooers papers, 1896-1954

Processed by Rachel Hadlock-Piltz in 2012 with assistance from Jillian Cuellar and Megan Fraser; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé.
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Descriptive Summary
Title: Harry L. Lewis and De Sacia Mooers papers
Date (inclusive): 1896-1954
Collection number: 719
Creators: Lewis, Harry L., 1883-1963; Mooers, De Sacia, 1879-1960
Extent: 4 document boxes (2.8 linear ft.) 3 flat boxes
Abstract: Harry L. Lewis (1883-1963) was an oil speculator, periodicals publisher, sports agent, boxing promoter, horse racing organizer and manager, and real estate developer. He was married to actress De Sacia Mooers (1879-1960), who acted on stage in New York and starred in silent movies in California. The collection consists of Lewis's books, clippings, papers, photographs, publications, and scrapbooks documenting his business interests and political involvement. It also consists of De Sacia Mooers's clippings, scrapbooks, photographs, publications, and publicity materials documenting her career in New York and California. There are some personal photographs and papers but the bulk of the material is associated with the couple's professional lives.
Language: Finding aid is written in English.
Language of the Material: Materials are in English.
Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library Special Collections.
Los Angeles, California 90095-1575
Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact UCLA Library Special Collections for paging information.
Restrictions on Access
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Provenance/Source of Acquisition
Gift of Mr. Harry L. Lewis, January 1962.
Processing Note
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Biography/History
Harry L. Lewis (a.k.a. Harry Lefkowitz) (1883-1963) had a long and varied career. He was a gold prospector, oil speculator, and published a sports paper in San Francisco and Los Angeles during the early decades of the 20th century. He was a sports correspondent for the San Francisco Bulletin, and published the weekly sports magazine The Referee. During this period Lewis became a boxing promoter, organizing fights in Los Angeles and the west for Jack Dempsey and other noted prize fighters. Around 1920 he ceased to use the name Harry Lefkowitz and went by the name Harry L. Lewis. He married silent film actress De Sacia Mooers circa 1926.
During the 1920s Lewis became involved in horse racing as an organizer, promoter, race track manager, and developer. Through the 1930s he organized and managed races in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona, in California, and in Portland and Gresham, Oregon. He was general manager of the Phoenix, Arizona Jockey Club, Oregon Jockey Club, and other horse racing clubs. He also developed race tracks in those states, as well as in California. Other real estate developments he headed include the Breakers Beach Club in Santa Monica, California, of which he was the president, and a resort in Palm Springs, California.
In the 1930s Lewis met with some success in lobbying in California for bills related to boxing and horse racing. In 1934 he ran for the California State Board of Equalization as a Democratic candidate for the fourth district. Lewis had many political acquaintances; he and Mooers were friends with former Los Angeles police commissioner Charles W. Ostrom and his wife,
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as well as other prominent Los Angeles residents. Lewis also had many friends in the movie business, among them Jack Warner and Tom Mix.

De Sacia Mooers (formerly De Sacia Saville) (1879-1960) was a silent film actress during the 1920s and 1930s. She was married to Edward Demarest Mooers, the heir to the Yellow Aster gold mining company in Randsburg, California. She divorced Mooers in 1925, and later married Harry L. Lewis (circa 1926). Mooers pursued her acting career in New York in the 1910s-1920s, appearing in stage plays and silent films under her married name and also under her maiden name. Known for playing "vamp" roles, she wrote magazine articles about romance and beauty that involved the theme of "vamping" and seduction, and gave interviews in entertainment and glamour magazines such as Movie Weekly. She also acted in California alongside movie stars such as Tom Mix and Warner Baxter. Other notable acquaintances include actress Billie Burke, Al Jolson, and George Gershwin.

Scope and Content
This collection documents the lives of Harry L. Lewis and De Sacia Mooers, covering the period 1896-1954. The bulk of the collection covers the period 1920-1939. It documents De Sacia Mooers's stage and film career in New York and California, and documents Harry L. Lewis's career as a publisher and sports promoter. It also documents his other careers as an oil speculator in Texas, and real estate developer in California, Arizona, and Oregon. It also contains some personal photographs and correspondence documenting Lewis's and Mooers's friendships with prominent people in California, in the sports world, and in the early film industry, such as movie mogul Jack Warner and Hollywood star Tom Mix. Some of the significant topics represented include boxing, horse racing, the movie industry, real estate development, and politics (especially laws and government oversight related to boxing, horse racing, and real estate).

Organization and Arrangement
Arranged in the following series:

- Series 1: Harry L. Lewis papers, 1911-1954
  - Subseries 1.1: Scrapbooks and publications, 1911-1951
  - Subseries 1.2: Books and manuscripts, 1921-1954
- Series 2: De Sacia Mooers papers, 1896-1951
- Series 3: Photographs, 1920-1928

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

Subjects
Lewis, Harry L., 1883-1963 --Archives.
Mooers, De Sacia --Archives.
Sports promoters --United States --Archival resources.
Motion picture actors and actresses --United States --Archival resources.

Genres and Forms of Material
photographs.

Related Material
The recollections of Harry L. Lewis [oral history transcript] / Harry L. Lewis, interviewee. UCLA Oral History Department interview, 1964. Available at Library Special Collections, UCLA.

Series 1: Harry L. Lewis papers. 1911-1954.

Language of Material: English

Scope and Content
Lewis's papers cover the period of 1911 through 1954. Prominent subjects include horse racing, boxing, and real estate development. His prominent real estate developments include race tracks in Arizona, Oregon, and California, and the Breakers Beach Club in Santa Monica, California. Other subjects include Lewis's work as a sports and entertainment reporter, and later as editor and publisher of the sports magazine The Referee. California politics, Lewis' friendship with people in the movie industry, and his involvement in public life in Los Angeles are also represented.
Subseries 1.1: Scrapbooks and publications. 1911-1951.

Scope and Content
This subseries contains scrapbooks and publications generated by Harry L. Lewis in the course of his career. Well-represented subjects include horse racing, real estate development, and sports publications. Other subjects include Lewis' oil speculation, political career, boxing promotion, and personal correspondence.

Periodicals (1911-1934) mainly relate to sports, and cover Lewis' time as editor and publisher of The Referee-Announcer and The Los Angeles Referee. The magazines appear to be related to an earlier San Francisco periodical also called The Referee, which merged with The Announcer in 1915. There are no complete series of any of the publications.

Arrangement
Lewis' scrapbooks are arranged chronologically by subject. Periodicals are arranged chronologically by publication. The Referee is arranged as one series despite changes to its name during a merger with The Announcer. Lewis had originally arranged the magazines this way in a 4-ring binder.

Box 6

Box 4, Folder 3
Sample ads for the Breakers Club. 1925, 1926.

Scope and Content Note
One folder with sample advertisements for Lewis' promotion of the Breakers Beach Club in Santa Monica, California.

Box 1, Folder 2
Newspaper scrapbook of Breakers Beach Club advertisements. 1926.

Physical Description: This scrapbook is in poor shape. The pages are very brittle, as most of them contain newsprint clippings.

Box 4, Folder 4
Menu for Breakers Beach Club. 1926.

Box 4
Scrapbook: "Breakers Club Clippings". 1926.

Box 3
Red scrapbook: Harry L. Lewis Campaign for State Board of Equalization. 1934 July-1934 August.

Box 3

Box 3

Box 3

Box 6

Box 6

Box 7, Folder 1

Box 7, Folder 2

Box 7, Folder 3

Box 7, Folder 4

Box 7, Folder 5
"The Referee" magazine (7 issues). 1917, 1928, 1929.

Box 7, Folder 6
"The Knockout" magazine cover. 1927 July 18.

Box 7, Folder 7
"Hollywood Filmograph" magazine. 1934 December 22.

Box 1, Folder 1
"The Los Angeles Times" newspaper. 1911 August 4, 1911 August 7.

Box 1, Folder 3
"The Referee" newspaper (Sydney, Australia). 1933 December 7, 1934 January 11, 1934 February 22.

Subseries 1.2: Books and manuscript. 1921-1954.

Scope and Content
This subseries contains six books related to sports, some of which are autographed by their authors, and one undated manuscript titled "The greatest sports teams in American history."

Box 2
Adios to Ghosts! Christy Walsh. After 1937 October 6.

Box 2

Box 4, Folder 5
"The greatest teams in American sports history", manuscript. circa 1960.

Box 2
Series 1: Harry L. Lewis papers. 1911-1954.

Subseries 1.2: Books and manuscript. 1921-1954.

Box 2
- *One Thousand Sport Stories*, vol. 3, Al Spink. 1921.

Series 2: De Sacia Mooers papers. 1896-1951.

Language of Material: English

Scope and Content
De Sacia Mooers's papers comprise scrapbooks, clippings, photographs and sheet music from her stage and film career, and from her private life, during the period 1896-1951. Prominent subjects include her work on the movies *The Blond Vampire* (1922), and *Potash and Perlmutter* (1923), her writings and interviews in *Movie Weekly* magazine, and her stage career in New York, including the play *The Vampire* (1919), where she performed under the name De Sacia Saville. Her green scrapbooks include clippings, photographs, management agreements and contracts with motion-picture studios, and advertisements related to her plays, movies, and publications. They also contain some clippings, correspondence, and photographs related to her personal and social life. The majority of her photographs' subjects are professional and promotional in nature (such as head shots, glamour shots, and promotional stills from her plays and movies); some of the play and movie stills are autographed by other cast members and contain descriptive captions.

Arrangement
De Sacia Mooers's papers are arranged chronologically. The photographs have been left in their original arrangement, grouped roughly by subject (glamour shots, stage play stills, motion-picture stills).

Box 5

Box 4, Folder 2
- De Sacia Mooers clippings. 1920-1928.

Box 4, Folder 1
- De Sacia Mooers "Potash and Perlmutter" clippings. 1923-1924.

Box 7, Folder 8
- De Sacia Mooers photographs (43 photos). 1915-1937.

Box 7, Folder 10


Scope and Content
This series comprises 24 photographs dated between 1920-1928. Subjects include photographs of friends of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis, edited publication photos of sports figures, a photo negative of a boxer thought to be Jack Dempsey, some of De Sacia Mooers's publicity photos, and oversized photos of the groundbreaking and barbeque at Lewis Wonder Date Palms Resort in Palm Springs, CA, circa 1926.

Box 7, Folder 9
- Photographs. 1920-1928.