
Betty Bronson papers, 1920-1970

Finding aid prepared by Arts Special Collections Staff, pre-1999; initial EAD encoding by Julie Graham; machine-readable finding aid created Caroline Cubé.

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Title: Betty Bronson papers

Collection number: PASC 158

Contributing Institution: UCLA Library Special Collections

Language of Material: English

Physical Description: 4.0 linear ft.(8 boxes and 2 flat boxes)

Date (inclusive): 1928-2009

Abstract: Betty Bronson was an actress whose career began in Hollywood's Silent Era and spanned several decades. She is best remembered for her role as Peter Pan in the 1924 version of the film, *Peter Pan*. The collection consists of materials related to Bronson's career and includes clippings, photographs, correspondence, scrapbooks, and personal and professional ephemera.

Physical Location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

Creator: Bronson, Betty, 1907-1971

Conditions on Access

COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE AT SRLF: Open for research. Advance notice required for access. Contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

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Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements

COLLECTION CONTAINS AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS: Audiovisual materials in this collection will require assessment and possible digitization for safe access. To review these audiovisual materials, you must notify the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk in advance of your visit.

UCLA Catalog Record ID

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Betty Bronson Papers (Collection PASC 159). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

Provenance/Source of Acquisition

Gift of Larry Lauerhass, 1983 and 1985.

Biography/History

Elizabeth Ada Bronson was born November 17, 1906, in Trenton, New Jersey. She started her film career in 1922, but appeared only in supporting roles. Her career took off when she was selected by Sir James Barrie to play the title role in the first film version of his play, *Peter Pan* (1924). She was given top billing in a number of films, including *Are Parents People?* (1925), *The Cat's Pajamas* (1926), and *A Kiss for Cinderella* (1926). When the silent version of *Ben Hur* was filmed, she appeared in a cameo role. Bronson made the transition to sound motion pictures, and was featured in *The Singing Fool* (1928) and *The Medicine Man* (1930). Paramount hoped to build her up as a successor to Mary Pickford, but changing public tastes forced her into more mature roles which diminished her popularity. She retired in 1932 to start a family but returned in 1937 to appear in the Gene Autry western, *Yodelin' Kid from Pine Ridge* (1937). She made several stage appearances at the Pasadena Playhouse and Lobero Theatre in Santa Barbara. In the 1960s, she re-emerged as a character actress and appeared in a television shows such as *Dr. Kildare*, *My Three Sons*, and *Run for Your Life* and films including *Blackbeard's Ghost* (1968), and *Evel Knievel* (1971). Betty Bronson died in 1971.

Scope and Content

The collection consists of material related to the career of actress, Betty Bronson. Included are clippings, photographs, correspondence, scrapbooks, writings by Bronson, and personal and professional ephemera. Projects represented are *Are Parents People?*, *Ben Hur*, *Blackbeard's Ghost*, *Day in Court*, *Little Orchid Annie*, *Sabrina Fair*, and *Peter Pan*, among others. The correspondence contains fan letters and a small amount of business and/or personal letters, notes and cards. The writings by Bronson include material for an article on the Hearst Ranch, titled *Hearst Castle: Then and Now* and a scrapbook of *Peeping Pixie* columns written by Bronson for the *Pasadena Independent*.

Organization and Arrangement

The collection is arranged in the following series:

Biographical and Personal
Projects
Photographs
Printed Material
Correspondence
Scrapbooks
Writings

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Bronson, Betty, 1907-1971 -- Archives
Actresses--United States--Archives.

Biographical and Personal

Scope and Content

Series consists of personal and biographical items such as an address book, two diaries, identification cards, a passport, and resumes.

Organization and Arrangement

There is no specific arrangement to the series.

Box 5, Folder 55

Address book and passport. 1928 and undated.

Scope and Content

Passport in leather carrying and appears related to 1928 trip to Europe.

Box 5, Folder 61
Box 4, Folder 54,
Box 4, Folder 53
Box 5, Folder 59

Composite card (later career) and biographical information. undated. Diaries (2 items). 1947.

Identification cards and ephemera. 1941, 1969, 1970.

Scope and Content

With two matchbooks with photos, Peter Pan clipping, and engraving plate for Miss Betty Bronson.

Box 2, Folder 34,
Box 3, Folder 42
Box 5, Folder 60

Resumes. ca. 1960s.

Who's Who of American Women galley and certificate of recognition. early-1960s. Projects. ca. 1920s-ca. 1970.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements

SERIES CONTAINS AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS: Audiovisual materials in this collection will require assessment and possible digitization for safe access. To review these audiovisual materials, you must notify the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk in advance of your visit.

Organization and Arrangement

The series is arranged alphabetically by project titles.

Scope and Content

The bulk of the series is clippings and photographs documenting motion picture, television, and stage projects in which Bronson was involved. Represented are *Are People Parents?*, *Ben Hur*, *Blackbeard's Ghost*, *Day in Court*, *Little Orchid Annie*, *Sabrina Fair*, and *Peter Pan*, among others. Additionally included is a small amount of publicity ephemera. Additional project related material may be found in the Photographs and/or Printed Material series.

Box 9	Photograph scrapbook containing stills from Betty Bronson films. ca. 1924 - ca. 1930s. Language of Material: English Scope and Content Are Parents People?, Ben Hur, Everybody's Acting, The Golden Princess, A Kiss for Cinderella, Not So Long Ago, Open Range, [Paradise For Two?], Peter Pan, and unidentified.
Box 2, Folder 35	Contract: AFTRA Exclusive Agency contract Under Rule 12-B between Bernyce Cronin Agency and Betty Bronson. 1971 March 30.
Box 2, Folder 35	Contract: Theatrical Motion Pictures Artists' Manager contract between Bernyce Cronin Agency and Betty Bronson. 1971 March 30.
Box 9, Folder 3	Are Parents People? stills (2 copies). ca. 1925.
Box 1, Folder 7	Are Parents People? clippings. 1925-1926.
Box 1, Folder 2	Ben Hur clippings. 1926.
Box 5, Folder 63	Ben Hur publicity ephemera. ca. 1926. Scope and Content The Making of Ben Hur (2 copies), Egyptian Theatre special preview tickets, and USC School of Medicine premiere invitation.
Box 4, Folder 49	Betty Bronson Red Hollywood scrapbook prospectus by Betty Bronson, William K. Everson and Johnny Aitchison. undated. Scope and Content Type script pages, red folio cover and facsimile of letter from Desi Arnaz regarding the show.
Box 2, Folder 33	Black Beards Ghost call sheets. undated.
Box 6, Folder 70	Blackbeard's Ghost final shooting script. 1966 Oct 6. Scope and Content With shooting call, production requirements and revised pages.
Box 7	Blackbeard's Ghost photographs and press release. undated.
Box 11	Blackbeard's Ghost stills. undated.
Box 5, Folder 58	Books with Betty prospectus for television program (2 copies). undated.
Box 1, Folder 3	The Cat's Pajamas clippings. 1926.
Box 10, Folder 97	The Cat's Pajamas publicity ephemera. undated. Language of Material: English
Box 2, Folder 36	Companionate Marriage program (Criterion). 1928.
Box 12	Cradle Song (Montclair) playbills and reviews. ca. 1933.
Box 6, Folder 68	Day in Court script (#159). undated.
Box 6, Folder 66	Day in Court script (#248). undated.
Box 6, Folder 66	Day in Court script (#455). undated.
Box 5, Folder 58	Day in Court script (#566). undated.
Box 2, Folder 36	East River Romance playbill (John Drew Memorial Theatre) (4 copies). undated. Scope and Content With an announcement ad found on Mr. Prohack playbill.
Box 7, Folder 75	Evel Knievel three page script excerpt (part of house mother). undated.
Box 9, Folder 3	Everybody's Acting still (5 copies and 1 negative). ca. 1920s.
Box 1, Folder 9	Everybody's Acting clippings. 1926.
Box 6, Folder 73	The Gay Little Spinsters (The Handsome Burglar) story and script by Jay Ingram. undated.
Box 1, Folder 8	The Golden Princess clippings. 1926.
Box 6, Folder 69	Grindle and the Boodle revised final draft screenplay by Jay Sommers. 1963 Aug 1.
Box 2, Folder 37	Half Shot at Sunrise and Just Imagine clipped advertisements. 1930 Oct 14.

Box 2, Folder 37	Harvey playbill (Labero Theatre). 1963. Scope and Content Autographed by cast; with review, and Bronson biography .
Box 6, Folder 71	Iron Kiss (The) script by Samuel Fuller. 1963 Sep 9.
Box 2, Folder 37	Junior League Follies review from the Asheville Times. 1935 May 18.
Box 1, Folder 4	A Kiss for Cinderella clippings. 1926.
Box 1, Folder 1	Little Orchid Annie clippings. 1930s.
Box 2, Folder 37	Little Orchid Annie playbills (Geary Theatre, San Francisco and Hollywood Playhouse). 1930.
Box 1, Folder 10	The Locked Door clippings. 1929.
Box 2, Folder 37	Lovers in Quarantine playbill (Savoy Players) (3 copies). 1930.
Box 7, Folder 87	Lux Video Theatre: The Night of January 16th press release and photograph. ca. 1950s.
Box 3, Folder 45	Merv Griffin Show appearance contract. 1970 Dec 23.
Box 2, Folder 36	Misalliance playbill (Gilmor Brown Memorial Theatre) (4 copies). 1962.
Box 7	Misalliance (Pasadena Playhouse) photographs (5 items). undated.
Box 7	Murder in a Pullman script by Harry Adler. undated.
Box 7	The Naked Kiss photographs and clippings. undated.
Box 10	The Naked Kiss press book. undated.
Box 1, Folder 11	Not So Long Ago clippings. 1926.
Box 1, Folders 5-6	Paradise for Two clippings. 1926.
Bin 10, Folder 97	Peter Pan publicity in The Film Bulletin (front cover and inside back cover). 1924 Dec.
Box 2, Folder 27	Peter Pan clippings. ca. 1924.
Box 7, Folder 88	Peter Pan letter re. photographs. undated.
Box 10	Peter Pan Betty Bronson MOMA reel to reel tape. 1969 May 5. Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements Audiovisual materials in this collection will require assessment and possible digitization for safe access. To review these audiovisual materials, you must notify the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk in advance of your visit.
Box 12	Peter Pan photographs (3 items). 1920s and 1960s.
Box 9	Peter Pan stills (34 items and 1 negative). ca. 1924. Language of Material: English
Box 5, Folder 58	Peter Pan placard. undated.
Box 7, Folder 81	Peter Pan stills (3 items). undated.
Box 12	Walt Disney's Peter Pan from the Motion Pictures Peter Pan Big Golden Book (2 copies). c. 1952.
Box 6, Folder 67	Radio script material. ca. 1940s. Scope and Content Pages titled: Another Language, Coquette, Cynara, Game of the Love and Death, Gilmore War Letters, Golden boy, Heartbreak House, Mary Turner (Within the Law), The Shining Hour, Stepdaughters of War, Stife, Dot (The Noose), Teresa (The Cradle Song) .
Box 6, Folder 66	Run for Your Life: Kiss Me as You Go teleplay by Howard Browne (2 copies). 1965 July 13.
Box 3, Folder 44	Sabrina Fair clippings, reviews, and programs/playbills (Cameo Playhouse and Pasadena Hall Theatre). 1960. Scope and Content With Actors Equity contract.
Box 8, Folder 1	Sabrina Fair clippings and program (Cameo Playhouse). 1960.
Box 7	Sabrina Fair photograph and negative. undated.
Box 2, Folder 36	Sabrina Fair playbill (Cameo Playhouse). undated.

Box 10, Folder 97
Box 6, Folder 72
Box 2, Folder 36
Box 2, Folder 36
Box 2, Folder 37
Box 11

Sabrina Fair publicity and playbill (Cameo Playhouse). undated.
Shannon: Bonds of Friendship final draft script by Philip Saltzman. 1961 Sep 27.
South Shore Players playbill (John Drew Memorial Theatre). undated.
Sunday Night Varieties playbill (Lobero Theatre). undated.
Twelfth Night playbill (Pasadena Community Playhouse News) (2 copies). 1931.
Unidentified audio reel tapes (2 items). undated.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements

Restricted Access: Audiovisual materials require assessment and possible digitization for safe access. To review these audiovisual materials, you must notify the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk in advance of your visit.

Photographs. ca. 1920s and ca. 1960s.

Scope and Content

The bulk of the photographs are mostly unidentified publicity photographs related to Bronson's career. Photographers include Edward Thayer Monroe, Melbourne Spurr, Kenneth Alexander, and Field Studios among others. Additionally included is snap shot of actresses Lilian and Dorothy Gish. See also Project Series for photographs that are related to known projects.

Organization and Arrangement

There is no specific arrangement to the series.

Box 11

Betty Bronson headshots (later career) (35 items and 5 negatives, some duplicate copies). undated.

Box 9

Betty Bronson headshots (early career, 4 signed) (28 items, some duplicates). [ca. 1960s?].

Language of Material: English

Box 7

Betty Bronson publicity photographs (early career, 6 items). 1920s, ca. 1960s, ca. 1970s.

Scope and Content

With Arthur Bronson headshots by Preston Duncan (3 items).

Box 7

Betty Bronson publicity photographs (later career, 9 items). undated.

Box 12

Betty Bronson photographs (20 oversize items). ca. 1925-ca. 1930.

Scope and Content

Photographers include Edward Thayer Monroe, Melbourne Spurr, Kenneth Alexander, Field Studios and others.

Box 3, Folder 39

Betty Bronson and Dorothy and Lilian Gish snapshots (2 items). ca. 1965.

Scope and Content

With letter from Bill [Indecipherable name].

Box 7

Betty Bronson Lauerhass and Ludwig Lauerhass portraits and headshots (22 items and 3 negatives). undated.

Language of Material: English

Scope and Content

Most are by photographer by John Engstead. Three items are from a later period.

Betty Bronson portraits and headshots (oversize, 20 items). ca. 1925-ca. 1930s.

Language of Material: English

Scope and Content

Photographers include Edward Thayer Monroe, Melbourne Spurr, Kenneth Alexander, Field Studios and others.

Box 7	<p>Betty Bronson with others at unidentified events photographs (3 items). undated.</p> <p>Scope and Content</p> <p>In department store, at luncheon with L. Lauerhass, and signed photograph of Vivian Duncan.</p>
Box 7	<p>Time Life photographs of Betty Bronson at The Museum of Modern Art (6 items). 1969.</p> <p>Printed Material. ca. 1920s-ca. 1960s.</p> <p>Scope and Content</p> <p>The bulk of the bulk of series consists of clippings and magazines with articles about or mentions of Betty Bronson and her career. See also the Project Series for clippings that are related to known projects.</p> <p>Organization and Arrangement</p> <p>There is no specific arrangement to the series.</p>
Box 9, Folder 1	<p>Betty Bronson portrait cover for Town and Country by Onestus Uzzell (3 copies of tear out). 1933 Sept 15.</p> <p>Crayon caricature of Mr. and Mrs. Lauerhass. undated .</p> <p>Language of Material: English</p>
Box 1, Folders 12-21	<p>Betty Bronson related clippings. 1920s.</p> <p>Scope and Content</p> <p>Articles pertaining to Bronson and her career. With items about Ben-Hur, Everybody's Acting, Paradise, Kiss For Cinderella, The Cat's Pajamas, among other write ups.</p>
Box 2, Folders 22-26, 29-31, 33	<p>Betty Bronson related clippings. 1920s-1960s and undated.</p> <p>Scope and Content</p> <p>Mostly related to: resuming career, showing of early Bronson films (with programs and flyers), Black Beards Ghost, The Best Has Yet to Be, television, marriage announcements, family life, birth of son, and obituaries,</p>
Box 11	<p>Betty Bronson related clippings. 1920s, 1930s and 1960s.</p> <p>Language of Material: English</p>
Box 2, Folder 32 Box 10, Folder 97	<p>Clippings (may not be related to Bronson). undated.</p> <p>Film Fan Monthly with piece about Bronson written by William Everson. 1971.</p> <p>Language of Material: English</p>
Box 12	<p>Magazines with Bronson mentions. 1920s.</p> <p>Scope and Content</p> <p>Theatre Magazine and Daily Variety.</p>
Box 5, Folder 64 and 65	<p>Magazines with Bronson mentions. 1960s and 1970s.</p> <p>Scope and Content</p> <p>With Daily Variety, Film Society, Horizon, Life Movie, Hollywood Reporter, Hollywood Spectator, New Yorker, Photoplay, Rob Wagner's Script, TV Guide, and TV Week (Evening Outlook).</p>
Box 10 Box 5, Folder 62 Box 4, Folder 47	<p>Playbills and TV Guides. undated, 1960s.</p> <p>The Rogue Song world premiere program. undated.</p> <p>Sheet Music. undated.</p> <p>Scope and Content</p> <p>Peter Pan (I Love You); Hold Your Man; Easter Parade; and Someday I'll Find You.</p>

Box 11

Where are They Today? (Hollywood Reporter article about Bronson). 1969 July 29.

Language of Material: English

Correspondence.

Scope and Content

The bulk of series consists of fan letters, cards, and notes to Bronson. Cards and notes correspondents include Francis X. Bushmans, Marion Davies, James Wong Howe, Tyrone Power, Norma Shearer, Cameron Shipp, Richard Watts, and Robert Young, among others. Additionally, there is a small amount of business and/or personal letters, requests, and items from W. K. Everson.

Organization and Arrangement

There is no specific arrangement to the series.

Box 2, Folder 35

Bronson claim vs. Mary Hart. 1931.

Scope and Content

Addressed to Actors Equity Association, New York City with letter of transmittal and affidavits of Betty Bronson and William J. Cocke.

Box 4, Folder 46

Cards and notes (some addressed to Mr. and Mrs. Lauerhass). 1930s, 1950s, 1960s, 1971.

Scope and Content

Correspondents include Francis X. Bushmans, Marion Davies, James Wong Howe, Tyrone Power, Norma Shearer, Cameron Shipp, Richard Watts, and Robert Young, among others. Photograph signed to Betty from Lida.

Box 7

Everson, W.K. correspondence. 1962-1974.

Scope and Content

With notes on Betty Bronson's Hollywood Scrapbook, notes on Bronson's book, Bronson filmographies, and programs to film presentation.

Box 3, Folder 38

Fan Letters (58 items). 1930s-1970s.

Box 3, Folder 45

Letters to Bronson. 1929, ca. 1930s, ca. 1950s-early 1970.

Scope and Content

Mostly business related, with a small number of personal items and/or requests, and ephemera. Small amount of correspondence between Ludwig Lauerhass and others.

Box 11

Letters to Bronson. 1958, 1960s, early-1970s.

Scope and Content

Semi-business and personal. Small number to Ludwig Lauerhass.

Scrapbooks.

Scope and Content

The series comprises three scrapbooks documenting Bronson's career. Included are newspaper and magazine clippings and a scrapbook of *Peeping Pixie* columns written by Bronson for the *Pasadena Independent*.

Organization and Arrangement

There is no specific arrangement to the series.

Box 8, Folder 3

Peeping Pixie columns written by Bronson for the Pasadena Independent (clippings). 1948-1949.

Box 5, Folder 57

Scrapbook of clipped magazine photographs of Bronson. undated.

Box 5, Folder 56

Scrapbook of newspaper and magazine photographs. 1920s.

Scope and Content

With items for Peter Pan and others.

Writings. 1928, 1961 and undated.

Scope and Content

The Writings series includes samples of personal writings by Bronson such as exercises for a writing class, an oversize journal with a small number of entries, and material for an article on the Hearst Ranch, titled *Hearst Castle: Then and Now*. See also the Scrapbook series for writings representing Bronson's weekly column for the Pasadena Independent with the byline, *The Peeping Pixie*.

Organization and Arrangement

There is no specific arrangement to the series.

Box 8, Folder 2

[Journal writings] in oversize decorative journal. 1928.

Scope and Content

Holographic writings; not all pages contain writing.

Box 10

Box 3, Folder 39

Hearst Castle story and correspondence. undated.

Hearst Castle: Then and Now. undated.

Scope and Content

Submission for publication letters from Bronson and responses from various companies; registration of manuscript; photocopy review for *The Kiss*.

Box 3, Folder 40

Hearst Castle: Then and Now. ca. 1960s.

Scope and Content

Typed manuscript pages: carbon of complete article, working copy on yellow paper, loose pages, tour booklets of San Simeon, clipping, and facsimile of letter from James Finan of *Readers Digest*.

Box 3, Folder 41

Hearst Castle: Then and Now. undated.

Scope and Content

Returned copies of manuscript with responses from *LIFE* and *Westways* magazines.

Box 4, Folder 52

Box 4, Folder 48

Untitled holograph manuscript pages on the 1930s. undated.

Writing samples by Bronson. undated.

Scope and Content

Holograph writings on pad. Some may be related to *The Yacht and Cruise of the Nadina 11*.

Box 5, Folder 58

Box 3, Folder 43

Writing samples [by Bronson?]. undated.

Writing samples by Bronson [for writing class?]. undated.

Scope and Content

With what appears to be *The Yacht* and pages from *Cruise of the Nadina 11*,

Box 10

Writings samples by Bronson [for Famous Writers school assignments?]. undated.