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Title: Library. Great American Documents Exhibit. Exhibit publicity records.

Identifier/Call Number: University Archives Record Series 475

Contributing Institution: UCLA Library Special Collections

Language of Material: English

Physical Description: 0.4 linear ft. (1 box)

Date: 1947-1950

Abstract: Record Series 475 contains exhibit publicity records of the 1949 Great American Documents exhibit at the UCLA Library.

creator: University of California, Los Angeles. Library.

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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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Library. Great American Documents Exhibit. Exhibit publicity records (University Archives Record Series 475). UCLA Library Special Collections, University Archives.

Historical Note

The Great American Documents exhibit was arranged by University of California, Los Angeles Librarian Lawrence Clark Powell, and was based on a 1948 touring exhibit entitled "Freedom Train." The exhibit contained over 100 items of historical Americana from the private collection of Philip H. Rosenbach and A.S.W. Rosenbach.

Items were on display in a guarded and specially remodeled room of what is now the Powell Library. Some of the items on display included the Barnaldez Cedex (a 1508 chronicle of Columbus' voyages), the first letter sent from America in 1512, the Bay Psalm Book (the first book printed by American colonists), sketches made by George Washington, letters written by Washington and Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln's war letters, a blood-stained Ford's Theatre program held by Lincoln at the time of his assassination, a surgeon's account of the assassination of Lincoln, and the original CA constitution.

On the night of March 4th, 1949, the Bay Psalm Book was illegally removed from the exhibit. The book was recovered by police on March 5th. The theft was committed by Charles Glenn, a UCLA graduate student who later suggested the theft had been arranged by an unnamed secret society at UCLA, or as part of fraternity initiation ceremony. Glenn was expelled from the University, and pled guilty to charges of burglary and grand theft.

Scope and Content

Record Series 475 contains exhibit publicity records of the 1949 Great American Documents exhibit at the UCLA Library. Files include clippings, arrangement documents, publicity and event materials, and visitor information. Additionally, files include information about the theft of the Bay Psalm.

This is an inactive record series; no additional University records are expected to be added.

UCLA Catalog Record ID

UCLA Catalog Record ID: 3466956

Box 1, Folder 1 Bay Psalm book theft - newspaper accounts. 1949.

Scope and Content

Newspaper clippings regarding the theft of the rare Bay Psalm from the Great American Documents exhibit.

Box 1, Folder 2 Details of arrangement. 1947-1950.

Scope and Contents note

Contains information about the arrangement of, and equipment used in, the exhibit. Includes correspondence, exhibit label text, a map of the exhibit layout, and checklists.

Box 1, Folder 3 Guards - photograph and memos. 1949.
Box 1, Folder 4  Handlist - copies of the exhibit catalog and related correspondence. 1949.

Box 1, Folder 5  Newspaper accounts. 1949.
   Scope and Content
   Includes newspaper clippings publicizing the Great American Documents exhibit.

Box 1, Folder 6  Publicity. 1949.
   Scope and Contents note
   Contains newspaper clippings regarding the exhibit.

Box 1, Folder 7  Special Events. 1949.
   Scope and Contents note
   Contains newspaper clippings and memos about events related to the exhibit, lists of visitor milestones (i.e. 2500th, 6000th), and photographs of the exhibit, it's organizers, and notable visitors.

Box 1, Folder 8  Visitors. 1949.
   Scope and Contents note
   Contains the visitor's log, photographs of school groups visiting the exhibit, and letters from visitors.