
Guide to the Peggy Gilbert Collection

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Contributing Institution: Special Collections & Archives

Title: Peggy Gilbert Collection

Creator: Gilbert, Peggy, 1905-2007

Identifier/Call Number: SC.PG

Extent: 5.66 linear feet

Date (inclusive): 1920-2007

Abstract: Peggy Gilbert was a saxophonist and band leader. From the 1930s through 1996 she led several all-girl orchestras and bands. An advocate for women musicians, she arranged for bookings and contracts. She was an active member in Local 47 of the Musician's Union. The *Peggy Gilbert Collection* contains the personal music scores, scrapbooks, and photographs of Peggy Gilbert, with a few items from her youth. The audio materials in the collection include an interview with Peggy Gilbert and a program about her life which aired on the BBC in 2007.

Language of Material: English

Biographical Information:

Peggy Gilbert (1905-2007) was a saxophonist and band leader. From the 1930s through 1996 she led several all-girl orchestras and bands. An advocate for women musicians, she arranged for bookings and contracts and was an active member in Local 47 of the Musicians' Union.

After playing with an all-girl band, Boots and Her Buddies, in the 1930s, Gilbert formed her own band in 1933 which played in Honolulu. She changed the name of her musical groups frequently. They played in Hollywood films and in clubs such as the Coconut Grove, Garden of Allah, and in 1937, Hollywood's Second "Swing Concert" at The Palomar in Los Angeles. Her band played on radio and toured with the USO during the 1940s, and from 1949 to 1970 she worked at Local 47 as a secretary.

After retiring, Gilbert continued to serve on Local 47's board of directors and wrote a column called "Tuning in on Femme Musicians" for the union's monthly publication, *The Overture*. In 1974, at the age of 69, she formed a new band, the Dixie Belles with whom she performed at numerous events and jazz festivals, including an appearance on the *Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson in 1981 and two appearances on episodes of *The Golden Girls* in 1982 and 1988. She stopped performing in 1996 and died at the age of 102 in 2007.

Scope and Contents

The *Peggy Gilbert Collection* documents the life and career of female jazz saxophonist and bandleader Peggy Gilbert. The collection documents the bands and orchestras she led and various groups in which she played during the 1930s and 1940s, her time spent working for the Los Angeles musicians union, Local 47, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the various movies and TV shows she appeared on, accolades bestowed upon her, and the formation of her all-girl band the Dixie Belles from 1974 to 1996. The collection contains Gilbert's scrapbooks, photographs, newspaper clippings, posters, plaques, awards, Compact Discs, correspondence, and musical scores. The collection has been divided into four series: **Scrapbooks** (1920-2007), **Music and Notes** (1936-2006), **Plaques and Other Awards** (ca. 1929-2007), and **Card Files and Compact Discs** (1986-2007).

Series I, **Scrapbooks**, consists of eleven of Peggy Gilbert's personal scrapbooks which document over eight decades of Gilbert's life and career, and make up the bulk of the collection. They document some of her early bands from the 1930s and 1940s, including her participation in the all-woman group Boots and Her Buddies as well as her own bands and orchestras. It includes posters and news articles advertising and describing her bands' performances at venues such as the Coconut Grove, Garden of Allah, and Orpheum Theatre, as well as various movies in which she appeared including *The Wet Parade* in 1932 and *Start Cheering* in 1938. Additionally, this series documents the time she spent working at Local 47 of the musicians union in the 1950s and 1960s, and contains copies of her column "Tuning in on Femme Musicians," which she wrote for the union's monthly publication, *The Overture*, from 1979 to 1984. The series includes extensive photographs, articles, and correspondence regarding the Dixie Belles. The series is arranged in loosely chronological order.

Series II, **Music and Notes**, contains Gilbert's musical scores and instrumental parts ranging from a tune entitled "Dixie Belle" by Anthony Horowitz to a musical co-written by Gilbert in the 1950s titled *Mr. Chick Tapp*, detailing the story of a tap-dancing chicken. The series also includes various songs, a manuscript, a sketchbook, certificates of copyright registration, jazz charts, CDs and press kits for Barbara Schottenfeld and Denise Wells, correspondence with composer Bob Nichols, and a notebook entitled "Sex or Sax. My Book Notes" which contains Gilbert's reminiscences. The series is arranged alphabetically.

Series III, **Plaques and Other Awards**, includes various awards that Peggy Gilbert received throughout her life. The majority of these plaques and awards were presented to Gilbert later in her life, including a 1989 "Life Member of the Year" award from the Musicians' Union Local 47 of Southern California, a 1982 "Golden Mask Award" from the Hollywood

Appreciation Society, and a 2005 City of Los Angeles Resolution wishing Peggy Gilbert a happy 100 th birthday. Additionally, this series includes a film poster of Peggy Gilbert and Her All Girl Band, some large photographs from 1920s-1950s, and a frisbee hand painted with a picture of Gilbert dressed in Dixie Belle attire and playing the saxophone. The series is arranged by format.

Series IV, **Card Files and Compact Discs**, contains a large number of Tune-Dex cards, which are 3 x 5 inch index cards with the melodies and chord changes of popular tunes found on one side, and the corresponding copyright information found on the reverse. This series also includes invitations for the Pioneer Musicians of Los Angeles Luncheon and Concert held in 1986, an audio interview of Peggy Gilbert conducted in 1998, and a BBC program about her life from 2007. The series is arranged by format.

Arrangement of Materials:

Series I: Scrapbooks, 1920-2007

Series II: Music and Notes, 1936-2006

Series III: Plaques and Other Awards, ca. 1929-2007

Series IV: Card Files and Compact Discs, 1986-2007

Conditions Governing Access:

The collection is open for research use.

Conditions Governing Use:

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Jeannie Pool, 2008

For information about citing items in this collection consult the appropriate style manual, or see the [Citing Archival Materials](#) guide.

Processing Information:

Tony Gardner

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Audiovisual materials

Documents

Photographs

Scrapbooks

Series I: Scrapbooks and Photo Album, 1920-2007

Box 1, Folder 1	Scrapbook 1, Boots and her Buddies, 1931
Box 1, Folder 2	Scrapbook 1, Correspondence
Box 1, Folder 3	Scrapbook 1, Films, Start Cheering, 1938
Box 1, Folder 4	Scrapbook 1, Local 47, ca. 1930-ca. 1939
Box 1, Folder 5	Scrapbook 1, Manila Hotel
Box 1, Folder 6	Scrapbook 1, Melody Girls, 1927
Box 1, Folder 7	Scrapbook 1, News Clippings, 1930-1939
Box 1, Folder 8	Scrapbook 1, Newsletter, 1928 December 1
Box 1, Folder 9	Scrapbook 1, Peggy Gilbert's Parents, Photographs
Box 1, Folder 10	Scrapbook 1, Venues, 1935-1939
Box 1, Folder 11	Scrapbook 1, Venues, Los Angeles Breakfast Club
Box 1, Folder 12	Scrapbook 1, Venues, Penn Albert Hotel
Box 1, Folder 13	Scrapbook 1, Venues, Zenda Ballroom
Box 1, Folder 14	Scrapbook 2, Local 47, 1942
Box 1, Folder 15	Scrapbook 2, News Clippings, 1945
Box 1, Folder 16	Scrapbook 2, Overture, "Women in Music," 1947

Box 1, Folder 17	Scrapbook 2, Venues
Box 1, Folder 18	Scrapbook 2, Venues, Garden of Allah
Box 1, Folder 19	Scrapbook 3, Dixie Belles, 1974
Box 1, Folder 20	Scrapbook 3, Hollywood Canteen, Service Award, 1967
Box 1, Folder 21	Scrapbook 3, Local 47, 1967
Box 1, Folder 22	Scrapbook 4, Correspondence
Box 1, Folder 23	Scrapbook 4, Local 47
Box 1, Folder 24	Scrapbook 4, News Clippings
Box 1, Folder 25	Scrapbook 4, Press Releases, Dixie Belles
Box 1, Folder 26	Scrapbook 4, Tournament of Roses, 1980
Box 1, Folder 27	Scrapbook 4, Tuning in on femme musicians
Box 1, Folder 28	Scrapbook 4, Venues, Dixie Belles
Box 1, Folder 29	Scrapbook 4, Women in Media and the Performing Arts, 1975
Box 1, Folder 30	Scrapbook 4, Research on Women Composers
Box 2, Folder 1	Scrapbook 5, Awards
Box 2, Folder 2	Scrapbook 5, Correspondence
Box 2, Folder 3	Scrapbook 5, Correspondence, 1981
Box 2, Folder 4	Scrapbook 5, Correspondence, 1982
Box 2, Folder 5	Scrapbook 5, Local 47
Box 2, Folder 6	Scrapbook 5, News Clippings
Box 2, Folder 7	Scrapbook 5, Photographs
Box 2, Folder 8	Scrapbook 5, Television Script
Box 2, Folder 9	Scrapbook 5, Tuning in on Femme Musicians
Box 2, Folder 10	Scrapbook 5, Venues, Dixie Belles
Box 2, Folder 11	Scrapbook 5, Venues, Dixie Belles, Annual Los Angeles Street Scene
Box 2, Folder 12	Scrapbook 5, Venues, Dixie Belles, Johnny Carson Show, 1981
Box 2, Folder 13	Scrapbook 6, Congress of Strings
Box 2, Folder 14	Scrapbook 6, Correspondence
Box 2, Folder 15	Scrapbook 6, Directories
Box 2, Folder 16	Scrapbook 6, International Congress on Women in Music
Box 2, Folder 17	Scrapbook 6, News Clippings
Box 2, Folder 18	Scrapbook 6, Tuning in on Femme Musicians
Box 2, Folder 19	Scrapbook 6, Venues, Dixie Belles
Box 3, Folder 1	Scrapbook 7, Correspondence
Box 3, Folder 2	Scrapbook 7, Directories
Box 3, Folder 3	Scrapbook 7, Exhibitions
Box 3, Folder 4	Scrapbook 7, Music Scores
Box 3, Folder 5	Scrapbook 7, News Clippings
Box 3, Folder 6	Scrapbook 7, Pioneer Women Musicians of Los Angeles
Box 3, Folder 7	Scrapbook 7, Press Releases
Box 3, Folder 8	Scrapbook 7, Venues, Dixie Belles
Box 3, Folder 9	Scrapbook 7, Venues, Forum Theatre
Box 3, Folder 10	Scrapbook 8, Awards and Honors
Box 3, Folder 11	Scrapbook 8, Awards and Honors, Local 47
Box 3, Folder 12	Scrapbook 8, Awards and Honors, Sigma Alpha Iota
Box 3, Folder 13	Scrapbook 8, Congress of Strings
Box 3, Folder 14	Scrapbook 8, Correspondence
Box 3, Folder 15	Scrapbook 8, Directories
Box 3, Folder 16	Scrapbook 8, Interview, Overture, May 1988
Box 3, Folder 17	Scrapbook 8, News Clippings
Box 3, Folder 18	Scrapbook 8, News Clippings, <i>People Magazine</i>, f 1989
Box 3, Folder 19	Scrapbook 8, Press Releases
Box 3, Folder 20	Scrapbook 8, Television Script, <i>Golden Girls</i>
Box 3, Folder 21	Scrapbook 8, Venues, Dixie Belles
Box 3, Folder 22	Scrapbook 9, Awards, Honors
Box 3, Folder 23	Scrapbook 9, Awards, Honors, International Association for Jazz Education, 2002
Box 3, Folder 24	Scrapbook 9, 100th Birthday
Box 3, Folder 25	Scrapbook 9, 101st Birthday

Box 3, Folder 26	Scrapbook 9, Christmas, 1997
Box 3, Folder 27	Scrapbook 9, Correspondence
Box 3, Folder 28	Scrapbook 9, Directories
Box 3, Folder 29	Scrapbook 9, Dixie Belles Stationary
Box 3, Folder 30	Scrapbook 9, Films, Peggy Gilbert and Her All Girl Band
Box 3, Folder 31	Scrapbook 9, Local 47
Box 3, Folder 32	Scrapbook 9, News Clippings
Box 3, Folder 33	Scrapbook 9, Obituaries
Box 3, Folder 34	Scrapbook 9, Press Releases
Box 3, Folder 35	Scrapbook 9, Venues, Dixie Belles
Box 3, Folder 36	Scrapbook 9, <i>You Bet Your Life</i>
Box 8, Folder 1	Scrapbook 10, News Clippings, 1932-1935
Box 8, Folder 2	Scrapbook 10, News Clippings, 1936-1938
Box 8, Folder 3	Scrapbook 10, News Clippings, 1940-1946
Box 8, Folder 4	Scrapbook 10, News Clippings, 1960-1974
Box 8, Folder 5	Scrapbook 10, News Clippings, 1975-1980
Box 8, Folder 6	Scrapbook 10, News Clippings, 1981-1983
Box 8, Folder 7	Scrapbook 10, News Clippings, 1984
Box 8, Folder 8	Scrapbook 10, News Clippings, 1985-1986
Box 8, Folder 9	Scrapbook 10, Venues, Dixie Belles, 1985-1986
Box 8, Folder 10	Scrapbook 10, News Clippings, 1987-1989
Box 8, Folder 11	Scrapbook 10, Birthdays, 100th-102nd, 1990-2007
Box 8, Folder 12	Scrapbook 10, News Clippings, 1990-2007
Box 8, Folder 13	Scrapbook 10, Recordings, 1990-2007
Box 9, Folder 1	Scrapbook 11, Peggy Gilbert and Her Dixie Belles
Box 9, Folder 2	Scrapbook 11, Dixie Belles, Snapshots of Venues
Box 9, Folder 3	Scrapbook 11, Retirement Party, ca. January 1970

Series II: Music and Notes, 1936-2006

Box 4, Folder 1	Dixie Belle
Box 4, Folder 1a	<i>Dixieland Jazz</i>
Box 4, Folder 2	Don't be a Fool
Box 4, Folder 3	Don't Wear Your Heart on Your Sleeve
Box 4, Folder 4	Gettin' Even
Box 4, Folder 5	I Found My Love in the Yellow Pages
Box 4, Folder 6	I'll See You Again
Box 4, Folder 7	If You Don't Think I'm Leaving
Box 4, Folder 8	Is There Room in Your Heart for Me
Box 4, Folder 9	Molasses, Molasses
Box 4, Folder 10	Mr. Chick Tapp, Copyright Registration
Box 4, Folder 11	Mr. Chick Tapp, Drawings by Peggy Gilbert
Box 4, Folder 12	Mr. Chick Tapp, Manuscript
Box 4, Folder 13	Mr. Chick Tapp, Music Score, "Ballet de Square Egg"
Box 4, Folder 14	Mr. Chick Tapp, Music Score, "Put the Pots on"
Box 4, Folder 15	Mr. Chick Tapp, Music Score, "The Belles are on their Way"
Box 4, Folder 16	Mr. Chick Tapp, Music Score, "Who Parked the Car"
Box 4, Folder 17	Mr. Chick Tapp, Music Scores, "Chick Tap, Kitten without Mittens, I See Pink People"
Box 4, Folder 18	Mr. Chick Tapp, Prologue
Box 4, Folder 19	Mr. Chick Tapp, Script
Box 4, Folder 20	Mr. Chick Tapp, Story Outline
Box 4, Folder 21	Mr. Chick Tapp, Typescript
Box 4, Folder 22	My Lonely Heart, Correspondence with Composer Bob Nichols
Box 4, Folder 23	Natalie
Box 4, Folder 24	Press Kit, Hot and Sweet, Barbara Schottenfeld
Box 4, Folder 25	"Rodeo Cowboy"
Box 4, Folder 26	"Sacramento Jubilee"
Box 4, Folder 27	Sex or Sax, My Book Notes
Box 4, Folder 28	"Sidesteppin'"

Box 4, Folder 29	"Wang, Wang Blues"
Box 4, Folder 30	Wells, Denise
Box 4, Folder 31	"You Can't See Me in My Jammies"
Box 4, Folder 32	"You Just Drive Me Screwy"
	Series III: Plaques and Other Awards, ca. 1929-2007
Box 5, Folder 1	Plaques and Other Awards
Box 6, Folder 1	Plaques and Other Awards
Box 9, Folder 4	Plaques and Other Awards
Folder 1	Awards and Posters
Folder 1, Item 1	County of Los Angeles Commendation
Folder 1, Item 2	City of Los Angeles Resolution on Peggy Gilbert's 100th Birthday, 2005 January 17
Folder 1, Item 3	California Legislature, Assembly Resolution on Peggy Gilbert's 100th Birthday, 2005 January 17
Folder 1, Item 4	Film Poster, Peggy Gilbert and Her All Girl Band
Folder 2	Oversize Photographs, ca. 1920-ca. 1949
	Series IV: Card Files and Compact Discs, 1986-2007
Box 7, Folder 1	Tune-Dex Cards
Box 7, Folder 2	Card File for Pioneer Musicians of Los Angeles Luncheon and Concert, 1986
Box 7, Folder 3	Peggy Gilbert Interview by Sherrie Tucker, Studio City, California, 1998 September 22-1998 September 23
	Scope and Contents
	6 compact disks
Box 7, Folder 4	BBC Program, <i>Brief Lives: Obituary of Peggy Gilbert</i> by Jeanne Poole, 2007 March 3
	Scope and Contents
	21:00 - 25:00