Ula Sharon Robinson Bergfeldt Papers
(K1223)

Collection Number: K1223

Collection Title: Ula Sharon Robinson Bergfeldt Papers

Dates: 1864-1993

Creator: Bergfeldt, Ula Sharon Robinson, 1905-1993

Abstract: The collection consists of family, personal, and professional materials of Ula Sharon Robinson Bergfeldt. The family papers include many photographs and legal documents pertaining to the Sharon and Headlee families in and around Spring Hill, Kansas, in the 1800s. The personal papers include correspondence between Ula and W.H. Bergfeldt during their courtship and early marriage, as well as Harold's correspondence to his parents and photographs from France following World War I. Ula also saved many programs of dance and theatre performances she attended. Professional materials include scripts for ballets and administrative records of the Kansas City Dance Theatre.

Collection Size: 12.5 cubic feet
(113 folders, 1,359 photographs, 1,164 slides)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City. If you would like more information, please contact us at kansascity@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: The donor has given and assigned to the University all rights of copyright, which the donor has in the Materials and in such of the Donor's works as may be found among any collections of Materials received by the University from others.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] Ula Sharon Robinson Bergfeldt (K1223); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Kansas City].

Donor Information: The papers were donated to the University of Missouri by Jean Coover on June 16, 1997 (Accession No. KA0955). An addition was made on December 1, 1997 by Jean Coover (Accession No. KA0976).
Related Materials: Additional materials related to the Ula Sharon Robinson Bergfeldt Papers can be found in the following collections:

Jean Coover Babcock Papers (K0740)

Processed by: Processed by Sophia Southard, June 2023

Note: The reel-to-reel tapes are unavailable for viewing until materials have been digitized.

Historical Note:

Ula Sharon Robinson was born to John M. and Lilleth (Sharon) in Spring Hill, Kansas, on March 17, 1905. John was a railway civil engineer who moved the family to the Philippines when Ula was a baby. She always showed talent for dancing, and upon the family’s return to the United States, she became a child star in Philadelphia’s vaudeville scene. At age ten, she toured Australia for three months. The Robinsons moved to Kansas City, where Ula enrolled in the Norman School and began dance instruction with Dorothy Burrows Perkins. At age 14 she and Lilleth moved to New York, and at age 15, Ula began a year of critical and popular acclaim starring in the vaudeville hit, Broadway Brevities. For the next several years she continued to study dance and perform in London and New York, most notably in the Greenwich Village Follies and a command performance for King George V.

In 1931, Ula married William Harold “Perky” Bergfeldt (1895-1971), proprietor of Dale-Bergfeldt Tailors, and in 1935, their only child, William Jr. was born. Ula taught dance and produced many original shows in Kansas City, and in 1954 she founded the Kansas City Dance Theatre. KCDT performed many of Ula’s works and gave hundreds of the area’s young people exposure to the dance. Ula continued to teach dance and body mechanics until 1983. She passed away on January 19, 1993.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following 7 series:

Personal
Kansas City Dance Theatre
Correspondence
Family
Photographs
Oversize
Audiovisual Materials

Scope and Content Note:

Personal

This series contains materials related to Ula’s personal life and her career as a ballerina. Of special interest are ballet and dance programs collected by Ula throughout her life, as well as materials related to her ballet career. Also of note are stories written by Ula. Series is arranged alphabetically.
Kansas City Dance Theatre

This series contains play scripts, publicity, programs, correspondence, notes, and newspaper clippings related to the Kansas City Dance Theatre. The administrative records contain by-laws, minutes, articles of association, board meeting reports, financial reports, histories of the theatre, and other related documents. Series is arranged alphabetically.

Correspondence

This series contains correspondence between Ula and William Harold Bergfeldt (1895-1971) during their courtship and early marriage, as well as Harold’s correspondence to his parents and photographs from France following World War I. Also included is correspondence from members of the Bergfeldt, Brown, Robinson, and Simmons family. Series is arranged alphabetically.

Family

This series contains materials related to the Bergfeldt, Headlee, Robinson, and Simmons families. Included are legal documents and certificates, funeral books and sympathy cards, marriage licenses, passports, wedding books, yearbooks, and more. Series is arranged alphabetically.

Photographs

This series contains personal and family photographs, as well as photographs and slides of performances held by the Kansas City Dance Theatre. Of special interest are portraits of Ula, as well as portraits of members of the Bergfeldt, Headlee, Robinson, and Simmons families. Series is arranged alphabetically.

Oversize

This series contains oversize photographs and scrapbooks, as well as costume sketches and posters for the Kansas City Dance Theatre. The oversize photographs are of Ula and her family. The scrapbooks contain photographs, postcards, telegrams, and newspaper clippings. Of special interest is a scrapbook featuring photographs from World War I during William Harold Bergfeldt’s military service. Series is arranged alphabetically, except for the last three scrapbooks, which are stored in a separate flat box due to size.

Audiovisual Materials

This series contains audio tapes, reels, and video tapes related to the Kansas City Dance Theatre’s performances and plays. Also included are audio tapes related to Jean Coover, one of Ula’s dance students, as well as the Coover-Hiedrich Ballet Workshop and Independence School of Dance, which Jean owned. Series is arranged alphabetically.

Container List:

f. 1-16                  Personal
Box 001  f. 1            Christmas Cards, no date
f. 4  Karma, no date
f. 5  Miscellaneous, 1915, 1935-1968
f. 6  “My Book”, no date
f. 8  Paper Dolls Commissioned by the Lincoln Exhibit for the Century of Progress (World’s Fair) Held in Chicago, 1933
f. 9  Poetry for Ula by E.M.G. (Maurice), 1931
f. 10  Program, Ballet Celeste, 1958
f. 11  Program, “Temple Varieties,” B’Nai Jehuda Sisterhood dedicated to the House of Living Judaism, no date
f. 12  Programs, Ula Sharon, 1938; Convention Hall, 1916, 1917, 1938
f. 13  Shakespeare’s “The Tempest”, 1926
f. 14  Songs, no date
f. 15  “The Dance”, no date
f. 16  Ula Sharon: Premiere Danseuse, 1993
f. 17-37  Kansas City Dance Theatre
f. 17-19  Administrative Records, 1958-1964
f. 20  An Introduction to Body Mechanics, no date
f. 21  “Circus Ballet”, no date
f. 22  Correspondence, 1957-1963
f. 23  “Cowboys and Indians”, no date
f. 24  “Fantasy of the Toys”, 1957-1958
f. 26  Miscellaneous Scripts, no date
f. 27  Nelson Gallery, 1956, 1958-1959
f. 28  Nomination of Ula to Women’s Leadership Fountain Project, 1991
f. 29  Notecards - Speech about Dance, no date
f. 30-31  “Parc Parisien”, 1962-1963
f. 32  “Parc Parisien” Newspaper Clippings, 1962-1963
f. 33  “Susan Goes to the Art Gallery”, 1956, 1959, 1964
f. 34  “The Nightengale and the Rose”, no date
f. 35  “The Road Beyond”, no date
f. 36  “The Sword and the Lute”, 1956-1957
f. 37  Untitled Script, no date
f. 38-52  Correspondence
f. 38  Charles and Hannah Bergfeldt, 1906, 1909
f. 39  John and Lil leth Robinson to Ula and Samuel Simmons, 1910-1934
f. 40  Lil leth and Ula Robinson to John Robinson, 1903, 1915
f. 41  Lil leth and Ula Robinson to Ula Simmons, 1912-1923
f. 42  Lil leth Robinson to Ula Robinson (chiefly from the Philippines), 1907-1922
f. 43  Mildred and Joe Brown, no date, 1977
f. 44  Ula Bergfeldt, 1956-1991
f. 45  William Harold Bergfeldt to Parents from France, 1918-1919
f. 46  William Harold Bergfeldt to Ula Bergfeldt in New York, August 1931
f. 47  William Harold Bergfeldt to Ula in Florida, February 1938
f. 48-52 William Harold Bergfeldt to Ula in New York, 1931-1932
f. 53-77 Family
f. 53  Dardanells and Greece Trip, no date
Box 002 f. 54  Diary, Jacob Headlee, Carrollton, Missouri, 1861
f. 55  Essay by William Bergfeldt, Jr., “Take Shakespeare off the Bookshelf”, no date
f. 56  Funeral Book, Ula Sharon Simmons, 1973
f. 57  Funeral Book, William H. Bergfeldt, 1971
f. 58  Funeral Book and Sympathy Cards, John M. Robinson, 1960
f. 59  Funeral Book and Sympathy Cards, Lillet Sharon Robinson, 1964
f. 60  James M. Robinson-Madeira Mamore Railway-Brazil, South America, 1910, Memoir, 1965
f. 61  Legal Documents and Certificates, Joseph Headlee, 1868-1927
f. 62  Legal Documents and Correspondence, Sharon and Headlee Families, 1864-1937
f. 63  “Mama’s Art Work”, no date
f. 64  “Memories of HaHaTonka”, no date
f. 65  Passports, circa 1920s-1930s, 1970s
f. 66  Passports and Marriage License, John and Lillet Sharon Robinson, 1904, 1922-1930
Box 003 f. 67  Personal Account Books, Samuel M. Simmons, 1884-1899, 1956-1957
f. 68  Poems by Lillet Sharon Robinson, no date
f. 69  Religious Writings “Wrote for Josephus Headlee”, circa 1880s
f. 70  Reminiscences, Charlotte Simmons, circa 1908-1909
f. 71  Souvenir Book, Verdun, France, no date
f. 72  Stock Certificates, circa 1902-1912
f. 73  Ula Sharon Simmons Autograph Book, 1886
f. 74  Wedding Book, Ula Sharon and Samuel M. Simmons, 1894
f. 75-76 Westport High School Herald, 1913-1914
f. 77  Yearbook, “The Log”, Rockhurst High School, 1927
f. 78-98 Photographs
f. 78-81 Family, 1905-1972, 1987
f. 82-85 Family Portraits, 1890-1972
f. 86-87 Kansas City Dance Theatre, 1945, 1954-1964
f. 88  Portraits Signed by Entertainers and Performances, 1922-1931
f. 89  Postcards, 1909-1942
f. 90  Sigma Nu Group, 1890-1891
f. 91  Ula Sharon Robinson Bergfeldt, circa 1906-1943, 1971
f. 92  Ula Sharon Robinson Publicity, circa 1918-1929
f. 93  World War I, William Harold Bergfeldt, circa 1917-1918
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f. 95-98  Slides, Kansas City Dance Theatre Performances, circa 1954-1964

f. 99-113  Oversize
Box 004  f. 99-102  Costume Sketches, no date
Box 005  f. 103-104  Family Portraits, 1922, 1937, 1945
f. 105  Group Portraits, no date
f. 106  Kansas City Dance Theatre Posters, 1958, 1976
Box 006  f. 107  Miscellaneous, no date
f. 108  Scrapbook, William Harold Bergfeldt, 1934-1936
f. 109  Travel, South America, no date
f. 110  Ula Sharon Robinson, 1926
Box 007  f. 111  Scrapbook, Family, 1934-1948
f. 112  Scrapbook, Ula Sharon Robinson Bergfeldt, Child, no date
f. 113  Scrapbook, World War I, 1918-1919

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a.t. 4  Concert Nelson Gallery, no date
a.t. 5  Coover-Hiedrich Ballet Workshop, no date
a.t. 6  Coover-Hiedrich Ballet Workshop Rehearsal Tape, no date
a.t. 7-9  Fantasy of the Toys, no date
a.t. 10  Irish Hat Box Waltz, no date
a.t. 11  Hat Box Waltz Solo, no date
a.t. 12  Independence School of Dance, no date
a.t. 13-17  Jean Coover, no date
a.t. 18  Jean Coover Concert, no date
a.t. 19  Midsummer Night, no date
a.t. 20  Miss Ula Bergfeldt, no date
a.t. 21-22  Mozart I and II, no date
a.t. 23  Offenbach Gaite Parisienne-Ballet, no date
a.t. 24-32  Parc Parisien, no date
a.t. 33  Park Program, Blue Bird, no date
a.t. 34  Sailor Dance, no date
a.t. 35-39  Susan Goes to the Art Gallery, no date
a.t. 40-42  Sword and the Lute, no date
a.t. 43  Tambourine Girl, no date
Box 009  a.t. 44-70  Untitled, no date
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