



Debra Ray Papers (R1503)

Collection Number: R1503

Collection Title: Debra Ray Papers

Dates: 1890-2020, bulk 1947-2020

Creator: Ray, Debra, 1947-

Abstract: The Debra Ray Papers contain the personal and family papers of Debra Ray. The papers include photographs, newspaper articles, family history, yearbooks, correspondence, and scrapbooks.

Collection Size: 2.5 cubic feet
(38 folders, 4 oversize folders, 503 photographs)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research, but is stored offsite. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at rolla@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: The Donor has given, assigned, and transferred to the Society all copyrights, and associated rights the Donor may possess in the materials.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Debra Ray Papers* (R1503); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Rolla].

Donor Information: The papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Debra Ray on April 15, 2021 (Accession No. RA1705).

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the Debra Ray Papers can be found in the following collections:

[*Ray Family Papers* \(R1356\)](#)

[*Edna Housden Haggard Papers* \(R1379\)](#)

[*Linda Ray Concoby Papers* \(R1504\)](#)

Processed by: Processed by Donovan Mefford and Kathleen Seale, July 29, 2021. Revised by Ashley Weaver on August 26, 2026.

Biographical Note:

Debra Sue Ray was born on August 22, 1947, in Waynesville, Missouri to Alba W. Ray, Jr. and Wilda Irene *Housden* Ray. She had an older sister Linda, and younger brother Jan Richard. The family lived in Texas County, Missouri, where Alba owned and operated Ray Chevrolet in Licking, Missouri. When she was about 7 years old, Debra spent time in the Trachoma Hospital in Rolla, Missouri and received treatment for the eye disease.

While in high school she was accepted by the American Youth Band and joined their European Tour in 1964. While on tour she played in England, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, France and for Princess Grace in Monaco. In 1965, she graduated from Licking High School and went on to attend college at the University of Missouri, she graduated sometime in the early 1960s.

Debra married Bobby Ray Vandivort on February 17, 1968. He worked as an employee of Emerson Electric of St. Louis, soon after they married the couple went on a field assignment for Emmerson Electric for Bobby's work to Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand. The couple lived in Thailand for many years. They had no children. Eventually, Debra returned to Missouri and divorced Bobby Ray sometime before his death. He died in Thailand in 2018.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following 5 series:

Personal Papers
Scrapbooks
Photographs
Yearbooks
Oversize

Scope and Content Note:

Personal Papers

This series contains materials related to Debra Ray. The materials include correspondence, photographs, wedding memorabilia, family papers, and an autograph from her childhood which includes signatures from her time in the Trachoma Hospital at Rolla, Missouri. Of note are folders 5-6 that contain correspondence, schedules, and photographs from Debra's trip with the American Youth Band. The European tour took place in the summer of 1964. The series is arranged in chronological order.

Scrapbooks

This series contains photograph scrapbooks put together by Wilda Ray and Rosella Housden. The photographs include images of Debra Ray, her sister Linda and other members of the Ray and Housden families. The series is arranged in chronological order.

Photographs

This series consists of photographs from the Ray and Housden families, Debra Ray's travels, wedding, life in Thailand, and family events. This series is arranged chronologically.

Yearbooks

This series contains yearbooks from Debra Ray's years at Licking High School and the University of Missouri. This series is arranged chronologically.

Oversize

This series consists of diplomas, a scrapbook and photographs including images of the George O. White State Forest Nursey outside of Licking, Missouri from the 1950s. Also include is a 1908 photograph of Baptist Ladies Aid group in Texas County, Missouri. The photograph album in folder 43 contains mostly images from the miniature horse farm at Silver Lane Ranch, owned by Coy and Edna Haggard. This series is arranged in chronological order.

Container List:

Personal Papers

Box 001	f. 1	Baby book, 1947-1953
	f. 2	Autograph book, 1954-1959
	f. 3	Correspondence, 1954-1987
	f. 4	Miscellaneous, 1964
	f. 5	American Youth Band, European Tour, correspondence, 1964
	f. 6	American Youth Band, European Tour, souvenirs and tour history, 1964-1965
	f. 7	Newspaper clippings, 1964-1990
	f. 8	Wedding keepsakes, 1968
	f. 9	Thailand, 1968-1969
	f. 10	High school reunion, 1985
	f. 11	Outward Bound, Minnesota trip, 1986
	f. 12	Rosella Williams Ray, 100th birthday and Christmas, 1987
	f. 13	Skiles/Skyles family reunion, photographs, 1988
	f. 14	Skiles/Skyles genealogy, 1988-2020
	f. 15	Wilda I. Ray, Democratic Party, 1995-2003
	f. 16	Postcards, no date
	f.17	Opryland souvenir map, no date

Scrapbooks

Box 001	f. 18	"You Oughta Be in Pictures," 1971
	f. 19	Roselle Williams Ray, 1971

Photographs

f. 20	Licking fair days, circa 1910
-------	-------------------------------

Box 002	f. 21	Housden family and family friends, circa 1935-1947
	f. 22	Ray family, extended family, 1943-1998
	f. 23	Birthday, 1954
	f. 24	Unidentified, 1957, no date
	f. 25	Debra Ray, 1961-1967
	f. 26	American Youth Bank, European Tour, 1964
	f. 27	Wedding, 1968
	f. 28	Thailand, 1968
	f. 29	Debra Ray, 1970-1990
	f. 30	Family home, Licking, Missouri, 1990s
	f. 31	Miscellaneous, no date
	f. 32	Zulah and Ivie Ray farm, no date
	f. 33	Photograph album, no date

Yearbooks

f. 34-37	Licking High School, 1962-1965
f. 38	Savior, 1966

Oversized

Box 003	f. 39	Photographs, 1890s-1909, 1949-1952, 1991
	f. 40	Diplomas, 1918, 1938
	f. 41	Scrapbook, 1923, 1940-1941
	f. 42	Photograph album, 1951, no date

Index:

Index Term	Folder	Image
American Youth Band	4-5, 26	Yes
Baptist church--Texas County	40	Yes
Baptist Ladies Aid (Texas County, Mo.)	40	Yes
Bratton, Richard	22	Yes
Columbia (Mo.)	25, 39	
Concoby, Linda Beth Ray Frost, 1943-2025	4-5, 6, 22, 29, 34-35	Yes
Crow, Jim	25	Yes
Emerson Electric (Saint Louis, Mo.)	8-9	
George O. White Nursery (Licking, Mo.)	39	Yes
Haggard, Coy	21-22	Yes
Haggard, Edna Housden, 1905-2000	3, 21-22, 29, 33, 40-42	
Hancock, Bill	25	Yes
Housden family	3, 14, 21	
Housden, Flora	22	Yes
Housden, Goulia Grant	21	Yes
Housden, Roxa Skiles	21-22, 27	Yes
Ichord, Richard H.	3-4, 8	

Index Term	Folder	Image
Licking (Mo.)	10, 12, 20, 29-30	
Licking High School (Licking, Mo.)	25, 34-38, 40	
Ray family	1-42	
Ray, Alba W., Jr., 1920-1975	1, 5, 8, 19, 25, 27, 29	
Ray, Debra Sue, 1947-	1-42	
Ray, Jan Richard, 1950-2014	12, 22, 29, 31, 34-37	Yes
Ray, Rosella Williams, 1886-1976	12, 19, 29	Yes
Ray, Wilda Irene Housden, 1921-2002	1-2, 5, 7-8, 12-13, 15, 18-19, 21-22, 24, 27, 29-31, 33, 39	
Skiles family	13-14	
Stephens College	40-41	
Thailand	9, 28	Yes
Trachoma Hospital (Rolla, Mo.)	2, 23	
University of Missouri	25, 38, 40	
Vandivort, Bobby Ray	7-8, 25, 27, 29	Yes
Vandivort, Ira, 1907-1998	27, 29	Yes
Vandivort, Leona, 1906-1999	27, 29	Yes