

CRANBROOK

ARCHIVES

Margaret Elleanor Biggar, 1906-1992
Scrapbooks, 1929-1973
.9 linear ft.

Acquisition Number: 1991-27

Acquisition: The collection was donated to the Cranbrook Archives by Margaret Biggar and Oral Sutliff.

Access: Access to the collection is monitored due to the fragile nature of the scrapbooks. No duplication will be allowed with the exception of digital photography.

Copyright: Copyright to this collection is held by the Cranbrook Educational Community.

Preferred Citation: Margaret Elleanor Biggar Scrapbook Collection, Cranbrook Archives, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

Photographs: The loose photographs were placed in acid-free envelopes and remain with the scrapbooks.

Processing: The collection was processed by Leslie S. Edwards in November 2002.



History

Margaret Elleanor Biggar was born 4 Oct 1906 in Detroit, daughter of M. Adelaide and Arthur F. Biggar. Biggar became interested in silverwork in Fairhope, Alabama where she attended high school for her senior year. She stayed and attended a second year, and not wanting to attend college, returned home to Detroit, where she graduated from the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts school.

From 1929-1931, she assisted renowned English metalsmith, Arthur Nevill Kirk, at the Cranbrook Academy of Art as a paid apprentice, making \$.30/hour in 1930 working primarily as the polisher. She returned to Fairhope, Alabama in 1931. There, she taught metals at the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education until Jun 1938 and formed a lasting relationship with fellow teacher, Eloise Hooker. In Jul 1939, Biggar and Hooker moved into a home on Magnolia Avenue where they set up their first “metalcraft” studio in which they taught classes in working silver, copper and brass. Their classes and studio were successful, and works were shown in local exhibitions. The studio became a part of local crafts tours in Fairhope, and people came from around the country to take classes and tours.

Margaret Biggar resided in Fairhope for 35 years before returning to Michigan where she died 12 May 1992 in Boyne City. She was buried there in Maple Lawn Cemetery.

Scope and Content of Collection

The scrapbooks contain news clippings and photographs of Margaret Biggar and Eloise Hooker and their work as metalsmiths. There are also clippings on resident artists and the art studios at Cranbrook Academy of Art, including Kirk, Eschmann, Fredericks, Milles, the weaving studio and the Cranbrook Press. There are some photographs of Biggar and Kirk in the CAA studio.

Additional clippings relate to Fairhope residents, fellow artists and friends, as well as the obituary notices for both of Margaret Biggar’s parents. There are some family photos, as well as photographs of the Fairhope studio and examples of the work of Biggar and Hooker, as well as some of their students.

Also of note is an article pertaining to the Arts and Crafts Society of Oakland County formed by a group of artists from Birmingham and Pontiac about 1927. And, in May 1943, Biggar took over the responsibility of securing enlistments for the War Dog Fund. This was a project organized to enlist the help of dogs on the “home front” to secure funds (through the donations of their owners) to assist dogs for Defense.

Related Collections

- Arthur Nevill Kirk Papers, 2002-15
- Oral History, Margaret Biggar, 1990-35