The Ogontz Archives: Women’s History Documented and Brought to Life

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The Ogontz School Archives

- Records of the school founded in 1850 as the Chestnut Street Female Seminary which became the Ogontz School for Young Ladies
- 1980s- additional materials were given to the Archives from the Ogontz White Mountain Camp in Lisbon, NH
- The Rydal School educated younger girls
Ogontz School Archives

- Documents from the school including school records, photographs, yearbooks, A. Sutherland memory books and more were part of the original donation
- Library books from the school and the personal collections of Abby Sutherland and Sylvia Eastman were also transferred
- Video and audio recordings from the school and camp as well as interviews
- Alums have donated many materials including uniforms, artifacts and scrapbooks
- 1992: Herkness Realty records were donated and are part of the Archives as they record parts of the property and the surrounding community
Herkness property records for Ogontz
Ogontz campus and Abington College

- Penn State Ogontz (now Abington College) was founded in 1950 when the Ogontz School was closed and Abby Sutherland donated the land and buildings to the Pennsylvania State College (now Penn State University)
- Archival material from Ogontz campus and the Abington College are not considered part of the Ogontz collection
- These materials are being coordinated in a separate project working with Abington College staff and librarians and the University Archives
The Ogontz Archive Room

• 1990s the current space was designed and created to house and showcase much of the collection

• Local architect Leon Clemmer, whose mother, Maizie Steele Clemmer, graduated in the Class of 1912 and two alumnae—Babette Liversidge Grala and Barbara Belfield Keenan (both High School Class of 1950) headed the project.

• More than $70,000 was raised to create the room.

• Additional materials are stored off-site

• Two small preservation funds
Cataloging and Finding Aids

• Terrie Smith developed an original finding aid
  • Lil Hansberry tracked additions over the years

• Intern made substantial progress on a listing of the girls
  • Includes information on the girls, materials and artifacts we hold

• Development of a guided tour brochure
  • Lil Hansberry and Christina Riehman-Murphy

• Future efforts will include additional aids and cataloging
  • Cataloging will be coordinated with digitization
Digitization of the Collection-Making the Archives More Accessible

- 2008 initial project
- Creation a “Digital Exhibit”
  - Four dozen photographs were scanned
  - Accompanying history and documentation was written
  - Ogontz School website was created
    - http://www2.libraries.psu.edu/psul/digital/ogontz.html
Penn State and Digitization

- University Libraries Preservation Department
  - Sue Kellerman, Judith O. Sieg Chair for Preservation and her staff
  - Ann Passmore scanning
Scanning
Creating the web pages

- Link from Libraries’ Homepage
- Start page for digital access.
  - Choose image(s) representative of the collection
  - Information describing the collection
  - Link to any other related online collections at Penn State
  - Create search capability as required
- A contact for the collection: Dolores Fidishun and Lillian Hansberry
Progress in Digitization

• Initial photos 2008
• Herkness Realty Records 2012-2014
• Ogontz Mosiacs -2015
Continuation of the Digitization Project

- Yearbooks
- May Queen Posters
- Memory books
- Other materials that reflect lives of the Ogontz Girls
  - Pictures of artifacts
  - Scrapbooks
    - What are issues surrounding?
  - School records
    - Must investigate privacy and legal issues
Bringing the Archives into the Curriculum

- Find ways to expand knowledge and relevance to the curriculum
- Public History Courses
- Internships
- Library Tours
- Library Events
Public and Educational Access

- Women’s Studies
- History
- Education
- Genealogy
- Popular Culture
- Architecture
Additional considerations as we move forward:

• Space and preservation
  • Library
  • Hillcrest

• Additional awareness of the collection

• Integration of the Ogontz and Abington Archives
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