

Finding aid for the Dix family papers Collection 421

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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February 2015
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Summary Information

Repository	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Creator	Samuel M, Dix, 1916-2006
Title	Dix family papers
Date [bulk]	Bulk, 1958-1996
Date [inclusive]	1918-1927, 1958-1996
Extent	1.0 Linear feet
Language	English
Abstract	<p>Samuel M. Dix (20 November 1916-20 June 2006) was an industrial engineer/consultant and a community activist in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This collection reflects his interests and includes material on the Grand Rapids Symphony Society (1958-1968), Fountain Street Baptist Church (salary survey, 1960-1961), abortion reform (1969-1977), the U.S. energy crisis (1977-1978), the Cannon Monitors (Cannon Township political group, 1992) and on the development of Dix's property into the Dix Farm Habitat (1994-1995). Also included are business records from the Wilmarth & Morman Company, manufacturers of grinding machine tools, and material on the nationally known artist Eulabee Dix, including an unpublished memoir written by her daughter, Joan Gaines.</p>

Biographical/Historical note

Samuel M. Dix (20 November 1916-20 June 2006) was an industrial engineer/consultant and a community activist. After serving in the U.S. Navy and working for several companies, he started his own business, S.M. Dix and Associates, in Grand Rapids in 1952. In addition to his work as an engineer and planner, Dix was active in community and political affairs. His interests, as reflected in this collection, ranged from the Grand Rapids Symphony to abortion reform, the energy crisis and township government.

Dix was the son of Horace Philip Dix Jr. and Helen Morman (daughter of Samuel A. Morman). Dix graduated from Central High School. He obtained an undergraduate and master's degree from Dartmouth College. He married Dorothy Swanson in 1951. They had three children: Stephen, Peter and Pamela.

Scope and Contents note

This collection reflects the interests of Samuel M. Dix, as well as his family. Dix's papers include material on the Grand Rapids Symphony Society (1958-1968), Fountain Street Baptist Church (salary survey, 1960-1961), the U.S. energy crisis (1977-1978), the Cannon Monitors (Cannon Township political group, 1992) and on the development of Dix's property into the Dix Farm Habitat (1994-1995).

Also included are letters, news articles, meeting minutes and papers on abortion reform. These papers provide valuable insight into the abortion reform movement on a city and state level. The material reflects differing view points from many people in the local community. It also addresses the coverage of abortion reform in the local news media, with a focus on possible news bias.

In addition, the collection includes business records, advertising, correspondence and photographs from the Wilmarth & Morman Company, manufacturers of grinding machine tools.

Lastly, the collection contains material on the nationally recognized artist Eulabee Dix, who was Samuel Dix's aunt. Included are photographs of her works and pamphlets and ephemera from exhibits, as well as correspondence from family members regarding her work. Of note is an unpublished memoir written by her daughter, Joan Gaines.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department February 2015

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Peter and Cheryl Dix, from the estate of Samuel M. Dix, 2006.059

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

54-19-33 – image, Wilmarth & Morman Co. machine equipment

1982 interview with Samuel Dix, Collection 166, GR Press Monday Guest oral history and graphics collection

Correspondence and publications, Samuel Dix, Collection 304, Gerald Elliot Michigan Authors

Catalogs, Wilmarth & Morman Co., Collection 246, GRPL general trade catalog collection

Bentley Historical Library: Michigan Abortion Referendum Committee Records, 1969-1972

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Fountain Street Church (Grand Rapids, Mich.).
- Grand Rapids Symphony.
- Wilmarth & Morman Company. (Grand Rapids, Mich.)

Genre(s)

- family papers

Geographic Name(s)

- Cannon (Mich. : Township) -- History
- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History

Personal Name(s)

- Dix, Eulabee, 1878-1961

Subject(s)

- Abortion -- Law and legislation -- Michigan
- Artists -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids
- Energy policy -- United States
- Land use -- Planning
- Women -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids -- History

Collection Inventory

Wilmarth & Morman Company records circa 1918-1927

Scope and Contents note

The Wilmarth & Morman Company manufactured grinding machine tools. The company was organized in Grand Rapids in May 1900. In 1927 the company was sold to the Covell-Hanchett Company and the local operations were dissolved. At the time the company was sold, the officers were L.T. Wilmarth (president), S.A. Morman (vice president), H.P. Dix (secretary and general manager) and C.E. Meech (treasurer).

After the sale, there was apparently some controversy over how the business was represented during negotiations. Dix compiled a notebook with records covering the financial status of the company, dealer and employee relationships, advertising material and various letters relating to the company and the sale negotiations. Also included are photographs, catalogs and property appraisements.

	Box	Folder
Interior photographs of Wilmarth & Morman Co. NOTE: Nine sepia-toned 8x10 prints showing the shop floor with men at work. The photographs were bound in an album, labeled Wilmarth & Morman Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. n.d.	1	1
Catalog, Precision Grinding Machinery, Wilmarth & Morman Company n.d.	1	2
Photograph, Wilmarth & Morman (Lund patent) grinding and polishing machine	1	3

Scrapbook

Appraisal, Property of Wilmarth & Morman Co. by The Lloyd-Thomas Co. October 24, 1918	1	vol
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Advertisement – Wilmarth & Morman No. 78 Super Surface Grinder n.d.	5	2
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Wilmarth & Morman Company, Analysis of Financial Status and Operations, 1922-1927, inclusive by Seidman & Seidman June 1, 1927	5	1
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Scrapbook

Scope and Contents note

Records and photographs of Wilmarth & Morman Company, compiled by H.P. Dix. The material was originally in a binder, separated by tabs. The original order was as listed below. The Lloyd-Thomas Co. Appraisal was found with other material.

	Box	Folder
Introduction, index and text (pages 2-30)	1	4
Exhibits B, C, D, E, F and G – letters, list of foreign dealers, Costs and a Cost System by H.P. Dix	1	5
Exhibit H – Photographs	1	6
Exhibit I – Advertising	1	7
Exhibit I – Advertising, oversize	5	3

Papers on Eulabee Dix

Exhibit A – Net sales curves	5	4
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Exhibit J – The Lloyd-Thomas Co. Appraisal	5	5
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Papers on Eulabee Dix 1959-1995

Scope and Contents note

Eulabee Dix (1878 – June 14, 1961) was an American artist who primarily painted portrait miniatures. Eulabee gained national recognition for her work and is featured in the National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA). She lived in Grand Rapids from 1895 to 1899, with her family. Her brother, Horace P. Dix, Jr., stayed in Grand Rapids and married Helen Morman (daughter of S.A. Morman).

Included here are photographs of her works and pamphlets and ephemera from exhibits. Also included are letters discussing establishing a gallery at the NMWA, as well as sales and donations of her paintings by family members. Also of note is a copy of an unpublished memoir by Eulabee's daughter.

	Box	Folder
Photographs, exhibit at National Art Museum, Lisbon, Portugal 1959/1960	3	1
Correspondence 1981-1994	3	2
List of miniatures for possible exhibition at the Grand Rapids Art Museum, with photographs 1987	3	3
Exhuming Eulabee: Recollections of her daughter, Joan Gaines 1990	3	4
Book proposal, correspondence – Jo Ann Ridley Circa 1993-1995	3	5

Sam Dix papers

Invisible Journeys, Jean Reed Bahle (draft of play featuring Emma Cole, Lucy Ball, Eulabee Dix and Betty Ford) April 24, 1994	3	6
Ephemera – Grand Rapids Art Museum	3	7
Ephemera – National Museum of Women in the Arts	3	8
Photograph, display frames	3	10
Miscellaneous	3	11
Photograph, portrait of Nina Gabrilovich/Gabrilowitsch (granddaughter of Mark Twain)	3	9
Sam Dix papers 1958-1996		
Grand Rapids Symphony Society, correspondence and papers 1958-1968	Box 3	Folder 14
Scope and Contents note		
<p>Samuel Dix was on the board of directors and at various times was on the finance committee, the nominating committee and was the chairman of the Federation Affairs committee. The papers consist mostly of correspondence, with occasional reports or other documents. They provide insight into the inner workings of the Grand Rapids Symphony during a period of change, as the Symphony transitioned into hiring full-time, professional musicians.</p>		
Fountain Street Baptist Church salary survey 1960-1961	Box 4	Folder vol

Abortion Reform**Scope and Contents note**

Samuel Dix completed a salary survey for Fountain Street Baptist Church. It established salary ranges for each position at the church, as well as review and increase policies. The survey collected job descriptions, salary ranges and policies from Grand Rapids area churches, as well as national statistics. The papers include correspondence, summary statistics tables and responses from local and national churches.

	Box	Folder
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Loose papers, Fountain Street Baptist Church salary survey 1960-1961	4	2
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Abortion Reform 1969-1977**Scope and Contents note**

In the late 1960s to early 1970s, several groups worked to reform abortion law in Michigan. A 1972 ballot initiative sought to legalize abortion in the state. It was voted down, but the Supreme Court decision on *Roe v. Wade* in 1973 legalized abortion in the United States.

Leading up to the 1972 ballot initiative, Dix worked to change the conversation in the media about abortion. Dix thought that the Grand Rapids Press showed news bias in their coverage of the issue, reflecting the conservative nature of the community.

After *Roe v. Wade*, Dix helped organize the New Clinic for Women, an abortion clinic serving a large portion of Michigan. Dix was involved with several organizations, including the West Michigan Abortion Reform Campaign, the West Michigan Council for the Study of Abortion, the Michigan Coordinating Committee for Abortion Law Reform and the West Michigan Pregnancy Termination Board.

His papers include letters with local clergy, lawyers, educators and doctors. In particular, he corresponded with Duncan Littlefair, Spike S. Martin, Veryl N. Meyers, Gerald Elliott and Werner Veit. At the state and national level, Jack M. Stack and Jimmye Kimmey were frequent correspondents. Dix

West Michigan Abortion Reform Campaign, S.M.Dix Associates Inc. – booklets...

also wrote many letters to Gerald R. Ford and received several replies. Also included are some materials on population control, including the West Michigan Chapter of Zero Population Growth (ZPG).

West Michigan Abortion Reform Campaign, S.M.Dix Associates Inc. – booklets of news clippings, mostly from the Grand Rapids Press 1969-1972

	Box	Folder
I: General progress in acceptance of abortion reform June 1969-August 1970	1	1
II: Success in Michigan Senate and the build up of resistance to reform September 1970-December 1971	1	2
III: Beginning of solid opposition to abortion reform January 1972-November 7, 1972	1	2
IV: Paid advertising October 1-November 7, 1972	1	2
Post election news and editorial comment	1	2
	Box	Folder
Abortion study and opinion survey	2	5
West Michigan Council for the Study of Abortion, correspondence file 1969-1972	2	3-4
Abortion Reform Facts, Issues and Answers, Michigan Council for the Study of Abortion September 1972	2	6

Energy papers

Facts on the abortion referendum question Circa 1972	2	7
West Michigan Pregnancy Termination Board / New Clinic for Women, papers 1973-1974	1	8-9
Miscellaneous, including newsletters, correspondence (including Jerry Ford), articles, news clippings, one photograph Circa 1972-1977	2	8
Energy papers		
Scope and Contents note		
Dix researched and compiled reports on energy sources in the United States, for use by Gerald R. Ford when he was vice president and president. Included here is one of those reports and a document detailing Dix's experiences in attempting to bring the energy crisis to the attention of American citizens.		
	Box	Folder
Energy – a critical decision for the United States Economy: a record of the experience in publishing and an analysis of the current U.S. Economic problem, S.M. Dix Associates Inc. December 1978	3	12
Energy: last report to President Ford: a critical decision for the United States Economy, by Samuel M. Dix 1977	3	13
Cannon Monitors, papers 1992	Box	Folder
	3	15
Scope and Contents note		
The Cannon Monitors was a political group formed in 1992 in response to problems in the township government in Cannon Township. The group, organized by Sam Dix, acted as a political watchdog. Between		

Dix Farm Habitat, papers

1988 and 1992, Cannon Township saw significant turnover in staff and board members. Additional tension came from conflict over updating the township zoning and master plan, as the formerly rural township saw increasing development. The papers include meeting minutes, advertisements, notes and a press release. Also included is an 11-page document by Gerald Kitson, "My experiences as Supervisor of Cannon Township."

Dix Farm Habitat, papers 1994-1995**Box****Folder**

4

1

Scope and Contents note

Dix Farm Habitat is a planned unit development on Kreuter Road in Belmont, Michigan (Cannon Township). It was developed by Sam Dix in 1994 as an alternative to traditional subdivisions. The development incorporates open space, rural character and natural resources. The papers outline the planning process, including correspondence, site plans, planning commission minutes, articles and a few environmental reports.

Memoir, Sam Dix – incomplete. Covers family history and Grand Rapids history, primarily in the 1830s circa 1996**Box****Folder**

3

16

Box**Folder**

Miscellaneous

3

17

Scope and Contents note

Includes two articles on Sam Dix; Oscar R. Wilmarth poem to announce birth of daughter Ada Wilmarth; Albert Bierstadt pamphlet.