

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Collection, 1970-2002

Wellesley Historical Society

Repository Identifier

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Local Identifier

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Name and Location of Repository

The Wellesley Historical Society

229 Washington Street

Wellesley, MA 02481

(781) 235-6690

www.wellesleyhistoricalsociety.org

Title

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Collection

Date

1970-2002

Extent

5.5 linear feet; 11 document boxes, plus 1 Archives Oversize Materials box

Name of Creator

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Inc.

Historical Note

The Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Inc. was active from its foundation in 1970 through its final exhibits in 2002. Organized as a non-profit by a group of like-minded painters and craftsmen who shared a common interest in arts and crafts, the group started as a grass-roots enterprise in which like-minded artisans could share their art with the public, as well as boost the profile of the arts in the community.

The group first gathered in March 1970 and elected Virginia D. Porter and Marilla N. Pratt as the first president and vice-president. That April they announced their first general meeting, inviting interested parties to attend; that meeting was held on May 5, and members exhibited their work, discussed plans, and put together a program of activities for the rest of the year. Their first program, on weaving, was held at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Wellesley Hills on June 3. It was so popular that a hands-on workshop in weaving was scheduled two weeks later. This

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Collection, 1970-2002

Wellesley Historical Society

program and the subsequent workshop set the pattern for much of the guild's activities until 1989, when space rental costs became prohibitive.

The WACG held its first "official" meeting on August 5, 1971, during which it passed its bylaws; Articles of Organization were approved by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts later that month. The WACG vision was to be a unified force in the community in promoting and supporting the arts through crafts programs, educational events, hands-on workshops, lectures, seminars, exhibitions, and sales.

The mission and goals of the guild were to "help the beginner to become acquainted and proficient with the tools and methods" of their craft; for the professional artist, the guild sought "to encourage a high level of creativity and technique through local and national exhibits and seminars in the arts." The guild also focused on the "intangibles" of the arts and hoped to encourage "self-fulfillment and excitement in the act of creating, the opportunity to help others begin to create and the mutual sharing in the progress and achievement of fellow members." They felt the arts added "richness to the life of the participant and to the community as a whole" (WACG Newsletter, 1972).

The guild held many types of events, but the two most prominent were the holiday exhibit and sale, held annually in late November or early December, and the Members' Spring Exhibit, held annually, usually in May. Events and programs were held at various facilities throughout the community, including the library, community center, the schools, and private studios.

The WACG was comprised of several individual guilds, including an Enamellers' Guild, Painters' Guild, Potter's Guild, and the Stained Glass Guild. Each of these guilds often operated independently of the parent organization, and often held their own workshops, events, and field trips.

The Guild had close ties with the Wellesley Public Schools, with art teachers from the high school serving on advisory boards and teaching many of the classes and leading workshops. One of their lasting contributions to the arts in Wellesley was the establishing of a scholarship awarded annually to a Wellesley High School graduating senior intending to major in art. The scholarship was initially known as the Walter H. Pratt Memorial Art Award from 1971-1989, named for the prominent Wellesley architect; in 1989 the scholarship became known as the WACG Scholarship. In 1971 the scholarship amount was \$100, awarded to one student; by 1989 it was \$600, and by 2001 the award was up to \$1500, awarded to multiple students. The final scholarships were awarded in 2002.

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Collection, 1970-2002

Wellesley Historical Society

Initially, the long-range goal for the guild had been to establish a permanent, full-fledged arts center in Wellesley, but this vision never came to fruition. The plan in 1970 had been to renovate and adapt the Wellesley Farms station building, but it was judged to be too costly. The dream of an arts center proved elusive after that. By 1989 the Guild was having problems finding affordable space to run workshops, and began to focus exclusively on exhibits, lectures, seminars, and field trips. The group dissolved in 2002, with the substantial scholarship fund devolving to the Town of Wellesley for use in the community.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains papers, photographs, and ephemera relating to the activities of the Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Inc., which operated from 1970-2002. The bulk of the collection is photographs, which document most aspects of the guild's public activities; eight of the eleven boxes contain photographs of events, exhibits, workshops, field trips, and programs. Two boxes of papers document the administration, business, and public relations activities of the guild, including newsletters, flyers, and event cards. One further box of materials contains materials related to the scholarship award, as well as files relating to individual artists.

Library of Congress Index Terms

Art

Art—Scholarships, fellowships, etc

Artisans

Artisans—Societies, etc

Artists' studios

Community arts projects

Cottage industries

Exhibit booths

Exhibitions

Guilds

Handicraft

Wellesley (Mass.)

Women and the arts

Women in guilds

System of Arrangement

The collection is organized into seven series, organized by type of material; within each series materials are organized by topic, and then chronologically within each topic. Most of the materials in the collection were organized in annual scrapbooks; in preparing the collection for archival storage and access, the scrapbooks have been dismantled, and the materials organized by type and topic.

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Collection, 1970-2002

Wellesley Historical Society

- I. Papers – Organizational and Foundational Documents
- II. Newsletters
- III. Promotional Materials – Mailing Cards, Flyers, Program Books, News Clippings
- IV. Ephemera
- V. Photographs
- VI. Scholarship Award
- VII. Artist Files

Conditions Governing Access

The Collection is open for research purposes by appointment only. Please contact the Wellesley Historical Society for more information.

info@wellesleyhistoricalsociety.org

(781) 235-6690

Physical Access

Some of the materials are fragile.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

Copyright restrictions may apply.

Languages and Scripts of the Material

English

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Allie Loehlin, Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Inc. member/officer. Gift received 10 June, 2003.

Accruals

The Historical Society may add materials to this collection in the future; however, no further accruals are currently expected.

Description

DACS-compliant Finding Aid created in February 2019 by Alden Ludlow. Processing of this collection was made possible through a grant from the Wellesley Community Preservation Committee.

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Collection, 1970-2002
Wellesley Historical Society

Container List

***I.* Papers – Organizational and Foundational Documents**

This series contains documents pertinent to the founding, organization, administration, and dissolution of the WACG. Included is an institutional history written by members for their 25th Silver Anniversary in 1997.

Box 1

Folder 1: Organizational/Foundational Documents – Articles of Organization, 1971

Folder 2: Organizational/Foundational Documents – Bylaws, 1971

Folder 3: Organizational/Foundational Documents – Dissolution of WACG, 2002

Folder 4: Organizational/Foundational Documents – Institutional history, 1997

Folder 5: Organizational/Foundational Documents – Membership Directory, 1971-1972

***II.* Newsletters, 1970-2002**

The newsletters contain schedules of programs and events, news and notices; guild workshop listings; schedules for classes for adults, children, and teenagers; plans for field trips and museum visits; and other information regarding all manner of WACG activities. Three newsletters were issued most years, in the Winter, Spring, and Fall.

Box 1

Folder 6: Newsletters, 1970-1975

Folder 7: Newsletters, 1976-1980

Folder 8: Newsletters, 1981-1985

Folder 9: Newsletters, 1986-1991

Folder 10: Newsletters, 1992-2002

Folder 11: Newsletters – Class/program listing supplements, 1975-1983

***III.* Promotional Materials – Mailing Cards, Flyers, Program Books, News Clippings**

This series contains various promotional materials for events, including press releases, mailing cards, event flyers, and program books. Also included are archival copies of many of the scrapbook pages which included newspaper clippings; the newspaper clipping copies are in no particular order.

Box 2

Folder 1: Press releases, manuscript form, 1970-1975

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Collection, 1970-2002

Wellesley Historical Society

Folder 2: Promotion – Holiday Sale, 1970-1996

Folder 3: Promotion and Logistics – WACG “December Store,” 1981-1984

Folder 4: Promotion – Spring Exhibit (Member’s Exhibit), 1973-1996

Folder 5: Promotion – SpringThing 1972 (“Wellesley’s Festival of the Arts”)

Folder 6: Program Books – Exhibit and Sale program books, 1977-1999

Folder 7: Newspaper clippings, from scrapbooks

Folder 8: Promotion – Miscellaneous events

Folder 9: Promotion and Logistics – Event/Exhibit Planning

IV. Ephemera

This series contains a few items associated with WACG events and programs. It includes name pins, an award ribbon, and the *Wellesley Arts & Crafts Guild Cook Book* (undated, circa 1970s). The Archives Oversize Box contains a banner used at exhibits, with 25th Anniversary (1997) additions attached; there is also an academic hood, purpose and use unknown.

Box 2

Folder 10: Ephemera

Archives Oversize Materials Costume Box

WACG 25th Anniversary banner, 1996; academic hood

V. Photographs, 1970-2002

This series contains hundreds of photographs of WACG activities, including exhibits, workshops, field trips, and sales. The bulk of the photographs are of the main two annual WACG events, the holiday sale (usually in November or December), and the members’ spring exhibition (usually in May, sometimes June). Most of the photographs are of members engaged in various activities, or photographs of their work or their work on display. The WACG ran a “December Store” in downtown Needham (936 Great Plain Avenue) from 1981-1984; these have been included in the Holiday Sale sequence. The photographs are generally arranged chronologically, but the large annual events have been gathered and ordered in sequence. Regarding names, the spring show was consistently called the Members’ Spring Exhibit over the years; the holiday sale went by various different names, which have been noted in parentheses.

Box 3

Folder 1: Workshop – 1970, Macramé class and workshop

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Collection, 1970-2002

Wellesley Historical Society

Folder 2: Workshop – 1970, October-December, King Coffin’s painting/drawing classes

Folder 3: Workshop – 1970, Bill Nutter, Jan Wallace, others

Folder 4: Administration – WACG “Originating Meeting,” 5 August 1971

Folder 5: Program – 1970-1971, Artists and Teachers in residence, Wellesley Junior HS

Folder 6: Workshop – 1971, March; “Spaceforms” paper art workshop, Jim Bottomley

Folder 7: Holiday Sale 1970 (November Sale)

Folder 8: Holiday Sale 1971 (Annual Pre-Christmas Sale)

Folder 9: Holiday Sale 1972 (Annual Pre-Christmas Sale)

Folder 10: Holiday Sale 1974 (Annual Pre-Christmas Sale)

Folder 11: Holiday Sale 1975 (Annual Pre-Christmas Sale)

Folder 12: Holiday Sale 1977 (Annual Pre-Christmas Sale)

Folder 13: Holiday Sale 1978 (Annual Pre-Christmas Sale)

Photographs

Box 4

Folder 1: Holiday Sale 1979 (Annual Pre-Christmas Sale)

Folder 2: Holiday Sale 1980 (Annual Christmas Sale)

Folder 3: Holiday Sale 1981 (The December Store, 936 Great Plain Avenue, Needham)

Folder 4: Holiday Sale 1982 (The December Store, 936 Great Plain Avenue, Needham)

Folder 5: Holiday Sale 1983 (The December Store, 936 Great Plain Avenue, Needham)

Folder 6: Holiday Sale 1984 (The December Store, 936 Great Plain Avenue, Needham)

Folder 7: Holiday Sale 1987

Folder 8: Holiday Sale 1988

Folder 9: Holiday Sale 1989

Folder 10: Holiday Sale 1990 (December Sale)

Folder 11: Holiday Sale 1991

Photographs

Box 5

Folder 1: Holiday Sale 1992

Folder 2: Holiday Sale 1993 (December Sale)

Folder 3: Holiday Sale 1994 (December Sale)

Folder 4: Holiday Sale 1995 (Arts & Crafts Sale)

Folder 5: Holiday Sale 1996 (25th Silver Anniversary Arts & Crafts Sale)

Folder 6: Holiday Sale 1997

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Collection, 1970-2002

Wellesley Historical Society

Photographs

Box 6

- Folder 1: Holiday Sale 1998
- Folder 2: Holiday Sale 1999
- Folder 3: Holiday Sale 2000
- Folder 4: Holiday Sale 2001
- Folder 5: Spring Exhibit 1971
- Folder 6: Spring Exhibit 1972
- Folder 7: Spring Exhibit 1973
- Folder 8: Spring Exhibit 1974
- Folder 9: Spring Exhibit 1975
- Folder 10: Spring Exhibit 1976 – Prior to Robbery
- Folder 11: Spring Exhibit 1976 – Aftermath of Robbery

Photographs

Box 7

- Folder 1: Spring Exhibit 1977
- Folder 2: Spring Exhibit 1978
- Folder 3: Spring Exhibit 1979
- Folder 4: Spring Exhibit 1980
- Folder 5: Spring Exhibit 1982
- Folder 6: Spring Exhibit 1983
- Folder 7: Spring Exhibit 1984
- Folder 8: Spring Exhibit 1985
- Folder 9: Spring Exhibit 1986
- Folder 10: Spring Exhibit 1988

Photographs

Box 8

- Folder 1: Spring Exhibit 1990
- Folder 2: Spring Exhibit 1991
- Folder 3: Spring Exhibit 1992
- Folder 4: Spring Exhibit 1993
- Folder 5: Spring Exhibit 1994
- Folder 6: Spring Exhibit 1995
- Folder 7: Spring Exhibit 1996

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Collection, 1970-2002

Wellesley Historical Society

Photographs

Box 9

Folder 1: Spring Exhibit 1997

Folder 2: Administration – Annual Meetings/Board Meetings/Officers, 1970-1979

Folder 3: Administration – Annual Meetings/Board Meetings/Officers, 1980-1989

Folder 4: Administration – Board Meeting/Officers, 1990

Folder 5: Administration – Annual Meetings/Board Meetings/Officers, 1991-1994

Folder 6: Administration – New/Old Board Supper and Officers, 1996

Folder 7: Field Trip – Newport, Rhode Island, April 1976

Folder 8: Field Trip – Painter's Guild at Commonwealth Center, October 1978

Folder 9: Field Trip – New York City, King Tut Exhibit, March 1979

Folder 10: Field Trip – WGBH Channel 2 auction, WACG members man phones, 1979

Folder 11: Field Trip – Rockport, Maine, June 1981

Folder 12: Field Trip – Dedham Pottery, Dedham, Massachusetts, Winter 1987

Photographs

Box 10

Folder 1: Exhibit – Hill & Co., Wellesley, 14th Annual Town Arts Festival, May 1971

Folder 2: Exhibit – Blue Moose Gallery, Summers of 1970-1972

Folder 3: Exhibit – St. Demetrios Church, Weston, 1972

Folder 4: Exhibit – Painter's Guild exhibit at Golden Ball Tavern, Weston, 1975

Folder 5: Exhibit – Babson College, October 1975

Folder 6: Exhibit – Wellesley Free Library, November 1977

Folder 7: Exhibit – Babson College Library, undated, circa 1978-1979

Folder 8: Exhibit – Mass Bay Community College, 1994

Folder 9: Exhibit – Portrait Exhibit, Wellesley Free Library, February-March 1996

Folder 10: Exhibit – Summer Exhibit 1996, student art, Wellesley Elementary Schools

Folder 11: Exhibit – WACG 25th Anniversary Party & Exhibit, January 1997

Folder 12: Program – WACG classes, workshops, 1976

Folder 13: Program – Three Development Award Winners, Fall 1991

Folder 14: Program – Picasso Lecture, October 29, 1997

Folder 15: Event – Hollyberry Workshop Class, 1970

Folder 16: Event – Creative Foods Dinner, 1971 and 1976

Folder 17: Event – WACG Open House at Wellesley Junior High School, October 1972

Folder 18: Event – WACG Open House at Wellesley Junior High School, October 1973

Folder 19: Event – Kitchen Sale, 1979

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Collection, 1970-2002

Wellesley Historical Society

VI. Scholarship Award

This series contains all of the materials related to the Walter H. Pratt Memorial Art Award (1971-1989) and the successor scholarship, the Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Scholarship (1990-2002). Included are certificates, award letters and recipient responses, photographs, and newspaper clippings.

Box 11

Folder 1: Papers – Pratt Memorial Art Award/WACG Scholarship, 1971-2002

Folder 2: Photographs – Scholarship award winners

Folder 3: Photographs – The Scholarship Tree (WACG Holiday Sale fundraiser)

Folder 4: Photographs – Scholarship winner artworks

Folder 5: Newspaper Clippings – Scholarship award winners

VII. Artist Files

This series contains photographs, short biographies, and other information on individual artists. The basis for this series is a deconstructed album that had been used as an artists' introductory "facebook" for the December Store (1981-1984). Other artist files have been added. Many of the artists represented here also appear in the Photographs series; also, many artists who appear in the Photographs series may not necessarily appear here.

Box 11

Folder 6: Artists, General, A-Z

Folders 7-61: Artists, Alphabetical, Last Name/First Name

Artist Files Alphabetical Listing

B

Folder 7: Biello, Elsie

Folder 8: Birch, Peg

Folder 9: Bowler, Mary

Folder 10: Bright, Nancy

Folder 11: Brody, Ann

C

Folder 12: Caryl, Joan D.

Folder 13: Constas, Athena

Folder 14: Curtis, Phyllis

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Collection, 1970-2002

Wellesley Historical Society

D

Folder 15: Davis, Sunny

Folder 16: DeGruttola, Suzanne Leek

Folder 17: Dooley, Eleanor

E

Folder 18: Ender, Margaret

Folder 19: Ennis, Dorothy

F

Folder 20: Fearnside, Margaret

Folder 21: Fuller, Toby

G

Folder 22: Gaubatz, Elaine

Folder 23: Geller, Gloria

Folder 24: Geru, Josephine

Folder 25: Gruverman, Marge

H

Folder 26: Hayden, Perry

Folder 27: Hickler, Lon

Folder 28: Higgins, Florence

Folder 29: Hoffstein, Lila

Folder 30: Hubel, Ruth

Folder 31: Huntington, Elizabeth T.

K

Folder 32: Kohl, Betty

L

Folder 33: Lilly-Hardy, Elizabeth

Folder 34: Lindin, Eleanor

Folder 35: Loehlin, Allie

Folder 36: Mallach, Linda

M

Folder 37: Marcus, Barbara

Folder 38: Marks, Janet

Folder 39: McGonigle, Rose and Betsy Geissler (collaborative)

Folder 40: McManus, Marcy

Folder 41: Meissner, Midge

Folder 42: Miller, Bea

Folder 43: Millster, Richard

N

Folder 44: Nordquist, Shirley-Ann

Wellesley Arts and Crafts Guild Collection, 1970-2002

Wellesley Historical Society

O

Folder 45: O'Keefe, Adelaide

P

Folder 46: Pierce, Mary Ellen

Folder 47: Porter, Virginia "Ginny" (first WACG President)

Folder 48: Potheau, Sophie

R

Folder 49: Rich, Shirley C.

Folder 50: Robbins, Beverley A.

Folder 51: Russell, Elizabeth

S

Folder 52: Schimelman, Ellie

Folder 53: Sciegienny, Lorraine A.

Folder 54: Stevens, Marian

Folder 55: Stockwell, Fiona

T

Folder 56: Tangerini, Bernice

Folder 57: Tingey, Susan

W

Folder 58: Williamson, Betty

Folder 59: Wilson, Julie

Folder 60: Wilson, Ronald

Folder 61: Wood, Karen Sorem