



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Marjorie Dycke files

1940-2004

*T-Mss 2004-001

Compiled by Robyn Hjermsstad, 2014

Summary

Creator: Dycke, Marjorie

Title: Marjorie Dycke files

Date: 1940-2004

Size: 4.2 linear feet (10 boxes)

Source: Donated by Marjorie Dycke, 2004.

Abstract: The Marjorie Dycke files date from 1940 to 2004 and document her career as founding chair of the drama department for the High School of Performing Arts in New York City through administrative material, correspondence, photographs, articles, and programs.

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Processing note: Compiled by Robyn Hjermsstad, 2014 Original order was maintained. Loose material was placed into folders. Previously assigned NYPL catalog numbers were retained and transferred to new folders.

Creator History

Marjorie Dycke was an American educator and founding chair of the drama department at the High School of Performing Arts (now called Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music Art and Performing Arts) in New York City from its inception in 1948 until her retirement in 1971. She also taught speech at several colleges throughout New York City, including Hunter College, the Teachers College at Columbia University, and New York University. In 1961 she was elected president of the American Educational Theatre Association (AETA). She was secretary and served on the executive committee of the American National Theatre and Academy (ANTA).

Marjorie Dycke died in 2013.

Scope and Content Note

The Marjorie Dycke files date from 1940 to 2004 and document her career as founding chair of the drama department for the High School of Performing Arts through administrative material, correspondence, photographs, articles, and programs. The collection reflects the transformation of the School of Performing Arts from its beginning as a vocational dramatics program to its inception as an official division of the Metropolitan Vocational High School.

The bulk of the collection consists of administrative files that document Dycke's career as chair of the drama department of the High School of Performing Arts. The Performing Arts Advisory Commission, student assemblies, senior theater projects, teachers meetings, various student productions, and the Parent Association are represented through photographs; student assembly programs; job contact lists for students; announcements; drama department curriculum objectives and descriptions; grading guidelines; annual reports; notes; meeting minutes; photographs; and orientation guides for new students and faculty. Material relating to Dycke's work as a speech teacher consists of correspondence with the New York Board of Education and photographs of classes.

Correspondence is present throughout these files and sometimes directly relates to the surrounding administrative material. Other topics of correspondence include student activities, class schedules, program and audition inquiries, thank-you letters, and letters of commendation. Department of Education employees, educators from other schools, and Dycke's fellow teachers and staff make up the bulk of the correspondents. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to align the High School of Performing Arts with more mainstream public schools, such as a proposed merger in with the High School of Commerce in 1958. Letters documenting the opposition to this proposal from Robert Whitehead, Eleanor Roosevelt, Martha Graham, and Kermit Bloomgarden are present.

Documents dating from the early 1940s reflect the activities of the vocational dramatics program, an academic focus program that would eventually be combined with the dance department to form The High School of Performing Arts. Materials consist of correspondence with past students, meeting minutes, and course outlines and objectives. The collection holds the initial proposal for the High School of Performing Arts to be an annex to the Metropolitan Vocational High School. There are also letters relating to the administrative activities during the initial years of the The High School of Performing Arts (1948-1949), such as preparation material for auditions, course objectives, and rejection letters to prospective students and faculty.

Photographs are arranged by date and document classes, rehearsals, and performances at the High School of Performing Arts. Yearbook photos and images of meetings and speech classes at the Department of Education are also present. The photographs are usually annotated with information about the performance, play, or students that they depict. The majority of the photographs are loose, though some are adhered to paper or are attached to photograph order lists. Correspondence and programs are sometimes found among the photographs.

Programs and articles reveal Dycke's continued support of the school after her retirement. Articles follow developments in the creation of the Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music Art and Performing Arts and the achievements of Performing Arts graduates and past faculty members. Early programs for school productions under Dycke's leadership are also present.

Arrangement: The collection is arranged into two categories: Administrative Files, and Articles and Programs.

Key Terms

Subjects

Drama in education -- New York (State) -- New York

Names

(New York, N.Y.) Metropolitan Vocational High School

(New York, N.Y.) School of Performing Arts

Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music Art and Performing Arts (New York, N.Y.)

High School of Performing Arts (New York, N.Y.)

Container List

Administrative Files

- b. 1 f. 1-7 1940-2002
8-MWEZ + N.C. 22,178
- b. 1 f. 8 1948
MWEZ + N.C. 22,179
- b. 2 f. 1-5 1948-1953
- b. 2 f. 6-7 1949-1970
MWEZ + N.C. 22,179
- b. 3 f. 1-6 1951-1959
MWEZ + N.C. 22,109
- b. 4 f. 1-9 1956-1971
Letters in opposition to the merger with the High School of Commerce can be found here.
- b. 5 f. 1 1983-1990
MWEZ + N.C. 22,108

Photographs

- b. 5 f. 2-14 1943-1968
- b. 6 f. 1-11 1954-1971
- b. 7 f. 1-10 1962-1970
- b. 8 f. 1 1971

Articles and Programs

- b. 8 f. 2-9 1948-1998
MWEZ + N.C. 22,177
- b. 9 f. 1-7 1980-2002
MWEZ + N.C. 22,177
- b. 10 f. 1-3 1983-2003
MWEZ + N.C. 22,177
- b. 10 f. 4-5 1992-2004