



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Sumner Arthur Long papers

1950-1989

*T-Mss 2015-032

Compiled by Kit Fluker, 2016.

Summary

Creator: Long, Sumner Arthur, 1921-

Title: Sumner Arthur Long papers

Date: 1950-1989

Size: 10.01 linear feet (25 boxes, 1 oversized folder)

Source: Gift of Robert Long and Alice Long, 2015.

Abstract: Sumner Arthur Long (1921-1993) was a writer for television, theater, and film. His papers document his career from 1950 to 1989. The bulk of the collection consists of theater and television scripts from plays such as *Never Too Late* and *Angela* and television series such as *Lassie*. In addition to scripts, the collection contains correspondence, contracts, and other material related to Long's theatrical works, notably *Never Too Late*, which was produced on Broadway in 1962.

Access: Some collections held by the Dance, Music, Recorded Sound, and Theatre Divisions at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts are held off-site and must be requested in advance. Please check the collection records in **the NYPL's online catalog** for detailed location information. For general guidance about requesting offsite materials, please consult: <https://www.nypl.org/about/locations/lpa/requesting-archival-materials>

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Creator History

Sumner Arthur Long (1921-1993) was a writer for television, theater, and film. Around 1950, he moved to California, where he began writing scripts for Columbia Pictures' television production studio, Screen Gems. He wrote for television programs such as *Lassie*, *The Betty Hutton Show*, and *The Donna Reed*

Show.

Long had great success with his first play, *Never Too Late*. The play was first produced at Bucks County Playhouse with the title *Cradle and All* (1959). *Never Too Late* was on Broadway from 1962 through 1965; it was also adapted into a 1965 film. Long's play *Angela* had a brief run on Broadway in 1969.

Long continued to write for television through the 1980s.

Scope and Content Note

The Sumner Arthur Long papers document his career as a writer for theater, television, and film between 1950 and 1989. The bulk of the collection consists of his scripts, both produced and unproduced. Some of the scripts were co-authored with other writers. The collection also contains correspondence, contracts, and other material related to Long's theatrical works.

Long's play scripts -- *Never Too Late*, *Angela*, *The Castaways*, and *The Javelin Catcher* -- sometimes contain his handwritten changes and corrections. Contracts and correspondence are present for *Angela* and *The Castaways*; the collection also contains a poster for *Angela*. *Never Too Late* is the best-represented work in the collection; its production history is documented through scripts, programs, posters, clippings, and correspondence. The correspondence traces the play from its inception as a film script titled *Blessed Event*, through the Bucks County Playhouse and Broadway productions, to the film adaptation. Correspondence includes letters from cast members such as Orson Bean, Maureen O'Sullivan, and Una Merkel; Henry Denker, who directed the Bucks County Playhouse production; Long's agent, Daniel Hollywood; and his wife, Beulah Long.

A small amount of correspondence related to other works by Long can be found filed with the *Never Too Late* correspondence, especially in files dating after 1963.

Television and film scripts are primarily clean, unmarked typescripts. There are multiple drafts of some television scripts. Long's work on *Lassie* is particularly well-documented. The files for some shows include story outlines as well as full scripts.

Arrangement: The collection is divided into two categories: Theater productions and Television and Film productions.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings (information artifacts)
Programs (documents)
Scripts (documents)

Occupations

Dramatists -- United States
Television writers -- United States

Titles

Lassie (Television program)

Subjects

Playwriting

Television scripts

Theater -- Production and direction

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1-2 Miscellaneous Writings and Mementos 1950s-1980
Includes a review of the book *Still Circling Moose Jaw* and poems or lyrics.

Theater

- b. 2 f. 5-8 *The Castaways* 1952-1965
Alternate title: *The Voyagers*.

Contracts, prose version of story, and television script.

See also the Never Too Late correspondence file for the year 1964.

- b. 3 f. 1-4 *The Castaways* 1964
Scripts, prose version of story.

The Javelin Catcher
Scripts.

- b. 3 f. 5-6 Circa 1976
b. 4 f. 1-6 1979-1990
b. 5 f. 1-3 1979-1989

Never Too Late

Earlier titles: *A Blessed Event* (film script) and *Cradle and All*.

- b. 5 f. 4 Contracts 1962-1963
b. 5 f. 5-11 Clippings 1960s
b. 23 f. 1 Clippings 1963-1965
b. 6 f. 1-10 Correspondence 1956-1965
b. 24 f. 1 Photographs 1963-1966
b. 25 f. 1 Photographs 1962
Depicts marquee and people outside the theater.
- b. 25 f. 3-5 Posters 1959-1963
o. 1 Film Poster 1965
b. 7 f. 1-6 Programs and Fliers 1959-1960s
b. 24 f. 2-5 Scrapbooks 1962-1963
Scrapbooks contain clippings, photographs, and ephemera.

Scripts

- b. 7 f. 7 *A Blessed Event* 1951
b. 8 f. 1-8 *A Blessed Event, Cradle and All* 1950s
b. 9 f. 1-6 *Cradle and All* 1950s
b. 10 f. 1-6 *Never Too Late* 1960s
b. 11 f. 1-2 *Never Too Late Screenplay* 1964-1965

Angela

Earlier title: *A Room For Improvement*.

Theater (cont.)

Angela (cont.)

- b. 1 f. 3-4 Letters, Clippings, and Contracts 1966-1970
- b. 25 f. 2 Poster 1969
- b. 1 f. 5-9 Scripts 1966-1968
- b. 2 f. 1-4 Scripts 1960s

Television and Film

Scripts and story outlines.

- b. 12 f. 1 Contracts 1950-1965
- b. 11 f. 3-7 Outlines and Proposals circa 1950s
- b. 12 f. 2 *The Adventures of Hiram Holliday* 1956
- b. 12 f. 3 *Another Day* 1977
- b. 12 f. 4 *Apple's Way* 1974
- b. 12 f. 5-8 *The Betty Hutton Show* 1959-1960
- b. 13 f. 1 *Cannonball* 1958
- b. 13 f. 2-3 Carmen Miranda Pilot 1955
- b. 13 f. 4 *The Danny Thomas Show* 1950s
- b. 13 f. 5 *Denise* 1950s
- b. 13 f. 6 *The Dennis O'Keefe Show* 1959
- b. 13 f. 7-8 *The Donna Reed Show* 1961-1962
- b. 14 f. 1-2 *The Donna Reed Show* 1961
- b. 14 f. 3 *Father Knows Best* 1954-1955
- b. 14 f. 4-6 *Ford Theatre* 1953-1955
- b. 15 f. 1 *Good Heavens* 1975
- b. 15 f. 2 *The Hank McCune Show* 1950s
- b. 15 f. 3 *Hey Mulligan* 1950s
- b. 15 f. 4 *I Married Joan* 1950s
- b. 15 f. 5 *It's All in the Family* 1950, 1960
Screenplay and story.

Lassie

Scripts are arranged by copyright date or air date.

- b. 15 f. 6-8 1954-1955
Episode numbers 5409, 5533, 5545, 5560, and 5562. Includes only one script from 1954:
"The Gun" by Jackson Gillis.
- b. 16 f. 1-5 1956-1957
Episode numbers 5549, 5611, 5627, 5635, 5639, 5745, 5746, 5748, 5755, 5759, 5761, 5763,
5765, and 5770.
- b. 17 f. 1-5 1957-1959
Episode numbers 5749, 5769, 5781, 5811, 5812, 5816, 5822, 5829, 5838, and 5902.
- b. 18 f. 1-6 1960-1962
Episode numbers 5907, 5916, 5933, 5934, 5938, 6010, 6020, 6026, 6121, and 6122.

Television and Film (cont.)

Lassie (cont.)

- b. 19 f. 1-3 **1962-1963**
Episodes 6123, 6131, 6133, 6202, and 6215.

- b. 19 f. 4 **Outlines** circa 1959-1962
- b. 19 f. 5-8 **Unproduced Scripts** 1978
- b. 20 f. 1-2 ***The Life of Riley*** 1950s
- b. 20 f. 3 ***The Love Boat*** 1983
- b. 20 f. 4 ***Malcolm*** 1964
- b. 20 f. 5 ***The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis*** 1959
- b. 20 f. 6 ***Marriage Is for Two*** 1950s
- b. 20 f. 7 ***The Millionaire*** 1979
- b. 20 f. 8 ***Miss Bishop*** 1958
- b. 20 f. 9 ***Mr. Delmar's Dilemma*** circa 1950s
Film script.

- b. 21 f. 1 ***The Paul Lynde Show*** 1973
- b. 21 f. 2 ***Private Secretary*** 1950s
- b. 21 f. 3 ***Rate of Exchange*** circa 1950s
Film script.

- b. 21 f. 4 ***The Ray Milland Show*** 1954
- b. 21 f. 5 ***Room for Improvement*** circa 1950s
- b. 21 f. 6 ***Run Far, Run Fast*** 1976
- b. 21 f. 7 ***The Smith Family*** 1971
- b. 21 f. 8 ***Space Station One*** 1970s
Film script.

- b. 21 f. 9 ***Teen-Age Father*** 1960s
- b. 21 f. 10 ***Tooley's Way*** 1950s
- b. 22 f. 1 ***Two Is Company*** circa 1950s
Film script.

- b. 22 f. 2 ***Waldo*** 1956
Scripts, outlines, and character analysis for proposed television series.

- b. 22 f. 3 ***The Waltons*** 1974
- b. 22 f. 4-5 ***Wanted Dead or Alive*** 1961
- b. 22 f. 6 ***You Can't Take It With You*** 1954-1955