

Collection #  
M 1302  
BV 5231

## **THE PLAYERS RECORDS, 1906–2001**

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Processed by

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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 4 manuscript boxes, 1 bound volume, 3 folders of black and white photographs, 1 folder of color photographs, 2 bins color slides, 2 artifacts

COLLECTION DATES: 1906–2001

PROVENANCE: The Players Club, Indianapolis, January, 2002

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2002.0089

NOTES:

## HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Players club was formed in October, 1905, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Rabb at 520 East 11th Street. The club consisted of young, non professional actors who enjoyed doing skits or short plays and having a good time. Membership in the organization was limited to twenty-five members. Entertainment was to be handled by a committee chosen based upon the members interests.

The first meeting took place at the house of Miss Sue Howe at 1403 N. Delaware on 14 February 1906. After several successful and entertaining evenings at members houses, the group decided to put on a three act play in November of that year entitled *A Social Judas*. This proved to be more difficult than anticipated because the size of the cast was greater than the membership resulting in several actors playing more than one part. It was then decided to return to lighter, shorter productions.

The club's popularity led to an interest in more members, so the original twenty-five member rule was eliminated. The other issue that was addressed involved location of the performances. The club had outgrown its parlor performance area and needed a bigger venue. Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Henderson, whose son, Paul, was cast member, volunteered the use of their attic of their home at 1622 North Meridian and the location became known as the Attic Playhouse. Later architect Herbert Foltz built his house at 1847 N. Delaware with a rehearsal area in the basement which was dubbed the Foltzkellar.

By 1907 the membership number had climbed to fifty and included such names as Mr. and Mrs. Kurt Vonnegut and Mr. and Mrs. Robert F. Daggett. Some of the early productions included "Hoodwinked" and "The Mousetrap," not to be confused with the Agatha Christie play of the same name. In 1914 the club put on a play authored by local architect Lee Burns entitled the *Innocent Bystander*. With a membership at seventy-five by 1916 it was decided that it was necessary to keep records and elect officer and Kurt Vonnegut, Sr. was chosen as the club's first president.

Membership by 1912 exceeded seventy-five and the need for larger and larger venues continued to be an issue. The old Propylaeum on North Street between Meridian and Pennsylvania served the needs for a while, but most productions from 1909 onward took place at the Odeon, a concert venue located at Fort Wayne and Pennsylvania. It wasn't until 1927 that The Players found a permanent home in the recently constructed Playhouse of The Little Theatre Society of Indiana which later became the Civic Theatre. In 1942 plays and activities were moved to the Woodstock Country Club, returning to the Civic the following year. In recent years, The Players have held productions at several locations in Indianapolis including Park Tudor School, Woodstock Country Club, and the Murat Shrine.

Sources:

Information in collection

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

Materials from The Players include scrapbooks, membership books, production information, photographs, newspaper clippings, and correspondence, 1906–2001.

Scrapbooks contain production information such as programs, reviews, publicity, and newspaper clippings pertaining to the organization and its activities. Also included are committee meeting minutes and treasurer's reports, correspondence, and membership gains and losses, 1906–1982.

Also included in the collection are the organization's annual reports and membership rosters. In addition to membership listings, there are listings for officers, play committees, names of plays produced and their locations, and the by-laws, 1927–2000.

Production items include primarily playbills, but also some advertising and newspaper clippings, 1906–1909 and 1961–2001. Other items in the collection include the organization's history from 1905–1961, newspaper clippings, photographs, the 75th anniversary celebration, 1980, slides, index cards from The Players library, correspondence, and name cards for members.

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CONTAINER

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Artifacts: 2002.0089

35 mm Slides, Bin 1

35 mm Slides, Bin 2

Artifacts: 2002.0089