

Guide to the Greek Games Collection BC38

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Barnard Archives and Special Collections

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Summary Information

Repository	Barnard Archives and Special Collections
Title	Greek Games
Date [bulk]	Bulk, 1903-1969
Date [inclusive]	1903 - 2012
Extent	27.6 Linear feet (28 document boxes, 1 banker's box, 1 photo album, 1 oversize photograph, 1 oversize wooden hoop)
Physical Location	This collection is stored offsite and advance notice is required for access. To use this collection, please contact the Barnard Archives and Special Collections at 212.854.4079 or archives@barnard.edu .
Language	English
Abstract	The Greek Games were an annual competition, based on Ancient Greek competitions and consisting of athletic and artistic contests, held at Barnard College between the freshman and sophomore classes between the years 1903 and 1967, with sporadic attempts to revive them in later years. This collection consists of materials used in and created during the annual competition at Barnard College. Included are reports, instructions, rule books, annual programs, publicity materials, newspaper clippings, reference materials, correspondence, photographs, costumes, and props.

Preferred Citation

Greek Games, 1903-2012; Box and Folder; Barnard Archives and Special Collections, Barnard Library, Barnard College

Historical Note

The Greek Games were started in 1903 as an informal competition, when Alice Rheinsein Bernheim and Cecil Dorrian, members of the Class of 1905 challenged the Class of 1906 to a competition loosely modeled on Ancient Greek athletic competitions, including both athletic and lyrical competitions. The early years of the Games were very informal with a greater emphasis on the athletic contests, which consisted of wrestling, archery and tug-of-war. Although other colleges and universities held similar athletic contest based on the Greek model, Barnard's was unique in becoming more "Greek" in nature, with a greater emphasis placed on the costuming, poetry, pageantry and performance. In 1908, the class of 1910 presented a chorus and dance as part of the competition. The athletic events also changed to reflect the greater emphasis on historical accuracy and evolved to include such competitions as the discus throw, hurdling for form, hoop rolling, torch races and chariot presentations. A panel of judges awarded scores to the participants in the various competitions, including the poetry and costumes. In 1909, the Games were dedicated to a specific patron deity, which from that year forward became part of the competition.

Starting in 1912, tickets were offered for admission to people other than students, faculty and alumnae; in 1913, men were allowed into the audience and shortly thereafter, notable women and men of the day were invited to be judges of the competitions. Christopher Morley, from the Saturday Evening Post attended as a spectator in 1923; W. H. Auden was a Judge of Lyrics in 1947. As the Games became a staple of Barnard College campus life, they became more formalized and better organized. Initially organized by two small committees from each class, the increased extravagance and size of the Games required greater oversight. This was reflected by the creation of a centralized Greek Games Committee, formed from members of both competing classes, that oversaw everything from finances to lyrics to musical selection. Faculty oversight was also necessary, and professors from the Physical Education, Classics, English, Dance and Music Departments were key members in the organization of the Games. Of particular note are Edward Delevan Perry, Professor of Ancient Greek; Agnes Wayman, Marion Streng, Lelia Finan and Marion Philips, Professors of Physical Education; and Bird Larson and Mary Porter Beegle, dance instructors. Dean Virginia Gildersleeve was also instrumental in providing support to the Games.

By the 1920s, the Greek Games became an elaborate pageant based more on aesthetic performance than on athletic skill. Having been established as an essential part of campus life, there was great interest in the Games for the first half of the 20th Century. However, in the 1960s, interest in the Games began to wane. They were seen as an antiquated tradition of campus life that had little to do with the concerns of the students. This feeling culminated in 1968 when, in conjunction with the student strikes at Columbia University, the participants in the Greek Games voted to cancel the Greek Games in solidarity with those students. There was an attempt to re-establish the Greek Games in 1969 as part of a more general music and arts festival, but it was unsuccessful due to lack of interest. Other attempts were made to remount the games in later years, but have been similarly unsuccessful.

Collection Scope and Content Summary

The Greek Games collection consists of committee reports, faculty reports, instruction reports, judging guidelines, rule books, correspondence, music and lyrics sheets, programs for the annual Greek Games, newspaper clippings and magazines containing articles about the Greek Games, general information pamphlets, tickets, judges' scorecards, scrapbooks, promotional flyers, reference materials including reproduction photographs, design sheets and manuals, and manuscripts. The collection also contains photographs of the Greek Games, costumes and props from the Greek Games and other pieces of realia related to the Greek Games. There are no administrative records from the earliest years, 1903 – 1917. The records for the years 1918 to 1929 are minimal, demonstrating the lack of formal centralized planning. The records after that are extensive, providing information on the various committees and faculty members that planned the Greek Games; the exception is for the Greek Games of 1953, where only one record is extant. The records for the 1960s are not as uniformly structured as those from the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, demonstrating the decline of the Greek Games as a part of campus life and contributing to their eventual cancellation in 1968. The Reference Materials (Series IV) used in order to create as accurate a presentation as possible illustrate the commitment the participants had to the Greek Games in their heyday. The intensive work that went into the staging of the Greek Games is also apparent in the intricate props that were used in the Greek Games, particularly in the costumes worn and wreaths awarded during the Games (Series V).

Items produced as a consequence of the Greek Games, both Programs for each year's event (Series II) and Publicity Materials (Series III) highlight the pageantry and complexity that were a hallmark of the games. The Programs highlight the scope of the Greek Games by including both reproduction photographs of the events as well as the poetry and lyrics that were created for them. The Publicity Materials highlight the interest people in the greater New York area had in the Games as demonstrated by the extensive clippings scrapbooks created by both the Athletic Department and the Publicity Committee. It is of note, however, that by the 1960s this interest had waned considerably, and the clippings from this time come almost exclusively from the Barnard Bulletin and the Columbia Spectator.

Collection Arrangement

The Greek Games Collection is arranged in 6 series. The series arrangement of the records is as follows:

Series 1, Organizational Papers, 1918 -1996

Series 2, Programs, 1910 - 2012

Series 3, Publicity Materials, 1903 - 2001

Series 4, Reference Works, 1898 - 1966

Series 5, Ephemera, 1914 - 1965

Series 6, Photographs, 1913 - 1963

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Barnard Archives and Special Collections ©2010

Access

This collection has no restrictions.

Reproductions Restrictions

Photocopies or scans may be made for research purposes.

Publication Rights

Permission to publish material from the collection must be requested from the Barnard Archives and Special Collections. The Barnard Archives and Special Collections approves permission to publish that which it physically owns; the responsibility to secure copyright permission rests with the patron.

Accruals

Additions are expected.

Acquisition Information

Portions of the collection were donated by alumnae and transferred to the Archives from other offices of the College from the 1970s through the present day. The acquisition date and source of the remainder of the collection is unknown.

Processing History

This collection was processed by Marcia Bassett, Archivist and Elizabeth Parker, Queens College Intern '11. Finding aid written by Elizabeth Parker in December 2010 and edited by Martha Tenney in 2015.

Descriptive Rules Used: Finding aid adheres to that prescribed by Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Encoding: Machine readable finding aid encoded in EAD 2002.

Finding aid written in English.

Related Materials

Separation Note

Roughly 1100 photographs of the Greek Games and related activities originally housed with this collection were relocated to BC17, the Barnard College Photograph Collection. Additionally, a small number of films of the Greek Games that were previously considered a part of this collection are now housed with Barnard's moving image collections.

Controlled Access Headings

Genre(s)

- Photographs

Subject(s)

- Barnard College
- Student activities
- Students--Social life and customs

Collection Inventory

Series 1 Organizational Papers 1918-1996 4 document boxes, 2 volumes

Scope and Contents Note

This series comprises the bulk of the documentation regarding the Greek Games. The records in the series all relate to aspects of the planning, organization, and presentation of the Greek Games. Included are annual planning reports, business ledgers, judges' scorecards, minutes of student and faculty committees, reports produced by faculty members, reports from student chairmen, correspondence, business reports, instructions on the rules of precedence, and instructions on relating to scoring and judges. The folders in this series are organized chronologically, with the report date for each year's games spanning the academic year.

Of special interest are sample tickets from the cancelled Greek Games of 1967 – 1968 and records relating to two attempts to restage the Greek Games in 1989 and 1996.

Also of special interest are three complete sets of Greek Games rule books dating from 1922-1966, some of which have been annotated.

This series also includes a book written by Mary O'Donnell and Lelia Finan about the history and staging of the Greek Games.

Box

O'Donnell & Finnan. "Greek Games." (2 volumes), 1932 2.0

29

Box

Folder

Annual Planning Reports, 1918-1919 1.0 file

1

1

Annual Planning Reports, 1920-1921 1.0 file

1

2

Organizational Papers

Annual Planning Reports, 1921-1922	1.0 file	1	3
Annual Planning Reports, 1923-1923	1.0 file	1	4
Annual Planning Reports, 1923-1924	1.0 file	1	5
Annual Planning Reports, 1924-1925	1.0 file	1	6
Annual Planning Reports, 1925-1926	1.0 file	1	7
Annual Planning Reports, 1927-1928	1.0 file	1	8
Annual Planning Reports, 1928-1929	1.0 file	1	9
Annual Planning Reports, 1929-1930	1.0 file	1	10
Annual Planning Reports, 1930-1931	1.0 file	1	11
Annual Planning Reports, 1931-1932	1.0 file	1	12
Annual Planning Reports, 1932-1933	1.0 file	1	13
Annual Planning Reports, 1933-1934	1.0 file	1	14
Annual Planning Reports, 1934-1935	1.0 file	1	15
Annual Planning Reports, 1935-1936	1.0 file	1	16

Organizational Papers

Annual Planning Reports, 1936-1937	1.0 file	1	17
Annual Planning Reports, 1937-1938	1.0 file	1	18
Annual Planning Reports, 1938-1939	1.0 file	1	19
Annual Planning Reports, 1939-1940	1.0 file	1	20
Annual Planning Reports, 1940-1941	1.0 file	1	21
Annual Planning Reports, 1941-1942	1.0 file	1	22
Annual Planning Reports, 1942-1943	1.0 file	1	23
Annual Planning Reports, 1943-1944	1.0 file	1	24
Annual Planning Reports, 1944-1945	1.0 file	1	25
Annual Planning Reports, 1945-1946	1.0 file	1	26
Annual Planning Reports, 1946-1947	1.0 file	1	27
Annual Planning Reports, 1947-1948	1.0 file	1	28
Annual Planning Reports, 1948-1949	1.0 file	1	29
Annual Planning Reports, 1949-1950	1.0 file	1	30

Organizational Papers

Annual Planning Reports, 1950-1951 1.0 file	1	31
Annual Planning Reports, 1951-1952 1.0 file	1	32
Annual Planning Reports, 1952-1953 1.0 file	1	33
Annual Planning Reports, 1953-1954 1.0 file	1	34
Annual Planning Reports, 1954-1955 1.0 file	1	35
Annual Planning Reports, 1955-1956 1.0 file	1	36
Annual Planning Reports, 1956-1957 1.0 file	2	37
Publicity Committee, Chairman Duties, 1956-1957 1.0 file	2	38
Judge of Lyrics Competition, 1946-1957 1.0 file	2	39
Annual Planning Reports, 1957-1958 1.0 file	2	40
Annual Planning Reports, 1958-1959 1.0 file	2	41
Annual Planning Reports, 1959-1960 1.0 file	2	42
Annual Planning Reports, 1960-1961 1.0 file	2	43
Annual Planning Reports, 1961-1962 1.0 file	2	44

Organizational Papers

Annual Planning Reports, 1962-1963 1.0 file	2	45
Business Manager's Ledger, 1962-1963 1.0 file	2	46
Annual Planning Reports, 1963-1964 1.0 file	2	47
Business Manager's Ledger, 1963-1964 1.0 file	2	48
Business Manager's Ledger, 1944-1964 1.0 file	2	49
Annual Planning Reports, 1964-1965 1.0 file	2	50
Annual Planning Reports, 1965-1966 1.0 file	2	51
Scorecards, 1965-1966 1.0 file	2	52
Athletic and Business Ledger, circa 1959-1966 1.0 file	2	53
Annual Planning Reports, 1966-1967 1.0 file	3	54
Annual Planning Reports, 1967-1968 1.0 file	3	55
Sample Tickets, 1968-1968 1.0 file	3	56
Annual Planning Reports, 1968-1969 1.0 file	3	57
Athletic Department Instructions, circa 1967-1969 1.0 file	3	58

Organizational Papers

Undated Planning Reports, undated 1.0 file	3	59
Centennial Celebration Planning, 1989 1.0 file	3	60
“Clash of the Classes” Committee Papers, 1996 1.0 file	3	61
Rule Book, 1926-1941 1.0 file	3	62
Rule Book, Business Section, circa 1940s 1.0 file	3	63
Bound Rule Book, “Black Book”, circa 1926-1966 1.0 file	3	64
Rule Book, Schedule Pages 102 -107A, circa 1926-1966 1.0 file	3	65
Rule Book, rewritten, circa 1954 1.0 file	3	66
Rule Book, revised, circa 1954-1969 1.0 file	3	67
Rule Book, loose pages 138, 142-144, circa 1954-1979 1.0 file	4	68
Correspondence, 1918-1983 1.0 file	4	69
Music and Lyrics, 1919-1966 1.0 file	4	70
Backstage Instruction Posters, undated 1.0 file	4	71
List of sophomore priestesses, circa 1937 1.0 file	4	71.1

Programs

Incantations for priestesses and correspondence regarding incantations, 1918-1937 1.0 file	4	71.2
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Series 2 Programs 1910 - 2012 3 document boxes, 1 bankers box

Scope and Contents Note

This series consists of programs for the Greek Games, which lists events, competitors, committee members, faculty advisors, and judges, along with lyrics and poetry submitted for the competition. The programs feature reproduction photographs of the dress rehearsals. The originals for many of the images are be found in the Photographs collection. Many of the programs have been annotated with last minute substitutions in the lists of the competitors and were used to keep score.

	Box	Folder
Program, 1913 1.0 file	4	72
Program, 1914 1.0 file	4	73
Program, 1915 1.0 file	4	74
Program, 1916 1.0 file	4	75
Program, 1917 1.0 file	4	76
Program, 1918 1.0 file	4	77
Program, 1919 1.0 file	4	78

Programs

Program, 1920	1.0 file	4	79
Program, 1921	1.0 file	4	80
Program, 1922	1.0 file	4	81
Program, 1923	1.0 file	4	82
Program, 1924	1.0 file	4	83
Program, 1925	1.0 file	4	84
Program, 1926	1.0 file	4	85
Program, 1927	1.0 file	4	86
Program, 1928	1.0 file	4	87
Program, 1929	1.0 file	5	88
Program, 1930	1.0 file	5	89
Program, 1931	1.0 file	5	90
Program, 1932	1.0 file	5	91
Program, 1934	1.0 file	5	93

Programs

Program, 1935	1.0 file	5	94
Program, 1936	1.0 file	5	95
Program, 1937	1.0 file	5	96
Program, 1938	1.0 file	5	97
Program, 1939	1.0 file	5	98
Program, 1940	1.0 file	5	99
Program, 1941	1.0 file	5	100
Program, 1942	1.0 file	5	101
Program, 1943	1.0 file	5	102
Program, 1944	1.0 file	5	103
Program, 1945	1.0 file	5	104
Program, 1946	1.0 file	5	105
Program, 1947	1.0 file	6	106
Program, 1948	1.0 file	6	107

Programs

Program, 1949	1.0 file	6	108
Program, 1950	1.0 file	6	109
Program, 1951	1.0 file	6	110
Program, 1952	1.0 file	6	111
Program, 1953	1.0 file	6	112
Program, 1954	1.0 file	6	113
Program, 1955	1.0 file	6	114
Program, 1956	1.0 file	6	115
Program, 1957	1.0 file	6	116
Program, 1958	1.0 file	6	117
Program, 1959	1.0 file	6	118
Program, 1960	1.0 file	6	119
Program, 1961	1.0 file	6	120
Program, 1962	1.0 file	6	121

Programs

Program, 1963	1.0 file	6	122
Program, 1964	1.0 file	6	123
Program, 1965	1.0 file	6	124
Program, 1966	1.0 file	6	125
Program, 1968	1.0 file	6	127
Greek Games Donor Dinner program, 2012	1.0 file	6	127.1
Program, 2000	1.0 file	6	128.2
			Box
Bound Greek Games Programs, 1910-1925	1.0 volume		29
Bound Greek Games Programs, 1910-1935	1.0 volume		29
Bound Greek Games Programs, 1926-1935	1.0 volume		29
Bound Greek Games Programs, 1936-1945	1.0 volume		29
Bound Greek Games Programs, 1936-1955	1.0 volume		29
Bound Greek Games Programs, 1946-1966	1.0 volume		29

Publicity Materials

29

Bound Greek Games Programs, 1956-1966

Series 3 Publicity Materials 1903 - 2001 2 document boxes, 1 bankers box**Scope and Contents Note**

This series is comprised of materials from the Alumnae Association, the Publicity Committee, and the Office of Public Relations to publicize the Greek Games. In addition to loose newspaper clippings there are three scrapbooks of newspaper clippings and photographs created by the Publicity Committee and the Athletic Department. Also included are materials relating to the book *To the Gods of Hellas*, a collection of lyrics from the Greek Games and published by the Alumnae Association.

Box

29

"To the Gods of Hellas." (5 copies), 1930 5.0

Box**Folder**

Barnard Bulletin, "Greek Festival", May, 1903 1.0 file

7

128

Athletic Department Clippings Scrapbook, 1913-1934 1.0 file

7

129

Athletic Department Clippings Scrapbook, 1935-1940 1.0 file

7

130

Christopher Morley, Letter and Article, 1923 1.0 file

7

131

Photo Essay Clippings, 1929 1.0 file

7

132

Promotional Materials for "To the Gods of Hellas.", 1930 1.0 file

7

133

Reference Works

Barnard College Alumnae Bulletin, Clippings, 1938-1975 1.0 file	7	134
Publicity Committee Scrapbook, 1943-1952 1.0 file	7	135
Flyers and Posters, 1935-1969 1.0 file	7	136
Office of Public Relations Reports, circa 1950s 1.0 file	7	137
Atlantis Magazine, May, 1954 1.0 file	7	138
Information Booklet: "Is Everything Greek to You?", 1957 1.0 file	7	139
MD: Medical Newsmagazine, February 1964 1.0 file	7	140
Newspaper Clippings, photocopies, 1914-1996 1.0 file	7	141
Newspaper Clipping, originals, 1914-1996 1.0 file	7	142
"New Yorker" Cartoons, undated 1.0 file	8	143
Magazine Article; Beirut, Lebanon, undated 1.0 file	8	144

Series 4 Reference Works 1898 - 1966 1 document box, 1 bankers box

Scope and Contents Note

This series contains pictures, pamphlets, scrapbooks, periodicals, and manuscripts used for reference purposes by the organizers of the Greek Games. Included are images, photographs, and drawings of classical Greek imagery, pamphlets relating to Ancient Greek athletics and games, and information on

Reference Works

costume construction. Of special interest is a manuscript on the history of the Greek Games written by a Barnard Alumna, Julie Marsteller and Edward Delevan Perry's bound collection of the ancient Greek invocations and challenges.

	Box	Folder
Plummer, E. "Athletics and Games of the Ancient Greeks", 1898 1.0 file	8	145
Costume Design, circa 1924 1.0 file	8	146
Schmid, V. "Costumes for Classical Plays", 1928 1.0 file	8	147
Professor Wayman's Greek Games Costume Book, circa 1928 1.0 file	8	148
Article, "Ancient Athletics", October, 1930 1.0 file	8	149
Miniature Reproductions, "Greek Athletics and Festivals in the 5th Century", 1939 1.0 file	8	150
Reserve Book List, Autumn, 1948 1.0 file	8	151
Vaticano, 1957 1.0 file	8	152
"Greek Vases from the Hearst Collection", 1957 1.0 file	8	153
Julie Marsteller manuscript, "Greek Games: the First Twenty Years", 1966 1.0 file	8	154
Chariot Design Illustrations, undated 1.0 file	8	155

Ephemera

Stage Design Illustrations, undated 1.0 file	8	156
“Greek Ethic”, undated 1.0 file	8	157
Postcards, undated 1.0 file	8	158
Reference Pictures, undated 1.0 file	8	159
		Box
Edward D. Perry. "Greek Games Invocations." (3 copies), 1918-1937 1.0 volume		29

Series 5 Ephemera 1914 - 1965 19 boxes, one oversize wooden hoop

Scope and Contents Note

This series is comprised of the objects that were created either for or as a result of the staging of the Greek Games. Included in this series are costumes worn during the Greek games, wreathes presented to winners of competitions, the hoop and discus used in the Games, a bronze charioteer pin, a miniature model of a chariot, and a hand painted watercolor card given to Marion Philips by the Class of 1964.

Of note is the orange tunic with green decoration, which was the Athletic costume for the Class of 1962 in their sophomore year, when the costume committee was chaired by Martha Stewart, Class of 1963.

Also of interest is a collection of papers relating to the Chester Beach statue “Spirit of the Greek Games.”

	Box	Folder
“Spirit of the Greek Games” Statue by Chester Beach, 1930-1996 1.0 file	8	160
Watercolor Thank You Card, circa 1964 1.0 file	8	161

Ephemera

Object Descriptions, 1930-1980 1.0 file	8	162
1957 Greek Games ticket and laurel leaf, 1957 1.0 file	8	164
		Box
Marble Oath Stone, 1911 1.0 box		9
Wreath for Entrance Words, April 14, 1917 1.0 box		10
Blue Tunic, undated 1.0 box		11
Wreath in Picture Frame, circa 1932 1.0 box		12
“Spirit of the Greek Games” Plaster Frieze, circa 1932 1.0 box		13
Chariot Medal, 1953 1.0 box		14
Orange Tunic with Green Decoration, 1960 1.0 box		15
Yellow Tunic with Brown Decoration, circa 1961 1.0 box		16
Blue Tunic with Green Decoration, circa 1965 1.0 box		17
Yellow Tunic with Red Decoration, circa 1960s 1.0 box		18
Yellow Tunic with Red Decoration, circa 1960s 1.0 box		19

Photographs

Yellow Tunic with Red Decoration, circa 1960s 1.0 box	20
Horse Costume, 1930 Games, Sophomore class of 1932, 1930 1.0 box	21
Black and Red Tunic, undated 1.0 box	22
White Tunic with Purple Decoration, 1.0 box	23
Pin for Challenger's Cape or Charioteer, 1.0 box	24
Discus, undated 1.0 box	25
	Oversize
Wooden Hoop, undated 1.0 box	Not boxed
	Box
Greek Games costume, undated 1.0 box	28
Series 6 Photographs 1913 - 1963 2 photographs, 1 album	
General Content Note	
This series consists of a small number of photographs of the Greek Games and related activities. A large number of photographs originally included in this series were moved to the Photographs collection, and a small number of moving images was moved to the moving images collection.	
	Box

Photographs

Photo album presented by classes of 1915 and 1916 to Mrs. Thurber, circa 1913 volume	1.0	26
	Box	Folder
Photograph, 1963 Greek Games, 1963	1.0 file	8
		163
		Drawer
Oversized photograph, undated	1.0 file	Flat file 2