



**FINDING AID TO THE
MORTAR BOARD RECORDS, 1924-2009**

**Purdue University Libraries
Virginia Kelly Karnes Archives and Special Collections
Research Center
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West Lafayette, Indiana 47907-2058
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Processed by: Virginia Pleasant, March 5, 2014
Revised by: Virginia Pleasant, February 23, 2016

Descriptive Summary

Creator Information	Mortar Board, 1924-
Title	Mortar Board records
Collection Identifier	MSP 148
Date Span	1924-2010, predominant 1965-2005
Abstract	The collection contains correspondence, photos, certificates, pamphlets, and scrapbooks, etc. documenting the history and activities of the Mortar Board honor society at Purdue University.
Extent	6.95 cubic feet, 13 boxes and 8 OVS scrapbooks
Finding Aid Author	Virginia Pleasant, 2014
Languages	English
Repository	Virginia Kelly Karnes Archives and Special Collections Research Center, Purdue University Libraries

Administrative Information

Location Information:	Vault
Access Restrictions:	Collection is open for research. The collection is stored offsite; 24 hours notice is required to access the collection.
Acquisition Information:	Transferred from Dean of Students Office via Joanna Sharp, June 14, 2013; Additional records were transferred from Student Activities and Organizations Office, in December, 2015
Accession Number:	20130614; 20151210.1
Preferred Citation:	MSP 148, Mortar Board records, Karnes Archives and Special Collections, Purdue University Libraries
Copyright Notice:	Purdue University
Related Materials Information:	MSF 467, Barbara Cook papers

UA 12.05.02-6, Dean of Women records

Mortar Board records- Jane Hamblin's Office

Elizabeth Venemann Lyle's Mortar Board Coat

Purdue University. Dean of Students- Mortar Board-
Records

Subjects and Genres

Persons

Barbara Cook
Carolyn Shoemaker

Organizations

Mortar Board (Society)

Topics

Women's Archives at Purdue University
Women's clubs
Purdue University--Students--Social life and customs
Purdue University—History

Form and Genre Types

Correspondence
Ephemera
Office Files
Photos/ Negatives

History of Mortar Board

The Mortar Board chapter at Purdue University began with the creation of the SLS honor society in the fall of 1924. The ideals and goals of SLS were embodied in its name, the letters standing for Service, Leadership, and Scholarship. The seven senior women inducted into the organization in 1924 initially operated secretly and individually within the community to achieve these standards; the ultimate goal was to eventually secure affiliation with the National Mortar Board society. Beginning with the first class of inductees in the spring of 1925, SLS moved into the public sphere and began to operate as a cohesive unit. SLS restricted membership to senior women with a minimum grade average of 85, and they were initiated during May Day festivities of their junior year.

The focus within SLS was on providing opportunities for and recognition of leadership by women students and the support of their character development. From its inception, the group aligned itself with other women's organizations and leaders on campus including the Women's Athletic Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, and the Purdue Office of the Dean of Women. During the spring of 1926, SLS members began to more actively pursue their proposal for acceptance into the National Mortar Board society. Members compiled a petition in scrapbook form to be presented by an SLS delegate at the National Mortar Board Conference in November of 1926. The book contains historical information about and photos of Purdue, SLS, and SLS members and alumnae. Also included in the book are several letters of support from regional Mortar Board chapters and prominent members of Purdue faculty.

After their petition was approved in the fall of 1926, SLS changed their name to the Mortar Board honor society. Membership was still restricted to senior women of high scholastic aptitude. Dean Carolyn Shoemaker was a faculty member of the society and supported their various endeavors in the early years, including the sponsorship of a women's glee club at Purdue, Alpha Lambda Delta, and the Gold Peppers. In addition to providing support for other women's groups on campus, Mortar Board hosted annual dances, teas, and breakfasts and engaged in volunteer work in the community. By the 1930s, they also began to donate scholarship funds to the Dean of Women to be distributed to deserving women students; these early awards served as a precursor for the better-known Mortar Board scholarships and fellowships.

Beginning in 1945, Mortar Board also contributed financially to the scholarship funds offered jointly by the Gold Peppers and Women's Panhellenic Association. Mortar Board's contributions to the various scholarship funds were collected through their annual calendar sales. By 1955, calendar sales were successful enough to enable Mortar Board to establish a separate scholarship fund in addition to the money contributed to the jointly awarded scholarships. A report compiled by the Mortar Board Scholarship Committee indicates that by 1971, the group had contributed over \$100k to women pursuing their education. After the advent of Title IX legislation and

the inclusion of male students in the club, the scholarships became available to men as well—but it does seem as though women students and Mortar Board members and alumni were given precedence.

In addition to their significant contributions to scholarship funds at Purdue University, the Barbara Cook Chapter of the Mortar Board Society sponsored a number of other efforts at the university: lecture series, health clinics, and informational books. In addition, the group sponsored long-lasting testaments to their presence such as various memorials to the Deans of Women and Amelia Earhart and a pond/sitting area at the Ag Hort Park in honor of their 50th anniversary.

The club operates today with a continued focus on the tenets of scholarship, leadership, and service. Annual calendar sales still fund numerous scholarship and fellowship opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate students.

Source(s):

MSP 148, Mortar Board records, Karnes Archives and Special Collections, Purdue University Libraries

Debris yearbooks, Karnes Archives and Special Collections, Purdue University

Collection Description

Scope

The Mortar Board records (1924-2009; 3.45 cubic feet) document the establishment and myriad activities of the Barbara Cook Chapter of the Mortar Board National Society at Purdue University. The collection reflects the changing scope of Mortar Board over the years, from their early supportive roles in the university, to their position as a major donor of scholarships and fellowships for women (and later men) students, and their devotion to fostering leadership skills in their members. This collection might be useful for researchers interested in women's history and organizations, women's liberation and the latent effects of Title IX legislation, student life and activities during the twentieth century, scholarship funds, and the impact of the Deans of Women at Purdue. Types of materials include: correspondence, publications, society records, scrapbooks, photos, slides and negatives, video and audio cassettes, optical drives, and removable discs. The Records are organized by type into four series:

Arrangement

1. Petition Book, 1924-1926 (0.45 cubic feet). This series consists of the petition book that was compiled in scrapbook format by SLS when they were petitioning for acceptance to the Mortar Board Society. The book includes historical information on and photos of SLS and Purdue, as well as information about its members and alumni. The second half of the book contains letters of support from regional chapters of Mortar Board and prominent faculty members. Of particular note in this section of the book are letters from Carolyn Shoemaker, Virginia Meredith, Mary Matthews, Stanley Coulter, President Elliott, and David Ross. There is also information about opportunities available to women students and prominent women alumnae and faculty.

2. Papers, 1925-2015 (2.1 cubic feet). This series consists of various manuscript material documenting the history and activities of the Barbara Cook Chapter of the Mortar Board Society. The records also give some indication of the chapter's interactions with the National Mortar Board Society. Much of the series is comprised of correspondence with various university officials, scholarship winners, and others. Also included are some minutes and internal memos.

3. Scrapbooks, 1950-2007 (3 cubic feet). This series consists of scrapbooks that were compiled by Mortar Board Historians each year. The content of scrapbooks varies from year to year, but generally includes pictures, notes and captions, and clippings related to Mortar Board and women students at Purdue. Materials are organized loosely by year; some larger books may be out of chronological order due to being stored separately.

4. Photos, Negatives, and Slides, 1927-2003 (0.75 cubic feet). The photos and slides in this series document the initiation and activities of Barbara Cook Chapter of the Mortar Board Society over the years. Also depicted is the involvement of the various Deans of Women with group.

5. Other Media, ca.1987-2009 (0.2 cubic feet). This series consists of optical drives, removable discs, video and audio cassettes. They document various activities and events participated in by the Barbara Cook Chapter of the Mortar Board.

6. Framed Items and Plaques, 1929, 1999-2000 (0.6 cubic feet). This series consists of a framed copy of a Little Orphan Annie cartoon drawn for the chapter by Harold Gray, a framed medallion, and a plaque honoring Helen Schlemen.

Descriptive Rules Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Processing Information

All materials have been housed in archival containers. All newsprint has been photocopied and in most cases original newspaper clippings have been discarded. Some clippings containing images of people or color graphics, or front pages of newspapers, have been preserved for display purposes, with photocopies made available for research. Some papers were originally in unlabeled binders, but have been removed and grouped into folders as they were grouped within the binders. Oversized maps, blueprints, diagrams, certificates, and other printed material [OVS]; photographs; and artifacts have been separated and grouped into individual series for preservation purposes.

Additions and Revisions

In December 2015, approximately four cubic feet of additional Mortar Board materials was transferred to the Archives from the Student Activities and Organizations Office. The new materials were processed and added to the existing processed collection in February 2016. The bulk of materials added were scrapbooks documenting the membership and activities of Mortar Board; these were organized into their own series. Additional papers, publications, slides, etc were merged with the existing collection and organized accordingly.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Series 1. Petition Book, 1924-1926

(0.30 cubic feet)

Box

1 Petition Book, 1924-1926

Series 2. Papers, 1926-2009

(1.6 cubic feet)

Files, 1925-1990, 2015

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
2	1	1925-1927 SLS, 1926
11	1	Correspondence and Manuscripts- Founding of Mortar Board, 1925-1926
2	2	1967-1968 Mortar Board, 1967-1973
2	3	1968-1969 Mortar Board, 1968-1973
2	4	1969-1970 Mortar Board, 1969-1970
2	5	1970-1971 Mortar Board, 1970-1971
2	6	1971-1972 Mortar Board, 1971-1972
2	7	1972-1973 Mortar Board, 1972-1973
2	8	1973-1974 Mortar Board, 1973
2	9	1987-1988 Mortar Board, 1987
6	2	Mortar Board Newspaper, 1984
11	2	Mortar Board Quarterly, 1951-1959
11	3	Mortar Board Quarterly, 1960-1967
11	4	Mortar Board Forum Newsletter, 1970s-1980s
11	5	Minute Book, 1941-1945
11	6	Minute Book, 1946-1949
11	7	Minute Book, 1950-1959
11	8	Homecoming program, 2015
11	9	1990 Reunion Class of 1980 "Vitae", 1990

Annual Reports, 1945-1985

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
2	10	Annual Reports, 1945-1950
2	11	Annual Reports, 1950-1960
2	12	Annual Reports, 1960-1966
2	13	Annual Reports, 1970-1980
2	14	Annual Reports, 1983-1985

Projects, 1965-2010

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
2	15	Mortar Board Alumni, 1999-2008
2	16	Sponsored Events, 1979-1981, 1986-1987
2	17	Sportsmanship Committee, 1979-1980
2	18	Sponsored Reports, 1965-1966, 1979 Including report on proposed changes to women's hours, 1965-1966
3	1	50 th Anniversary Horticulture Park Project, 1976-1980
3	2	50 th Anniversary Correspondence, 1976
3	3	50 th Anniversary Planning, 1976
3	4	75 th Anniversary, 2001
3	5	80 th Anniversary, 2006
3	6	Dean of Students Portrait Project, 2008
3	7	Dean of Students Portrait Project, 2009
3	8	Dean of Students Portrait Project, 2010
3	9	Dean of Students Portrait Project Photos, 1942-2004
3	10	Certificates, 1988-2001
6	1	Distinguished Purdue Woman Certificate for Helen Schlemen, 1986
3	11	News Clippings, 1926-2005 (predominant 1975-1976)
3	12	Ephemera, 1989, 2010
3	13	Graduate School Handbook, 1968
3	14	Graduate School Handbook, 1970
3	15	Graduate School Handbook, 1971
3	16	Graduate School Handbook Other Schools, 1967-1969
3	17	Undergraduate Scholarship Book, 1989-1990
5	1	Fall Retreat, 2002-2003
5	2	Volleyball Tournament, 2002
5	3	Homecoming Tailgate Reception, 2002
5	4	Horizon's Scholar Reception, 2002-2003
5	5	Women Dean's Welcome Reception, 2002-2003
5	6	Christmas Caroling, 2002
5	7	Leadership Conference. 2003-2004
5	8	Selection, 1998-2010
5	9	Reading Extravaganza, 2002-2004
5	10	Tapping, 2003
5	12	Initiation, 2002-2004
5	14	Farewell Dinner, 2003
5	15	Community Service, 2002-2003
5	16	Social, 2002-2003
5	20	Initiation Script, 2004
OVFF	1	Horticultural Park Project Plans, 1976

Calendar and Scholarships, 1955-2005

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
3	18	Mortar Board Calendar, 1973-1974
4	1	Mortar Board Calendar Committee, 1955-1956
4	2	Mortar Board Calendar Committee, 1960-1970
4	3	Mortar Board Calendar Committee, 1970-1975
4	4	Mortar Board Calendar Committee, 1975-1980
4	5	Mortar Board Calendar Committee, 1999-2000
4	6	Calendar Cover Competition, 1999
4	7	Calendar Cover Competition, 2000
4	8	Calendar Cover Competition, 2001
4	9	Calendar Cover Competition, 2002
4	10	Calendar Cover Competition, 2003
4	11	Calendar Cover Competition, 2005
4	12	Scholarships Committee, 1955-1960
4	13	Scholarships Committee, 1960-1970
4	14	Scholarships Committee, 1970-1980
4	15	Scholarships Committee, 1980-1990
5	11	Binder- Fellowships, 2003
5	13	Binder- Awards Dessert, 2003-2008
5	17	Binder- Awards Nomination Form and Selection Materials, 2003
5	18	Binder- Awards Program Materials, 2003
5	19	Binder- Additional Awards Materials, 2002

Series 3. Scrapbooks, ca 1950-2007

(3 cubic feet)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
11	10	Scrapbook, circa 1950s
12	1	Scrapbook, 1970-1971
12	2	Scrapbook, 1987-1988
12	3	Scrapbook, 1988-1989 Including letter from Barbara Cook upon renaming of group to the Barbara Cook Chapter of Mortar Board
12	4	Scrapbook, 1989-1990 Including several pictures of the women deans
12	5	Scrapbook, 1990-1991
13	1	Scrapbook, 1991-1992
13	2	Scrapbook, 1994-1995
13	3	Scrapbook, 1995-1996
13	4	Scrapbook, 1996-1997
13	5	Scrapbook, 1997-1998
13	6	Scrapbook, 1999-2000
13	7	Scrapbook, 2000-2001

Shelf	1	Scrapbook, 1961-1964
Shelf	2	Scrapbook, 1964-1968
Shelf	3	Scrapbook, 1971-1972
Shelf	4	Scrapbook, 1978-1979
Shelf	5	Scrapbook, 1998-1999
Shelf	6	Scrapbook, 2001-2002
Shelf	7	Scrapbook, 2004-2005
Shelf	8	Scrapbook, 2006-2007

Series 4. Photographs, Negatives, and Slides, 1927-2003
(0.75 cubic feet)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
9	1	Slides, 1972-1973
9	2	Slides, 1973-1974
9	3	Slides, 1977-1978
9	4	Slides, 1978-1979
9	5	Slides, 1984-1985
9	6	Slides, 1985-1986
9	7	Slides, 1987-1988
9	8	Slides, 1988-1999
9	9	Slides, ca 1980s
9	10	Slides, 1990-1991
9	11	Negatives, ca. 1980s-2000s
9	12	Negatives, 1980s
9	13	Negatives, 1990s
9	14	Negatives, 2000s
9	15	Alumni Club Negatives, 1999-2009
10	1	Photographs, 1927
10	2	Photographs, ca. 1970s
10	3	Photographs, 1980s
9	16	Photographs, 1987-1988
10	4	Photographs, 1990s
10	5	Photographs, 2000s
10	6	Group Photographs, ca. 1990s-2000s

Series 5. Other Media, ca. 1987-2009

(0.2 cubic feet)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Item</u>	
8	1	VHS- Mortar Board Dinner, 1994
8	2	VHS- Mortar Board Orientation, 1987
8	3	VHS- Mortar Board "Share the Tradition, Shape the Future", unknown date
8	4	Audio Cassette- "Institutional Responses to AIDS", unknown date
8	5	Removable Disc- Yellow, Unlabeled, Unknown Date
8	6	Removable Disc- Mortar Board Cover Stacey Strickler, 2002-2003
8	7	Removable Disc- Josh Thompson Mortar Board Covers, unknown date
8	8	CD- Mortar Board National Conference, 2005
8	9	CD- Mortar Board Portrait Project, 2009
8	10	CD- Michael Yates Mortar Board Submission

Series 6. Framed Items and Plaques, 1929, 1999-2000

(0.6 cubic feet)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Item</u>	
6	3	Little Orphan Annie Cartoon, 1929
7	1	Mortar Board Metal, 1999-2000
7	2	Plaque from Sigma Delta Chi honoring Helen Schlemen