



BHC-MSS 0183

Guide to the Records of the Bridgeport Historical Society Inc.

by Meg Rinn

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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Bridgeport Historical Society Inc.

Title: Records of the Bridgeport Historical Society Inc.

Dates: 1956-1970

Quantity: 1 linear foot, 2 ½ manuscript boxes

Abstract The Bridgeport Historical Society Inc. was active from 1957 to approximately 1969. While it had a small number of objects, its focus was primarily on the preservation of historic buildings in Bridgeport, laying the groundwork for later individuals and organizations to ensure the long term safety of such buildings.

Language: English

Repository: Bridgeport History Center

Biographical History:

The Bridgeport Historical Society Inc. was active from 1957 to approximately 1969. Founded by individuals such as Barnum Museum curator Elizabeth Seeley and defender of the Harral-Wheeler Mansion Edna Richardson, its goal was to preserve Bridgeport history. It should not be confused with past historical societies, such as the ones based out of the Barnum Museum in the 1890s, nor any currently active groups such as the Bridgeport Community Historical Society.

Based on the records in the collection, the group had a small collection of objects, and were especially interested in historic buildings in Bridgeport. Given that this organization was working in the direct aftermath of the destruction of the Harral-Wheeler house, the emphasis is easy to follow, and indeed, their notes and documents appear to lay the groundwork for the later Bridgeport Architecture Conservancy. The BAC did enormous amounts of work in supporting Charles Brilvitch's efforts to document historic homes and areas in Bridgeport, many of which are a part of the National Historic Register, either individually or as a part of a particular neighborhood designation. The Bridgeport Historical Society Inc. worked to protect the Old Fairfield County Courthouse as well.

It is unclear why the group disbanded.

Scope and Content note:

Contains files, clippings, minutes and correspondence of the group, with special emphasis on the preservation of the Wheeler mansion, an historic building survey which would later be picked up by the Bridgeport Architectural Conservancy, and work with the State Historical Commission to save the old Fairfield County Courthouse.

Arrangement Note:

Subject file arranged alphabetically.

Administrative information:

Provenance: 1975.08, gift of Christopher Collier

Preferred Citation:

Records of the Bridgeport Historical Society Inc. (BHC-MSS 0183), Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library.

See also

Papers of Edna M. Richardson Regarding the Preservation of the Harral-Wheeler House (BHC-MSS 0089) Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library.

Records of the Bridgeport Architecture Conservancy (BHC-MSS 0131), Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library.

Names and Subject Tracings*Personal names*

Seeley, Elizabeth S.

Richardson, Edna M.

Subject tracings

Bridgeport, Conn.

Historic preservation

Historical societies

Detailed box/folder listing

Box 1

1. Articles of association, 1957
2. Brooks house, Capt. John Jr. (Wilder will copy), undated
3. Bylaws, undated
4. Clippings, 1965-1966
5. Collections, undated
6. Correspondence, 1958-1965
7. Correspondence, 1966-1968
8. Correspondence, 1969-1970
9. Financial, 1964-1968
10. Historic building survey, 1965-1967
11. Meetings, 1965-1968
12. Membership, 1965
13. Morgan, James Keeler, 1965
14. Old courthouse, 1956-1960
15. Stationary, undated

