Descriptive Summary

Creator: American Almanacs, Old Farmer's Almanac, Middlebrook's Almanac, and others
Title: Guide to the Seeley Collections of Almanacs
Dates: 1776-1990
Quantity: 34 pamphlet boxes

Abstract: Collected by former Barnum Museum curator Elizabeth Seeley, the almanac collection demonstrates the wide dissemination and use of almanacs in the 1800s into the 1900s. Almanacs were primarily guides for farming, but almost always included astrological information, entertainment, jokes, and other items. Their history goes back into the medieval era and earlier, as farming and tidal information was absolutely essential for pre-industrial societies.

Language: English

Repository: Bridgeport History Center

Note: This collection was arranged by former archivist David Palmquist. The description and slight readjusting of material was performed by Meg Rinn. Some material bears the Bridgeport Public Library stamp, implying that additions to the base collection from the Seeley home was added onto over the years.

Biographical History:
Elizabeth Sterling Seeley (1897-1974) was a direct descendant of P.T. Barnum, and in addition to being an active member of the Bridgeport community, served as the curator of the Barnum Museum. She was an avid collector of many things as well as invested in keeping the Barnum legacy alive. Following her death in 1974, material from her estate was acquired by the Bridgeport History Center. In addition to her personal papers, several of her collections were also taken in, including that of her almanacs.

While it is unclear why she chose to collect them, their range of 1776 into the 1970s provides a window into the mass production of an important annual publication that many Americans relied on. Additional almanacs were added to the collection following her death in 1974. These items were likely found within the Bridgeport History Center’s stacks and simply appended to the collection.

Bibliography
https://www.americanantiquarian.org/proceedings/44817296.pdf


Scope and Content note:
As a genre, almanacs are incredibly old with a history going as far back as 2000 BCE. The purpose has largely remained unchanged: they record important information for farming and seafaring, with an emphasis on predictions for crops, tides, and phases of the moon.

Within early America and throughout the 19th century, almanacs were viewed as a key reference guide for not only farming and seafaring, but a means of tracking time. This was especially true for rural areas, where it was easier to track natural cycles such as the phases of the moon. They were highly valued in a household, and they can be incredibly valuable historical resources that reflect concerns of certain communities. Later volumes with advertisements and the like can be used to study consumer culture as it grew in the 19th century.

The two most prominent titles in the collection are the Old Farmer's Almanac, originally edited by Robert B. Thomas and still being published today. Middlebrooks' Almanac was published by Elijah Middlebrook in Bridgeport, Connecticut, making it the most local of the publications in the collection.

**Arrangement Note:**
Arranged alphabetically, with smaller volumes of material grouped together, arranged alphabetically, and placed at the end of the collection.

**Administrative information:**
Provenance: Accession #1974.09

Preferred Citation:
Please cite the almanac as an individual book according to the style guide you are using.

**Detailed box and folder listing**

Box 1, American Almanac, 1830-1835

Box 2, American Almanac, 1836-1882

Box 3, Ayers Almanac, 1885-1880

Box 4, Beckwidth Almanac, 1870-1887

Box 5, Beers Almanac, 1813-1832

Box 6, Telephone Co. and Bell System Almanacs, 1934-1952

Box 7, Family Christian Almanac, 1848-1869

Box 8, Old Farmer's Almanac, 1799-1845

Box 9, Old Farmer's Almanac, 1846-1891

Box 10, Old Farmer's Almanac, 1915-1936

Box 11, Old Farmer's Almanac, 1937-1954
Box 13, Old Farmer's Almanacs, 1971, 1976-1977
Box 15, Middlebrook's Almanacs, 1807-1834
Box 16, Middlebrook's Almanacs, 1835-1848
Box 17, Middlebrook's Almanacs, 1849-1859
Box 18, Middlebrook's Almanacs, 1860-1872, 1874
Box 19, Middlebrook's Almanacs, 1875-1881
Box 20, Middlebrook's Almanacs, 1883-1892
Box 21, Middlebrook's Almanacs, 1893-1916
Box 22, Middlebrook's Almanacs, 1917-1923-1927, 1930-1938
Box 23, New England Almanacs, 1837,1839, 1841, 1843,1845,1848-1851,1853-1857
Box 24, New England Almanacs, 1858-1875
Box 25, New England Almanacs, 1876-1885,1887-1889, 1891 1892,1894
Box 26, New England Almanacs, 1895-1910
Box 27, New York Almanack, 1871,1877, 1823
    Prindell's Almanac, 1825,1829,1831, 1842,1848,1849,1853
Box 28, New England Almanack, 1805, 1806, 1809,
    Allen, Anson Almanac, 1910, 1834,1836
    Newtonian Reflector, 1827, 1930
    Palmers, 1933
    Hutchins Improved Almanac and Ephemeris, 1769,1773,1792,1828, 1836, 837
    Illustrated Pilgrim Almanac, 1860, 1861, 1866,
    Boston, Massachusetts, 1872, 1881, 1882
    Christian Almanac – Hartford, 1827,1829,1831
    Christian Almanac – Boston, 1829
Box 29, Standard Annual Almanac, 1894-1898, 1901
Box 30, Staffords' Almanac, 1776-1778, 1797, 1801,18041803,1826
Box 31, Tribune Almanacs, 1857-1859, 1862, 1973
    Whig Almanacs, 1845, 1849-1850, 1852, 1854-1955

Box 32, Agricultural & Economic Almanacs, 1817-1818
    American Agriculturist Almanac, 1847
    American Farmers’ Almanac, 1845
    Ames, Nathaniel Almanac, 1760
    Annual Register of Rural, 1857
    Affairs Almanac
    Centaur, 1873
    Centennial Almanac, 1878
    Celestial Diary by Salem Pearse, 1750
    Columbia Almanack, 1830
    Comic Almanac, 1839
    Connecticut Almanac New Haven, 1821
    Crocket, Davy Comic, 1845
    Day’s City & Country Almanac, 1842
    Day’s New York Pocket Almanac, 1831
    Family Almanac, N.Y., N.Y., 1842
    Farmer’s Diary of the U.S., 1791, 1793
    Farmer’s New Poor Richard Almanac, 1892
    Greens Connecticut Annual Register, 1845
    Greenleaf’s Almanac & Ephemeris, 1792, 1795
    Graefenberg Almanac, 1870, 1875

Box 33, Harpin’s Connecticut Almanac, undated
    Herbalist, 1945
    Hostetter’s United States Almanac, 1876, 1893
    Illustrated Almanac-Greenfield, MA, 1881, 1882
    Illustrated U.S. Almanac, 1893
    Knickerbocker Almanac, 1843
    Landreth’s Almanac, 1855, 1857
    Lilly’s Almanac, Boston, 1797, 1802, 1803
    Low’s Almanack, 1805
    Methodist Almanac, N.Y., 1855
    Nast’s Illustrated Almanac, 1872
    New Jersey Almanac, 1828
    New York Observer, 1871
    North East Centre Farmer’s Almanac, 1847
    Parley’s, Peter, 1836
    Perry, Joseph Almanack-Hartford, 1785

Box 34, Pocket Almanac by Thomas S, 1842
    Pocket Compendium, 1904
Poor Richard Albany Almanack, 1807
Radway's RRR Kalender, 1873
Roger Sherman Almanac printed in New Haven, 1756
Sanford, Joel-Almanack, Bridgeport, 1826
Temperance Almanac, Albany, N.Y., 1837, 1839
Thomas, Isiah Almanac, 1795
Travelers Almanac, 1897, 1898
Vinegar Bitters Almanac, 1878
Voov het Jaar Almanac, 1851
Waterbury Almanac, 1855
Wright's Almanac, 1909
Wright's Pictorial Almanac, 1876
Yankee Farmer's Almanac-Boston, MA, 1833

Box 35, Beckwiths Almanac, 1873, 1875, 1878
Dr. Miles New Wheathe and Hand Book, 1937
Farmers Almanac, 1972
Middlebrook New England Almanac 1874-1875, 1877-1884, 1902

Old Moore's Almanac, 1966, 1969
Standard Annual, 1897