

Grand Rapids History and Special Collections

Archives

GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Finding Aid for the

S.O.U.L (Sharing Our Uncommon Legacy)of Philanthropy Project

Collection #369

October 2009 version

Abstract

The S.O.U.L (Sharing Our Uncommon Legacy) of Philanthropy project was a grassroots effort by a group of Grand Rapids historians and film makers working together during 2006-2009. The group researched and interviewed twenty-eight Grand Rapids philanthropists using high definition video technology. This collection includes research files on each interviewee, the footage of the interviews (along with transcripts and related material) and the documentary, The Gift of All, (in various formats) that the group created from the footage.

Collection #: 369

Accession #: 2009.055

Donor: SOUL Project

Span dates: 2006-2009

Processor: Jen Morrison

Size: 2.9 linear ft. (35.0 in.)

Related Collections

Box Summary

<u>Box No.</u>	<u>Description of Contents</u>	<u>Box Description</u>
Box Inventory September 2009		
1	Project Documents/ Research folders	Standard
2	Research folders	Standard
3	Research folders/media	Standard
4	Interviews. Hard Drives storage.	White legal handles
5	Interviews on mini dv	Clamshell
6	Media	Standard
Binder	Interview transcripts	

History

The SOUL (Saving Our Uncommon Legacy) of Philanthropy project began as the inspiration of Pam Daugaveitis, a Grand Rapids freelance writer. She created the Spectrum Health Foundation newsletter for several years and developed an appreciation for the role of philanthropy in the community. Daugaveitis held a series of meetings with local professionals, including former city historian, Gordon Olson, Calvin College film professor, Daniel Garcia, and members of the Association of Personal Historians. Among the latter were John and Jennifer Morrison, and Jennifer's position on the staff of the Grand Rapids Public Library's local history department ensured a collaboration between SOUL and the library from the early stages.

Bill Martindill, a local philanthropist and friend of Daugaveitis consulted on and assisted with fund-raising. The Grand Rapids Community Foundation served as the fiduciary agent for the project.

The SOUL team raised the necessary funds and interviewed 28 of Grand Rapids' most prominent philanthropists, including Fred and Lena Meijer, Ralph Hauenstein, Rich and Helen DeVos, Peter Cook, David VanAndel, Tom Fox and Peter Secchia. The interviewers from the SOUL team included Steve Goolian, Deb Moore, Annette Remsburg, Gordon Olson and Jennifer Morrison. Some philanthropists were interviewed multiple times at the request of the documentary creators for the sake of film and interview quality.

SOUL created a roughly one hour documentary celebrating the history of philanthropy in Grand Rapids entitled "The Gift of All" and directed by Daniel Garcia. The finished documentary aired twice on WGVU-TV, initially at 8:00 pm, Wednesday, November 26, 2008. Still photos and moving images from the GRPL's local history department were used as B roll for the film.

SOUL's website was: www.soulofphilanthropy.org.

Scope and Content

"The Gift of All" is a documentary about philanthropy, but more broadly about community building in Grand Rapids. Completed in 2009, the film features clips of interviews with 28 Grand Rapids philanthropists, the majority of whom were wealthy, socially prominent and seventy years old or older at the time. Some younger interviewees were included largely so that their parents' contributions would be represented. The SOUL group also attempted to represent diversity in the selection of interviewees. In general the project captures the voice of the generation that grew up during the Great Depression, lived through World War II, observed the decline of the central city and urban renewal, and subsequently contributed to the revitalization of downtown by supporting its higher education, entertainment and health care industries.

The insight offered by "The Gift of All" is important but is limited by what is achievable in a roughly 50 minute documentary. Future researchers will find the broader collection rich in raw materials that they can put to a variety of uses. Each interview is an approximately two hour conversation with an important witness to the twentieth century development of the city of Grand Rapids. Most interviewees were key figures in the advancement of the community as well as generous and honest with their observations. Researchers will find history of local institutions, interpretations of developments and personal recollections.

Users will also find an impressive range of media to choose from within the collection. Interviews can be read, listened to or watched. Since the SOUL group was a temporary collaboration, all material and the rights to it, were given to GRPL. Any subsequent broadcast of the documentary must be arranged through GRPL (see the head of the local history department). While the paper transcripts will probably be most comfortable for those simply interested in the information, the collection contains the documentary and the interviews in a variety of formats, including digital and broadcast quality.

Series Descriptions

I. Paper

Each interview was transcribed and the transcripts donated to the library in paper form in a bound notebook as well as a text document on CD. Interviewees were given the opportunity to review their transcripts and subsequently supply additions/corrections or have sections blocked out.

Jennifer Morrison researched each interviewee using internet and GRHSCC resources, and created a paper file for each primarily comprised of newspaper, magazine, and website articles. Multiple copies of each file were made and one given as preparation to the SOUL interviewer. A second copy was given to the GRHSCC and filed into its clipping files on the public floor. A third copy was eventually given to the GRHSCC for this collection.

The other material in this series is generally self-explanatory and is listed in the contents section.

II. Media

The interviews, interview transcripts, documentary and related material are included in various formats listed in the contents section.

Peter Wege and Earl and Donnalea Holton were researched but not ultimately interviewed due to conflicts with their schedules. For archival purposes, the Council of Michigan Foundations provided the SOUL project with a DVD of Wege relevant to his receiving the Mawby Award in 2006. The interview with Fred Keller, done late in the project, was captured strictly on audiotape. Former city historian, Gordon Olson; Grand Rapids Community Foundation president, Diana Sieger; Calvin College professor of history, James Bratt; and Grand Valley State University professor of philanthropy, Joel Orosz are also featured on the documentary but their remarks were scripted rather than edited from fuller interviews.

Contents

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
		Series I. Paper
		Project Documentation
1	1	Web Site Pages, 5/22/2009 http://soulofphilanthropy.org/ Invitation to June 1, 2009 event at the Ladies Literary Club celebrating the transfer of materials from SOUL to GRPL
1	2	Copyright Assignment form. Legal Document transferring ownership from the Grand Rapids Community Foundation to the Grand Rapids Public Library, Jan. 9, 2009 (copy; original located in the Archival Accession Files)
1	3	GRPL Photos used as B-roll Photocopies of GRPL photos plus relevant information used or considered for the documentary
Binder		Transcripts of Interviews Binder of transcripts arranged in alphabetical order by last name of interviewee
1		Research Files Canepa Cook Devos, R. Devos, H. Fox Hamersma Hauenstein Holton
2		Hooker Hunting Keeler Keller Lemmen Lettinga Lubbers Martindill Meijer

Robinson
Royce
Schad
Secchia
Sellers Walker

3
Sprague
Tomatis
Van Andel
Vega
Voss
Wege
Wondergem
Woodrick
Young

Series II. Media

- 3 10 2 CDs with digital copies of the interview transcripts.
- 5 Videotape cassettes (mini dvs) of raw footage for each interview (filed alphabetically)
- 3 11 Fred Keller
Two audio cassette tapes, Tapes 1 & 2.
- 3 12 Fred Keller, 3/17/2008 interview. Interviewers Jen & John Morrison
(4 cds=CD 1 & 2, 2 copies of each) of the above interview
- 3 13 DVD. Peter Wege. 2006 Mawby Award. Provided by Robert S. Collier, Council of Michigan Foundations
- 3 14 "The Gift of All : a Community of Givers". **Master DVD**. Jan. 15, 2009. Video DVD.
- 6 1 Usage copy of above with case and cover art
- 6 2&3 2 HDCAM Digital HDVS Master tapes (documentary for broadcast, one with closed captioning) SONY 155 124 tapes.
2009.055.2 Added 7/1/2009
- 00362DM2 General Master 55:23
 - 00362DM1 CC Encoded HD Master
- 4 4 computer hard drives with raw footage of all interviews plus other material (such as B roll) created for the documentary.

Appendix. Participants/Release forms. (30 total)

Filed with the Archival Release Forms.

John Canepa
Peter C. Cook
Richard M. DeVos
Helen J. DeVos
Thomas S. Fox

June B. Hamersma
Ralph Hauenstein
Robert L. and Judith S. Hooker (2)
John R. Hunting

Mary Ann Keeler
Fred P. Keller

Harvey Lemmen
Wilbur Lettinga
Arend D. (Don) Lubbers

Bill Martindill
Frederik H. Meijer and Lena Meijer (2)

Jake W. and Delores A. Robinson (2)
Charles L. (Chuck) and Stella A. Royce (2)

Vernis L. Schad
Peter Secchia
Margaret Sellers-Walker
William E. (Bill) Sprague
Louis A. Tomatis

David VanAndel
Francisco M. Vega
B. Margaret Voss (Bunny Voss)

Casey Wondergem
Robert A. Woodrick
Richard W. (Dick) Young