

**MS-287**

**Dayton Civic Music Association Collection**

**Wright State University Special Collections and Archives**

**Introduction**

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The Dayton Civic Music Association Collection consists of the papers and scrapbooks of the Dayton Civic Music Association. The Dayton Civic Music Association was founded in 1940 and presented twenty-eight concert seasons before its demise in 1968. The organization provided a social setting where people who liked the performing arts could gather together to enjoy a common interest. The vast majority of this collection consists of records detailing the association's business relations with various talent agencies and chronicling the concerts presented by it during its existence. The collection was donated to the Wright State University Special Collections and Archives by George Bayless in November 1998. Mr. Bayless' father, G. Harold Bayless, was a member of the Dayton Civic Music Association's executive committee and served on its Board of Directors. G. Harold Bayless was also the organization's second president. The inclusive dates of the collection are 1940 to 1998. However, the bulk of the collection comprises the years 1940 to 1968. The collection is made up of two Hollinger boxes and two oversize boxes. The Dayton Civic Music Association Collection is organized into eight record series as follows:

Series I	Administrative Records
Series II	Clippings
Series III	Correspondence
Series IV	Pamphlets
Series V	Photographs
Series VI	Programs
Series VII	Scrapbooks
Series VIII	Miscellaneous

There are not any restrictions on the use of this collection.

### **Biographical Sketch**

## **Dayton Civic Music Association**

The Dayton Civic Music Association came into being on June 21, 1940 when several culturally minded citizens met with Miss Murl Springsted of the National Broadcasting Company's Civic Concert Service to discuss the possibility of organizing a music association in Dayton. The purpose of the association was to provide a social setting for musically inclined citizens and to nurture the growth of performing arts in the community. The concerts also provided a way of educating the masses about different types of performing arts such as ballet to which they might not generally be exposed. However, in order to enjoy these concerts, citizens had to pay a small membership fee to the Dayton Civic Music Association. The money gleaned from selling memberships was then used to purchase performers for concert engagements in Dayton. The Dayton Civic Music Association began its first annual membership campaign in October 1940. Initially, the membership fee was \$5.00 for adults and \$2.50 for students but by 1968 the dues had increased to \$12.00 and \$8.00 respectively. After their dues were paid, Dayton Civic Music Association members were allowed to attend all of the concert season's performances. Though the length of the season varied during its twenty-eight year existence, the concert season usually consisted of five to eight performances. During the Dayton Civic Music Association's existence, it sponsored a wide range of performers including the Trapp Family Singers, Jeanne Mitchell, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Skitch Henderson, the Ruth Page Ballet, Feis Eireann, and Fiesta Mexicana. Though presidents Herbert S. Nonnenan (1940-1963) and G. Harold Bayless (1963-1968) were dedicated advocates of the performing arts, they were unable to permanently sustain the community's interest in the arts.

By the late 1960s, the Dayton Civic Music Association was experiencing financial difficulties. The organization did not have the sufficient funds to cover both operating expenses and the purchase of enough talent to present a full concert season due to declining membership sales. The association's leadership attributed the membership crisis to such things as its inability to sell single concert memberships, poor newspaper coverage of the organization's events, and growing community apathy towards the performing arts. When only 500 of the previous season's 1,800 patrons renewed their memberships in 1968, the society's officers decided that their attempts to revitalize the once venerable organization were futile. On June 19, 1968, G. Harold Bayless and the other officers officially disbanded the Dayton Civic Music Association.

## **Scope and Content Note**

## **Series I      Administrative Records**

This is the largest series in the collection. It consists of twenty-one file folders and the organization's Articles of Incorporation located in the oversize collection. Files include a wide variety of business-related papers ranging from bills received by the organization and insurance policies to meeting minutes and a list of attractions presented by the Dayton Civic Music Association. However, the most pervasive set of files in the series contain engagement contracts from various talent agencies. The majority of these contracts span the years between 1940 and the early 1960s. These contracts are useful primarily for the information they provide regarding the widely disparate fees received by different performers over three decades.

## **Series II      Clippings**

This series consists of one file folder. The series contains clippings spanning the entire twenty-eight years of the Dayton Civic Music Association's existence. However, most of the clippings date from the late 1960s with only a minimal amount from the 1940s and 1950s. In general, the clippings contained in the series are announcements for the annual membership campaigns and articles covering various performances sponsored by the Dayton Civic Music Association. Most of the clippings are from the Dayton Daily News, the Dayton Herald, and the Journal Herald but there are a few articles from other newspapers such as the Houston Post and the Akron Beacon Post.

## **Series III      Correspondence**

This is the second largest series in the collection. This series consists of thirteen file folders. The series includes letters to and from members as well as business letters. Though there are letters to members from most years of the organization's existence, they are unfortunately mostly form letters. Many of them are a bit repetitious because each year's letters are often only variations of a similar letter from the year before. For instance, many of the letters discuss membership campaigns and the only difference from the previous year's letter is that the dates of the campaign have changed. The business letters are primarily to and from talent agencies. They usually discuss performer bookings and changes made in contracts.

## **Series IV      Pamphlets**

The fourth series consists of two files. The first file contains pamphlets describing the Civic Music Plan to potential members and providing information on how to join the Dayton Civic Music Association. The second folder contains one pamphlet describing the music plan offered by the United Audience Service, Inc. It also contains some pamphlets providing biographical information about performers and/or excerpts from reviews of their past performances.

## **Series V      Photographs**

The fifth series consists of two file folders. The first file only contains a photograph of a sign announcing the Dayton Civic Music Association's membership campaign for the 1967-1968 concert season. The second folder contains a couple of performer photographs from ca. 1954 and several artist photographs from ca. 1966 and 1967. Though difficult to ascertain positively, the photographs appear to be publicity shots supplied to the organization by the performers' talent agencies.

## **Series VI      Programs**

This series consists of three file folders. The first file contains intermittent programs from the Dayton Civic Music Association's annual campaign workers' dinner. These programs are in essence sheets containing various songs that the guests either sang after the dinner or that were performed for them. The second file mainly contains programs from concerts sponsored by the Dayton Civic Music Association. A few of the earlier programs provided biographical sketches of the artist or group as well as listing the order in which pieces were performed. The later programs only contain the name of the artist and the repertoire they performed at the concert. The majority of the programs are from the 1950s and 1960s. The third file contains a program from a meeting of the Park Layne Sertoma Club.

## **Series VII      Scrapbooks**

This series consists of two oversize boxes. The first box contains four scrapbooks spanning the years 1940 to 1955. The second box contains three scrapbooks covering the years 1955 to 1967. The scrapbooks mostly contain newspaper clippings, form letters, concert reminder notices, programs, and a few photographs of performers.

## **Series VIII      Miscellaneous**

The last series in the collection contains one file folder. This series includes a magazine about Dayton in 1965, a Dayton Philharmonic Volunteer Association newsletter, a couple of business cards, a few blank membership cards, and a speech delivered to the Park Layne Sertoma Club among other things.

### **Box and File Listing**

#### **Series I: Administrative Records**

Box   File   Description

Date

		Articles of Incorporation	July 23, 1948
1	1	Attractions Presented by the Dayton Civic Music Assoc.	1940-1965
	2	Auditorium Information	n.d.
	3	Bank Resolution	June 5, 1963
	4	Constitution and By-Laws	June 21, 1940
	5	Contracts, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra	Jun. 1966-Nov. 1966
	6	Contracts, Civic Concert Service, Inc.	May 1941-Dec. 1960
	7	Contracts, Summy-Birchard Company	Dec. 1962-Dec. 1965
	8	Contracts, United Audience Service	Dec. 1960-May 1962
	9	Financial Information, Bills, and Receipts	Jan. 1965-June 1968
	10	Financial Information, Receipts and Disbursements	Oct. 1940-Feb. 1968
	11	Instructions to Membership Campaign Workers	ca. 1966-1967
	12	Leadership Lists	1945,1967
	13	Schedules	1967-1968
	14	Statements of Continued Existence	1959,1965
2	1	Contracts, Albert Morini	Dec. 1965-Nov. 1966
	2	Contracts, Columbia Artists Management Inc.	Dec. 1965-Aug. 1967
	3	Contracts, Judson, O'Neill, Beall and Steinway, Inc.	Oct. 1966-Nov. 1967
	4	Contracts, Miscellaneous	Jun. 1940-Mar. 1967
	5	Insurance Policies	1953-1954
	6	Financial Information, Membership Campaign Reports	Apr. 1942-May 1965
	7	Minutes	June 1940-June 1968

## Series II Clippings

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
2	8	Articles and Advertisements from Assorted Newspapers	Nov. 1940-Mar. 1968

## Series III Correspondence

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	15	Cambridge Concert Association	October 1967
	16	Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra	Nov. 1965-May 1967
	17	Civic Concert Service, Inc.	Sept. 1941-Dec. 1960
	18	International Artists	Mar. 1966-Jan. 1968
	19	Judson O'Neill Beall and Steinway Inc.	Nov. 1966-June 1968
	20	Miscellaneous Business Letters	April 1942-Nov. 1998
	21	Otto Kapell Company	Oct. 1965-Feb. 1966
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	22	Summy-Birchard Company	Jan. 1965-Oct. 1966
	23	United Audience Service, Inc.	Nov. 1962-Nov. 1965
	24	Form Letters and Notices to Members	1945-1968
	25	Members	Apr. 1967-Mar. 1968

2	9	Albert Morini Artist Management	Nov. 1965-Dec. 1967
	10	Columbia Artists Management Inc.	Oct. 1965-Dec. 1967

**Series IV Pamphlets**

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
2	11	Membership Campaigns	1952-1968
	12	Performers and Talent Agencies	1940-1968

**Series V Photographs**

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	26	Annual Membership Campaign Sign	1967-1968
	27	Performers	Ca.1954,Ca.1966-1967

**Series VI Programs**

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	28	Concerts	Mar. 1941-Mar. 1968
	29	Park Layne Sertoma Club	March 11, 1967
2	13	Annual Dinner Songsheets	May 1949-May1964

**Series VII Scrapbooks**

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
3		Brown Scrapbook with Gold Crest	Oct. 1940-May 1942
		Black Scrapbook	Oct. 1942-Feb. 1948
		Brown Scrapbook	Mar. 1948-May 1952
		Black Scrapbook with Gold Crest	May 1952-May 1955
4		Green Scrapbook	Oct. 1955-Feb. 1960
		White Scrapbook	Feb. 1960-Feb. 1963
		Red Scrapbook	June 1962-Mar. 1967

**Series VIII Miscellaneous**

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	30	Business Cards, Magazine, Newsletter, Speech, and etc.	May 1965-Sept. 1998

