

MS-170, Adelaide Patricia O'Brien Papers

Collection Number: MS-170

Title: Adelaide Patricia O'Brien Papers

Dates: 1913-1980

Creator: O'Brien, Adelaide Patricia, 1877-1980

Summary/Abstract: A native of Sharonville, Ohio, Patricia O'Brien was a successful singer and actress in New York City during the early part of this century. She returned to Dayton, Ohio in 1917 and became manager of the Dayton Symphony Association. She also worked as a promoter of local theatrical events. Her papers include correspondence, photographs, diaries, and miscellaneous items documenting her life, love of theatre and the arts, and her longevity.

Quantity/Physical Description: .5 linear feet

Language(s): English

Repository:

Special Collections and Archives, Paul Laurence Dunbar Library, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-0001, (937) 775-2092.

Restrictions on Access: There are no restrictions on accessing material in this collection.

Restrictions on Use:

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Preferred Citation:

MS-170, Adelaide Patricia O'Brien Papers, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio

Acquisition:

The papers of Adelaide Patricia O'Brien were accessioned into Wright State University's Special Collections and Archives on August 28, 1986. They were donated by Mary Margaret Naas.

Separated Material:

A folder of photographs is location in Oversize Location 11, Folder 5.

Other Finding Aid: The finding aid is available on the Special Collections & Archives, Wright State University Libraries web site at

http://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/collection_guides/guide_files/ms170.pdf. It is also available in the OhioLINK Finding Aid Repository at <http://ead.ohiolink.edu/xtf-ead/>.

Processed by: Thomas C. Hentrich, August, 1987. Finding aid revised by Toni Vanden Bos, October, 2014.

Arrangement: Arranged by record type.

Biographical Note:

Adelaide Patricia O'Brien, who often went by Patricia or Pat, was born in Sharonville, Ohio in 1877, the third of four children of Owen O'Brien and Catherine Lenanghen O'Brien. Her father, an Irish immigrant, was a U.S. Marshall, Mayor of Sharonville, and Founder and President of People's Building and Loan until his death in 1917.

Adelaide graduated from Notre Dame in Reading, Ohio, completed a business course at the Cincinnati Business College, and studied two years at the American Academy of Applied Music.

O'Brien was a successful singer and an actress in New York City for ten years. She was an associate of Paul Armstrong, managing his theatrical enterprises until they were closed out. O'Brien returned to Ohio in 1917 when her father died and became the manager of the Dayton Symphony Association.

Adelaide managed Mary Gardens' appearances on the concert stage as well as those of other notable men and women. She had taken part in and instructed for all local special concerts.

O'Brien was a correspondent, promoter, and general representative for the "New York Musical Digest" for the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, and Michigan.

Adelaide never married and lived with her sister in the Arcade in Dayton, Ohio. Her sister Angela Mae founded the O'Brien School of Elocution and Dramatic Arts in 1891 in the Arcade which closed in 1930 during the depression.

Angela Mae graduated from Notre Dame in Reading, Ohio, attended school in Washington D.C. and Northwestern University. She received her B.A. in 1927 from the University of Dayton and her M.A. in 1948, nine years after her retirement from the Dayton Public Schools. Angela was the Miami University librarian for their extension schools at Central School and Colonel White High School from 1954-59.

The two sisters resided together later in life at the Lourdes Hall of Maria Joseph Living Care Center. Adelaide Patricia O'Brien died on August 2, 1980 at the age of 103 in Dayton, Ohio.

Scope and Content Note:

The main body of the collection documents O'Brien's career as an actress, singer, playwright, correspondent, and promoter through correspondence, newsclippings, photographs, and diaries. Also included is a brief historical biography of the O'Brien family, and information about Adelaide Patricia O'Brien's sister, Angela Mae. The papers span over 70 years of O'Brien's

life and reveal her experiences, feelings, and opinions on life as she advanced in age. Her love of the theatre and dramatic arts are evident through the documents.

The first folder of the collection contains a short, historical, biographical sketch of the O'Brien family. The following folder consists of articles written by and or about O'Brien's career in the *Minneapolis Tribune*, *New York Dramatic Mirror*, and the *New York Musical Digest*". Folder 3 contains scripts and scenarios written by O'Brien. Folder 4 consists of correspondence written to her sister, Angela Mae, from Adelaide's trip abroad in 1928. Folders 5 and 6 contain writings by O'Brien, a Journal of Verses and two diaries written between 1970 and 1973 when in her nineties. Folder 7 consists of articles on her longevity, as well as congratulatory letters from the President and Senators on her 100th birthday. Folder 8 is a miscellaneous file of influences on her life. Folder 9 consists of papers on her sister, Angela Mae's School of Elocution and Dramatic Arts, Angela's Impressions on Mexico, and Angela's obituary. The final folder contains a collection of photographs of O'Brien's family life and career. In oversize, a photograph of Orville Wright with Admiral Richard E. Byrd is signed by Byrd to Miss O'Brien.

Subject Terms:

Persons/Families

O'Brien, Adelaide Patricia, 1877-1980
O'Brien, Angela Mae, 1874-1972
O'Brien, Owen
Wright, Orville, 1871-1948 -- Photographs
Byrd, Richard Evelyn, 1888-1957 -- Photographs

Organizations/Corporate Names

O'Brien School of Elocution and Dramatic Arts (Dayton, Ohio)
Dayton Symphony Association

Places

Dayton (Ohio) – History – 20th century

Subjects (General)

Longevity
Performing arts – Ohio -- Dayton

Material Types

Correspondence
Photographs
Diaries
Clippings (books, newspapers, etc.)

Collection Inventory

Container Listing			
Box	File	Item	Date
1	1	Owen O'Brien Biography (Father of A.P. O'Brien and A.M. O'Brien)	Undated
	2	Adelaide Patricia O'Brien: Theater Articles from New York Dramatic Mirror, Minneapolis Tribune, and Musical Digest	1913-1936
	3	Adelaide Patricia O'Brien: Dramatic Scripts and Scenarios	Undated
	4	Adelaide Patricia O'Brien: Correspondence with Sister During Trip Abroad	1928
	5	Adelaide Patricia O'Brien: Journal of Verses	Undated
	6	Adelaide Patricia O'Brien Diaries	1970-1973
	7	Adelaide Patricia O'Brien: Articles on 100 th Birthday, 102 nd Birthday, Birthday Wishes from Senators & Presidents, Proclamation from Ohio Commission on Aging, and Obituaries	1977, 1980
	8	Adelaide Patricia O'Brien: Miscellaneous	Undated
	9	Angela Mae O'Brien School of Expression and Dramatic Arts Catalog and Ad, Her Impressions of Mexico, and Obituary	Undated
	10	Adelaide Patricia O'Brien: Photographs	Undated
OS 11	5	Photographs: Joseph Hart's "An Opening Night" and Orville Wright with Admiral Richard E. Byrd (signed)	Undated