

**Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia
Board of Trustees records, 1925-1990
ANSP.2010.009**

Finding aid prepared by Eric Rosenzweig and Laurie Rizzo.

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

September 17, 2010

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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Summary Information

Repository	Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia
Creator	Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.
Title	Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia Board of Trustees records
Date [bulk]	Bulk, 1976-1989
Date [inclusive]	1925-1990
Extent	14.0 Linear feet
Language	English
Abstract	<p>The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (ANSP) is a natural history museum which was founded in 1812, “for the encouragement and cultivation of the sciences, and the advancement of useful learning.” The ANSP Board of Trustees, was established in 1925, as one of the institution’s primary administrative bodies. The Board of Trustees was charged with establishing financial policies, selecting the Academy President, assisting with fund raising and community relations, and serving as a board of review. This collection of Trustees records dating from 1925 to 1990 contains minutes and correspondence of various Board committees, policies and procedures, departmental activity reports, annual meetings and files from the President's office related to board matters.</p>

Preferred Citation note

[Description and date of item], [Box/folder number], 2010.009, Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia Board of Trustees records, 1925-1990, Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia.

Historical note

The Academy of Natural Sciences (“Academy”), the oldest natural science research institution and museum in the Americas, was established in 1812. The Academy began as a group of gentlemen devoted to the sciences who would exchange ideas, specimens, research and publications. Its mission was set forth by the Pennsylvania legislature in 1817, as “for the encouragement and cultivation of the sciences, and the advancement of useful learning.” The Academy formally opened its doors to the public in 1828.

Originally, a group of Academy staff, known collectively as the Council, oversaw institutional administration. In 1924, however, the Council elected to create a separate governing body known as the Board of Trustees. This new body assumed some of the Council’s administrative responsibilities, allowing the Council to govern the academic or scholarly functions of the Academy more effectively. More specifically, according to the by-laws, the Board of Trustees was created to support the goals of the Academy through securing funds to ensure the continuation, dissemination and preservation of the institution’s research as well as the maintenance and expansion of the Museum, Library and Education programs.

A group of officers, elected annually, oversaw the internal administration of the Board of Trustees; Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Managing Director. The Chair was made responsible for the general operations of the Academy, all matters related to finance and policy, the budget and annual report. In addition, Trustees were also appointed as Honorary or Emeritus, though those members had little decision making power.

Board of Trustees Chairs represented in this collection are:

Chalkey T. Palmer, 1925-1927

George Clark, 1964-1967

Lane Taylor, 1968-1972

Minturn T. Wright III, 1976-1981

Howard Brokaw, 1981-1985

Marvin Heaps, 1986-1990

Edward A. Montgomery Jr., 2002

On a more practical level, the Board carried out its mission through Committees, which oversaw policies and procedures relating to specific elements of the Academy. The Committees include: Executive, Finance, Audit, Board, Personnel, Development, Project Funding, Building and Space, Education and Public Events, Exhibits, Library, Long Range Planning, and Science.

Between 1925 and 1993, there were five standing committees: Executive, Finance, Audit, Board and Personnel. The Executive Committee which oversaw the day to day activities of the Academy between Board meetings and prepared issues and proposals that are presented at the Board meetings for discussion

and decisions. The Finance Committee reviewed the budget and budget changes. The Audit Committee reviewed the annual auditor's report as well as accounting and asset protection policies and procedures. The Board Committee nominated Trustee candidates and performed current Trustees re-election evaluations. The Personnel Committee oversaw policies and procedures related to Academy staff hiring, promotion, dismissal, compensation and pensions. All of these activities, between the years 1925 and 1990 are represented to some degree in this collection.

Scope and Contents note

This collection contains records created by the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia Board of Trustees from 1925 to 1990, with a bulk of the material created between 1976 and 1989.

The collection is divided into seven series. The series are: "Minutes," "Department Activities Reports," "Annual Meeting," "Committees," "Correspondence," "Administrative Files," and "Presidents Office working files."

The "Minutes" series dates from 1929 to 1989. This series contains the minutes from meetings of the Board of Trustees which were held routinely every other month. In addition, this series also contains minutes from special meetings. Together, minutes of regularly scheduled and special meetings demonstrate the Academy administration's plans to achieve institutional goals and objectives. A typical set of meeting minutes includes: information about meeting attendance and location, reports from the various committees, and security changes (stocks bought and sold). Additional information available in annual meeting minutes, or the first meeting of the year, includes: election of officers of the Academy; committee and department appointments; and the estimated budget for the year which includes departmental salaries and operating expenses. The series is arranged in chronologically.

The "Department Activity Reports" series dates from 1983 to 1989. Twelve operating departments of the Academy submitted detailed monthly activity reports. These reports were correlated and condensed by Jan Schmitz, Coordinator of Publications, into Departmental Activity Reports and distributed to the Board of Trustees in order to give members of the board knowledge of the activities of the departments. The twelve departments are, Annual Fund, Membership, Public Relations, Volunteer Program, Publications, Natural History Museum, Education, Exhibition, Library, Environmental Research, Systematics, and Building Operations. The report contains Academy membership and attendance statistics, financial information, grants awarded, publications, library usage, upcoming programs and exhibits, and staff changes, honors or awards. This series is arranged chronologically.

The "Annual Meeting" series dates from 1975 and 1980 to 1992 and includes minutes, programs and notes from the Annual Meetings. Like the bi-monthly Board of Trustees meetings, the Annual Meeting was a forum for the Academy administration to discuss its goals and objectives. The topics discussed at the Annual Meetings were more general and addressed the overall yearly agenda of the Academy, as opposed to the specific issues addressed in the regular Board of Trustees meetings. Other events that took place at the yearly meetings include: the announcement of new Trustees; memorials for members

who died over the course of the previous year; and the announcement of the yearly budget. This series is arranged chronologically.

The "Committees" series dates from 1974 to 1989 and contains the records of various Board of Trustee committees. Members of the Board served on a variety of committees which oversaw different aspects of the Academy. Each committee was concerned with policies, planning and organizing matters related to a specific topic. Committees represented in this series include: Executive, Finance, Science, Audit, Long Range Planning, among others. This series is arranged alphabetically by committee and then chronologically.

The "Correspondence" series dates from 1974 to 1989 and contains correspondence between the Officers of the Board of Trustees and various board members, honorary and emeritus, as well as outside funding companies and individuals. None of the correspondence is very extensive. The subject matter generally relates to announcements, solicitations, and letters of appreciation. This series is arranged alphabetically.

The "Administrative Files" series dates from 1925 to 1960 and consists of correspondence with Trustees regarding various administrative matters including meeting dates; and Trustee, Officer, Committee and staff appointments. The information contained in this series provides insight into the day to day operations of the Academy by documenting committee appointments, meeting dates and purposes, election information, resignations, and other officer activities. The series is arranged alphabetically by subject and then in reverse chronological order within the subject.

The "Presidents' Office working files" series is arranged into three subseries: "Annotated Meeting Minutes, Notes and Reports," "Board of Trustees Activities," and "President Search Committee files." This series consists of material collected by Thomas Peter Bennett, President of the Academy from 1976 to 1985, over the course of his term and during the process of the selection of his replacement from 1985 to 1987.

The "Annotated Meeting Minutes and Reports" subseries dates from 1977 to 1985 and includes the Office of the President's collection of minutes from Annual Meetings as well as the meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees. The subseries also includes President's Reports, which were submitted to the Board of Trustees and contain Academy news, monthly activity report summary, scientific activity report summary, upcoming events, and photocopies of newspaper clippings. This subseries also includes a collection of meeting notes by Regina Kilimnik, the assistant to the President. This subseries is arranged in reverse chronological order, which is consistent with the file's original order.

The "Board of Trustees Activities" subseries contains materials from 1976 to 1988, which contain information about the organization and structure of the Board of Trustees, membership lists, committee lists, a trustee questionnaire, documents related to the creation of a Trustees Handbook and other papers dealing with daily operations. This subseries is arranged in chronological order.

The "President Search Committee files" subseries contains material from 1984 to 1987 and documents the activities and concerns of the people involved in the search for a new Academy President. The subseries contains proposals from consulting firms, candidate profiles and correspondence, internal search committee correspondence discussing candidates, and interview forms and schedules. This subseries is arranged chronologically. Much of the material in this series is restricted. Please contact the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia Archives for more information.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia

Conditions Governing Access note

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use note

Copyright restrictions may apply. Please contact the Archives with requests for copying and for authorization to publish, quote or reproduce the material.

Processing Information note

The processing of this collection was made possible through generous funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, administered through the Council on Library and Information Resources' "Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives" Project.

This collection is minimally processed to the folder level.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

Related Collections: Collection 10. ANSP. BUILDING COMMITTEE. Papers, 1866-78. Collection 187. ANSP. BUILDING FUND - TRUSTEES. Papers, 1862-95. Collection 424. ANSP. LIBRARY COMMITTEE. Papers, 1844-1958. Collection 292. ANSP. PUBLICATION COMMITTEE. Papers, 1821-1939.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.

Genre(s)

- Administrative records
- Correspondence
- Financial records
- Minutes
- Reports

Geographic Name(s)

- Philadelphia (Pa.)

Personal Name(s)

- Browkaw, Howard P.
- Clark, George, 1910-1998
- Heaps, Marvin
- Montgomery, Edward A.
- Palmer, Chalkley T.
- Taylor, Lane
- Wright, Minturn T., 1925-

Subject(s)

- Committees
- Natural history museums

Correspondence

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