

KARL A. BICKEL CORRESPONDENCE, 1923 – 1961, bulk dates 1946-1961

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Overview

Repository	Archives The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art 5401 Bay Shore Road Sarasota, FL 34243 archives@ringling.org
Creator	Karl August Bickel, 1882- 1972
Title	Karl A. Bickel Correspondence 1923- 1961
Dates	1923 -1961
Language	English
Physical description	.25 linear feet
Arrangement	Chronological
Summary	Documentation covers a variety of issues including: the obligation of the State to utilize the resources of the Ringling estate; financing of programs for the Ringling properties; purchase of land adjacent to the Museum; creation of a John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art collection catalog by Dr. William Suida; admission to the museum; landscaping of the Ringling Plaza; gift of the Two Hemisphere bandwagon to the Museum, acceptance of works of art; mediation of a property transfer with Uplands Company and the Sarasota Airport Authority;

Museum staff failure to sign anti –communist declaration; initiation of a Circus Museum project; and items gifted from the personal collection of Karl and Madira Bickel. There is a file holding photocopies of Karl Bickel’s correspondence addressing international issues while President of the United Press Association.

Correspondence is exchanged with but not limited to: The State Board of Control; John James Watson, consulting engineer and town planner; J. W. Blanding, Museum business manager; A. Everett Austin, Museum director, and Kenneth Donahue, Museum director. The correspondence of Karl Bickel span the years of 1923. In addition to correspondence, there is a 1947 museum operating budget and a 1965 Legislative Budget for the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art describing a capital outlay budget for buildings and improvements.

Administrative Information

Provenance	The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art
Information about access	The Karl Bickel Correspondence Collection may be viewed by appointment. Use of certain materials is restricted by statute, by the office of origin, or by the donor. For the protection of its collections, the Archives also reserves the right to restrict access to records which are not arranged, are being processed, or are exceptionally valuable or fragile. In some cases, copies may be substituted for the originals.
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Cite As Credit must be given for any use of materials. The credit line should read: The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Florida State University, Karl Bickel Correspondence, 1923 – 1961 and should include the box and folder listing.

Processing Note Collection processed by H. Connor in 2015; finding aid created by H. Connor in May 2015, and updated July 2020 by H. Connor.

Historical Note

Karl Bickel attended Stanford University and later worked for the San Francisco News and Examiner. Bickel joined United Press in 1907 and became their first manager in Portland, Oregon. He left for five years to serve as the editor of the Grand Junction Daily News. He returned to United Press in 1913 as a salesman. He was the business manager from 1916 – 1922 and then general news manager.

Bickel was an innovator who guided United Press news service into the morning newspaper field, feature syndication and news for radio as well as expanded coverage to 49 countries, and nearly doubled the number of subscribers. Bickel retired in 1935, became chairman of the board of Scripps Howard Radio, Inc. and moved to Sarasota with his wife, Madira.

Bickel was very active in the Sarasota community. He led the efforts to build the Lido Beach Municipal Casino and the Sarasota Municipal Auditorium. He was appointed to the first citizen's advisory committee that advised the State Board of Control on the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art's operations. He drafted the first operating budget for the Museum in 1946 and donated several works of art from his personal collection to

the Museum. In 1959, the state legislature voted to place the administration of the Museum under a five-man board of trustees appointed by the governor. Bickel was a member of this board from 1959 to 1965. Bickel died at the age of 90, after devoting more than 40 years to the Sarasota community.

Scope and Content Note

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Subject Headings

Bickel, Karl A.--(Karl August),--1882-1972--Correspondence.

Government correspondence--Florida--History.

Business correspondence.

Museums--Records.

Advisory boards.

Consultants.

Contents of the Collection

Box No. Folder No. Folder Title

- 1 Correspondence and desk files
 - 1 Correspondence 1945-1946
 - 2 Correspondence 1947-1948
 - 3 Correspondence 1948
 - 4 Correspondence 1949 – 1950
 - 5 Correspondence 1951
 - 6 Correspondence 1952
 - 7 Correspondence 1957, 1960
 - 8 Resolution November 16, 1961
 - 9 United Press Association 1923 – 1934
 - 10 State Legislature capital outlay request for buildings and improvements at the Ringling Museum of Art, 1965

Related Materials

Records of the Governing Boards

Records of A. Everett Austin, Director of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art
Exhibition files 1973, Karl August Bickel, 1882-1972: an exhibition to honor his many contributions to the Ringling Museums and the state of Florida, October 25-November 25, 1973