

## Baylor University . The Texas Collection

### BU Records: Dean of the Union Building (Lily Russell). Inclusive: 1936-1966, Bulk: 1946-1954

#### Summary Information

<b>Creator</b>	Russell, Lily McIlroy, 1887 - 1958
<b>Extent (quantity/size)</b>	33 document boxes.
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	BU Records: Dean of the Union Building (Lily Russell) consists of administrative records related to the Union Building, as well as some of Lily Russell's personal records and materials from when she was Director of Public Relations at Baylor University.

#### Subjects

Baylor University -- History -- 20th century. / Russell, Lily McIlroy, 1887-. / Waco (Tex.) -- History -- 20th Century. / Women -- Texas -- Waco.

#### Administrative Information

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BU Records: Dean of the Union Building (Lily Russell), Accession BU/161, Box #, Folder #, The Texas Collection, Baylor University.

**Processing Information** Described by Amanda Dietz and released on 2013-06-16.

#### Scope and Content

BU Records: Dean of the Union Building (Lily Russell) was acquired by two transfers from The Texas Collection's Uncatalogued Holdings, 1974 July and 1979 November 29.

This record group begins in 1936 and ends in 1966. The Administrative Records series is by far the largest in the record group. This record group documents the Union Building's various activities, including social events, classes, and lecture series. The Administrative Records also reflect societal changes the University was experiencing at the time, such as desegregation and documenting the University's experience of societal changes in the postwar period. Some of the materials in the record group were produced after Russell's death, but have been included in the record group because they were incorporated into her files, presumably by her staff or her successor, Marie Mathis. The Personal Records series contains Russell's datebooks, as well as letters about her early life that she wrote to her daughter. Finally, the University Public Relations Series contains documents related to publicity at Baylor University, as well as suggestions for Baylor University that various people submitted to Russell while she was Director of Public Relations.

#### Administrative/Biographical History

Lily Russell was born on 1887 January 24 and graduated from Baylor in 1911. Her family ties to Baylor reach back at least one more generation, as her father attended Baylor University in Independence. After Russell taught English at Baylor for five years, she became an assistant to the Dean of Women in 1926. President Pat Neff appointed her as the Dean of Women in 1931, a position she held for the next nine years. In 1940 Russell became the Director of Public Relations, and served eight years in that role. As director, she chaired the Baylor Centennial Committee. Her next assignment was as Dean of the Union Building, a structure she had helped plan. Her last official position at Baylor was as official university historian, starting in 1950. Lily Russell died on 1958 August 21, still planning to write her history of Baylor University. This dream was carried out by Baylor employees Lois Murray and Sue Moore, who organized her files and wrote *Baylor at Independence*.

This collection is comprised primarily of Lily Russell's papers produced during her time as Dean of the Union Building. Russell began gathering information about various union buildings around the country in the late 1930s in an effort to develop plans for Baylor's Union Building. The University held a Breaking Ground ceremony on Alumni Day, 1940 June 1. Construction of the building was delayed for a time, due to World War II and a slowdown in fundraising. In the spring of 1948 Russell was named Dean of the Union by President William R. White. Russell moved into the Union Building 1948 August 25. The Union Building opened to the public 1949 September 14. According to a publication by the National Union Association, Baylor University was the first school to use the term "dean" for the head of a union building. In an oral history with Russell's successor, Marie Mathis, she notes that Russell was the only one to hold the title Dean of the Union Building, as Mathis preferred the title Director of Union Building.

During her involvement with the Union Building, Lily Russell oversaw the project from conception to completion, including details such as the interior design of the building, establishing a lending library, managing staffing and logistical matters, and hosting special events. Russell was involved with many activities on the Baylor campus and was responsible for organizing several book clubs, manners classes, and movie nights for Baylor students. She also kept newspaper clippings related to Baylor special events, such as visits by famous people such as Billy Graham and President Dwight Eisenhower, and changes in campus culture, such as desegregation. Lily Russell was succeeded as Dean of the Union Building by Marie Mathis, who was Director of the Union from 1952-1981.

#### Related Resources

Summary of related Archive materials

Lily McIlroy Russell Papers.

#### Related records in other Archive collections

Papers Lily McIlroy Russell Papers, 1900-1958

Records BU Records: Historical Research Office, Inclusive: 1863-1974, undated, Bulk: 1944-1960, undated.

Records BU Records: Dean of Women (Lily Russell), 1931-1940

#### Related citations

BU Records: Historical Research Office Records, Accession #BU/103, The Texas Collection, Baylor University.

Mathis, Marie Wiley, interview by Thomas Lee Charlton, 1972 September 6 and 1984 November 26, transcript, Institute for Oral History, Baylor University, Waco, TX

Osborne, Catherine. "Just Ask Mrs. Russell, She Knows." *The Daily Lariat*. 1951 January 25.

Wallace, Patricia Ward. *A Spirit So Rare: A History Of The Women of Waco*. Austin: Nortex Press, 1984.

#### Archival Arrangement

BU Records: Dean of the Union Building (Lily Russell) had been inventoried prior to this finding aid. Many of the existing folder titles and arrangement of materials were original to the records and were maintained. Some of the wording of folder titles was changed to make the contents more clear to researchers. However, when possible, specific terms used in folder titles were maintained to preserve original organization and content.

Currently, BU Records: Dean of the Union Building (Lily Russell) are in three series: I. Administrative Records, II. Personal Records, III. University Public Relations Records.

### Series 1: Administrative Records.

#### Summary Information

**Media** Photographic print

#### Administrative/Biographical History

The Administrative Records series is the bulk of this collection. The series maintains much of its original organization from how Lily Russell kept her files, in alphabetical order by subject. Materials in the series deal with various aspects of the operation of the Union Building, including Russell's correspondence with campus visitors, special guests, and alumni. Documents about Russell's involvement with campus activities is also included, such as extracurricular classes, parties, and other social events. When possible, Russell's folder titles were used to describe the materials enclosed.

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## Series 2: Personal Records.

### Administrative/Biographical History

The Personal Records series contains Lily Russell's datebooks from when she was Dean of the Union Building, which detail events at the Union Building as well as campus activities. The series also contains letters from Lily Russell to her daughter, Mary, that describe Lily Russell's early life, including her family's move from the Pacific Northwest to Texas.

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## Series 3: University Public Relations Records.

### Administrative/Biographical History

The University Public Relations series contains materials about publicity for Baylor University that were produced while Lily Russell was at Baylor, including press releases and newspaper clippings. The series also contains suggestions that various people sent to Russell, including ideas for events and recommendations for improving the university.

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