

Jean Mattson Collection, 1977-1999

Overview of the Collection

Title:	Jean Mattson Collection, 1977-1999
Creator:	Jean Mattson (1927-2020)
Accession:	PPL-MSS-2007-002
Size:	2.5 linear feet of records, comprised of: One (1) records storage box One (1) half document box One (1) oversize box
Repository:	Plainfield Public Library, Local History Department, 800 Park Avenue, Plainfield, NJ 07060
Abstract:	The Jean Mattson collection documents her work with two exhibits involving Plainfield, NJ. The first exhibit includes her academic and genealogical research of local African American individuals from "History In The Making: Honoring Achievement in Plainfield." This exhibit honors the achievements, great and small, of numerous people throughout the history of Plainfield, NJ. There is also a series of Jean Mattson's own work from her photographic exhibit entitled, "The Plainfield Project: A Work in Progress," which celebrates the diversity of Plainfield's population. Other papers include biographical and genealogical materials from Jean's family and other Plainfield residents. Record types include: photocopies of handwritten letters and genealogical research, typed biographies, curriculum vitae, brief biographies, newspaper clippings, photographs, video tapes, and DVDs. Materials date from 1977 to 1999.
Language:	The records are in English.

Biographical Information

Jeannette Squier Mattson, known as Jean, was born in Plainfield, NJ, and graduated from Maxson School and Plainfield High School. She held master's degrees in educational media and history. She was a former president of the Historical Society of Plainfield. Local historian, world traveler, and photography teacher, Jean was a well-respected member of the Plainfield community.

Also an accomplished photographer, Jean worked on numerous photography shows over the years. Her photos were published on magazine covers in Ireland and shown at conferences on gypsy lore. She also had works on display at the Plainfield Public Library and the Drake House Museum in Plainfield. One of Jean's most notable exhibits includes an eight-year photographic survey in Ireland involving an inner city neighborhood and study of "The Traveling Gypsies" – Irish gypsies. In the late 1990s, Jean received a grant from New Jersey State Council on the Arts for her "Plainfield Project," which documents Plainfield's diverse population. Jean lived in Plainfield and taught photography. She died in 2020 at the age of 93.

Scope and Contents

The Jean Mattson Collection includes a variety of material dating from the 1990s, and is largely undated. Record types include: curriculum vitae, brief biographies, event fliers, newspaper clippings, and photographs. The CVs, biographies, clippings, and some photographs are those of notable African Americans with a relationship to Plainfield, NJ – either as a resident or through

their occupation. They are all part of a 1996 exhibit entitled, "History in the Making: Honoring Achievement in Plainfield." Jean Mattson was a Committee Member for the exhibit, which was dedicated to Mills Barnes – a well-respected, Plainfield historian and black history pioneer. This exhibit was sponsored by the Historical Society of Plainfield and the Drake House Museum. The collection also includes Jean Mattson's own photographs from her exhibit entitled, "The Plainfield Project: A Work in Progress," which celebrates the diversity of Plainfield's population. This series contains 61 sepia toned and black & white photographs, mostly 8x10 or 11x14.

There are also documents related to Jean Mattson's genealogical research into her own family. These include: photocopies of genealogical records of the Crane/Squier family, a copy of a newspaper clipping, and two color photographs of painted portraits of Mr & Mrs. Squier.

There are also: two copies of a VHS video tape containing an oral history with Anne Louise Davis that has been converted to DVD and digitized, and one DVD, entitled "The Life & Times of Mary Vic Griswold" that has been digitized.

Arrangement

The Jean Mattson Collection is arranged into four series:

Series 1: Exhibit - History in the Making: Honoring Achievement in Plainfield

Series 2: Exhibit - The Plainfield Project: A Work in Progress

Series 3: Personal Genealogy

Series 4: Plainfield Biography

Index Terms

People:

Mattson, Jean

Davis, Anne Louise

Griswold, Mary Vic

Organizations:

Historical Society of Plainfield / Drake House Museum

Plainfield Public Library

Places:

Plainfield (N.J.)

Subjects:

Plainfield (N.J.)--History

African Americans--History

Black History

Plainfield (N.J.)--Photography

Plainfield (N.J.)--Biography

Plainfield (N.J.)--Genealogy

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements

This collection consists of paper documents and photographs which do not require any additional technology for access. The two oral history DVDs have been sent for digitization and will be made available online in the [Oral History Collection](#) under the names of the interviewees, Anne Louise Davis and Mary Vic Griswold.

Series Description

Series 1: Exhibit - History in the Making: Honoring Achievement in Plainfield [1996]

Series Description

Series 1 contains curriculum vitae, brief biographies, event fliers, newspaper clippings, and photographs related to the 1996 exhibit entitled, "History in the Making: Honoring Achievement in Plainfield." Jean Mattson was a Committee Member for the exhibit, which was sponsored by the Historical Society of Plainfield and the Drake House Museum. It is composed solely of paper documents and photographs.

Arrangement

Series 1 is arranged alphabetically by personal name. It was originally housed in a three-ring binder, but the original provenance has been maintained. It fills three folders.

Series 2: Exhibit - The Plainfield Project: A Work in Progress [1998-1999]

Series Description

Series 2 contains Jean Mattson's own work from her photographic exhibit entitled, "The Plainfield Project: A Work in Progress," which celebrates the diversity of Plainfield's population. It is composed solely of black and white or sepia-toned photographs.

The photographs in this series are viewable [here](#).

Arrangement

Series 2 is arranged by subject, and fills one oversized, photograph box.

Series 3: Personal Genealogy [undated]

Series Description

Series 3 contains Jean Mattson's genealogical research of her relatives from the Crane and Squier families. Documents are photocopies of typed and handwritten records.

Arrangement

Series 3 is predominantly arranged by subject or author, and fills one folder.

Series 4: Plainfield Biography [1977, undated]

Series Description

Series 4 contains biographies and genealogies of several people, specifically: Nancy White Campbell (circa 1860), the Brower family (including the Bogardus, Webber, De la Montagne, and Duryea family lines), Anne Louise Davis, and Mary Vic Griswold. There are photocopies of publications, genealogical records, letters, photographs, and newspaper clippings in this series, as well as two VHS tapes and two DVDs. There are also two lists of names of Plainfield residents.

Arrangement

Series 4 is arranged by subject, and fills most of a records storage box.

Administrative Information

Access & Restrictions

The Jean Mattson Collection is available for research.

Access is restricted to materials prepared by the Local History department staff. All materials must be viewed in the Plainfield Room and may not be removed to another area of the library without permission of the Library Director or designee. Materials must be handled carefully and kept in order. Materials must not be leaned upon, altered, folded, ripped, or traced upon. Marks may not be added or erased from materials. Materials must be returned directly to Local History department staff and inspected before the researcher leaves the Plainfield Room.

One photocopy may be made (by Plainfield Public Library staff) of each document for the purpose of research; official Local History departmental reproduction fees may apply. Permission to publish must be obtained by the Plainfield Public Library Board of Trustees as delegated to the Library Director. Permission to publish does not constitute a copyright clearance. The researcher is responsible for further copyright restrictions. The Plainfield Public Library is not responsible for the misuse of copyrighted material.

Preferred Citation

Identification of item; Date (if noted); "Jean Mattson Collection", Box and Folder Number, Local History Department, Plainfield Public Library, Plainfield, New Jersey.

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated on September 26, 2007 by Mrs. Jean Mattson.

Processing Information

This collection was processed by Sarah Hull in May 2009. The finding aid was written and encoded by Sarah Hull in May 2009, and updated by Sally Weiner in 2022 and September 2024. Finding aid content follows the guidelines suggested by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Collection Inventory

Series 1: Exhibit - History in the Making: Honoring Achievement in Plainfield [1996]

Box	Folder	Title/Description	Date(s)
1	1	History in the Making: Honoring Achievement	1996
	2	History in the Making: Honoring Achievement	1996
	3	History in the Making: Honoring Achievement	1996

Series 2: Exhibit - The Plainfield Project: A Work in Progress [1998-1999]

Box	Folder	Title/Description	Date(s)
2	1	Letter to the Mayor	1998
		8x10 photographs	1998, 1999
3		11x14 photographs	1998, 1999

Series 3: Personal Genealogy [undated]

Box	Folder	Title/Description	Date(s)
1	4	Personal Genealogy	undated

Series 4: Plainfield Biography [1977, undated]

Box	Folder	Title/Description	Date(s)
1	5	Nancy White Campbell "Ebenezer", Part 1	1977
	6	Nancy White Campbell "Ebenezer", Part 1	1977
	7	Nancy White Campbell "Ebenezer", Part 2	1977
	8	Nancy White Campbell "Ebenezer", Part 2	1977
	9	Brower Genealogy, Part 1	undated
	10	Brower Genealogy, Part 2	undated
	11	Plainfield Resident Lists	undated
	12	Anne Louise Davis Oral History VHS (master)	1994
	13	Anne Louise Davis Oral History VHS (copy)	1994
	14	Anne Louise Davis Oral History DVD	1994
	15	"The Life & Times of Mary Vic Griswold" DVD	1994
	16	Van Wyck Genealogy, Part 1	undated
	17	Van Wyck Genealogy, Part 2	undated
	18	Horton Genealogy, Part 1	undated
	19	Horton Genealogy, Part 2	undated
	20	Olcott Genealogy	undated