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Kay Family Collection: Finding Aid

Overview of Collection

Creator: Elizabeth D. Kay; Alfred G. Kay
Title: Kay Family Collection
Date: 1910-1982
Quantity: 5 boxes, 2 linear feet

Restrictions

Important Information for Users of the Collection

This material is open for research with limited restrictions under the conditions of the Morris County Park Commission archives access policy. Records may be copied for use in individual scholarly or personal research; however, as with all materials in the Morris County Park Commission, researchers are responsible for obtaining copyright permission to use material from the collection.

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Kay Family Collection, Courtesy of the Morris County Park Commission.

Acquisition Information

The records were found in the collection at two separate locations, items were found in 2004, by Lynn Laffey in the Attic of the Kay House, (KC2011.6) and other items were found in the basement at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum Mansion, during the 2011 Frelinghuysen inventory project, by Kristina Knable (KC2011.4, KC2013.3.1). Additional materials were purchased in Chester by Mark Texel in February 2012 (KC2012.1).

Processing Information

Described by Melanie Bump, January 2012
Updated by Chris Rain, December 2013
Revised and updated by Katie Humphreys, April 2020

Fonds Parent Record KC2013.2

Biographical Note

Elizabeth Donnell Kay (November 9, 1893 - April 1, 1987) was the only child of James J. Donnell and Ann Leeds Warden, a prominent Pennsylvania family. As a young woman, Elizabeth attended the all-girl Master's School at Dobbs Ferry, New York. Her husband Alfred Goddard Kay (November 16, 1889- March 23, 1973),

the son of Fredric and Jana O'Hara Kay, was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He was a prominent student at Princeton University from 1906 to 1912. He was head editor of the *Horae*, treasurer of the Missionary Society and a member of the Concordian. Mr. Kay was also an accomplished athlete. He was part of the Princeton football team (1907), golf team (1906 to 1907), and captain of the Tigers Hockey team (1908 to 1912). After his graduation in 1912, he established himself as a member of the New York Stock Exchange with the stock brokerage firm Childs, Kay, and Woods; later Kay and Richards & Co.

In 1915, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Kay married. They moved to Chester, New Jersey in the 1920s. They lived in Chester during the spring, summer and fall, on their 233-acre estate "Hidden River Farm". The property encompassed an array of habitats, including fields, deciduous forests and hemlock gorge set along the Black River. The couple wintered in Palm Beach, Florida at their home "Casa Ananda". They had two daughters: Audrey Kay, later Audrey Dines, and Anita Kay and one son, Warren W. Kay. They also owned property in Guatemala.

Alfred and Elizabeth Kay were very active in their communities. They helped found the Palm Beach Day School and St. Mary Hospital; presided over the Palm Beach Civic Association and Everglades Club; and helped rescue the Pine Ridge Hospital. In addition, they helped establish The Seeing Eye Center, Morristown, NJ. In 1960, Mrs. Kay donated the architectural plans for the Pine Jog Environmental Science Center in West Palm Beach, FL. Elizabeth Kay was deeply dedicated to environmental conservation, ecology, and the national education of science. She was a past president of the Garden Club of America. In addition to their community involvement Mr. and Mrs. Kay were gifted writers that penned numerous articles. The Kays also ghost wrote an autobiography of David Fairchild *The World Was My Garden* and edited *The Plant World in Florida* based on the notes by Dr. Henry Nehrling.

Alfred Kay died in 1973. When Elizabeth Kay died in 1987, she bequeathed "Hidden River Farm" to the Morris County Park Commission. In 1994 the Park Commission dedicated the property as the Elizabeth D. Kay Environmental Education Center.

Scope and Content Note

The materials relate to Elizabeth D. Kay and Alfred G. Kay; their family; and research and publications on plants, history and travel. In addition, materials related to Kay properties are included in this Collection. These documents are an excellent source of information for researchers interested in the Kay's writing and research, horticultural work and personal life. The arrangement of the collection reflects the natural groupings found within the Collection: Plants and Travel, Elizabeth D. Kay, Alfred G. Kay, History, Kay Properties.

Associated Image Collection

[Kay Image Collection](#)

170 images comprised of photographs, slide transparencies, and digital images the Kay Image Collection depicts the Kay family, their properties Hidden River Farm and Casa Ananda, and their travels to Honduras, Spain, Portugal, and other parts of Europe. All images contained within this Collection are available on MCPC's online database.

Arrangement

The Kay Family Collection is organized into 5 series relating to various aspects of Elizabeth D. Kay and Alfred G. Kay's life.

Series 1: Plants and Travel

Articles, Publications, Transcripts, Letters. Material related to travel that was created by both Alfred and Elizabeth Kay, or if which Kay authored the document cannot be determined.

Series 2: Elizabeth D. Kay (1894-1987)

Letters, writings, certificates and personal documents. Material relating to the life and activities of Elizabeth Donnell Kay or can be attributed to her.

Series 3: Alfred G. Kay (1899-1973)

Material relating to the life and activities of Alfred G. Kay.

Series 4: History

Material relating to research and writings on history created by both Alfred and Elizabeth Kay, or the author cannot be determined.

Series 5: Kay Properties.

Deeds, maps, financial records. Material relating to any property owned by Alfred and Elizabeth Kay, including Hidden River Farm and Casa Ananda.

Container List

Series 1: Plants and Travel

Box	Folder	
1	1	Pine Jog (KC2011.4.2)
	2	Caribbean Ports, by Alfred and Elizabeth Kay. (KC2011.4.2)
	3	“Good Friday” speech and Travel Notes (KC2011.4.2)
	4	Transcript, The Use of Vegetable Dyes for Beginners typed. (KC2011.4.2)
	5	Transcript, regarding travels and plant species encountered. (KC2011.4.2)
	6	Transcript, regarding travels and plant species encountered. (KC2011.4.2)

Series 2: Elizabeth D. Kay (1894-1987)

Box	Folder	
2	1	Correspondence, Regarding a fountain. (KC2011.4.1)
	2	Certificate, Florida Nurse Association (KC2011.4.1)
	3	Herb Farm and Herbs (KC2011.4.1)
	4	Herbs and Plants Bibliography and articles (KC2011.4.1)
	5	Booklet, Memorial Service Donald Frizell Hyde, March 11, 1963 (KC2011.4.1)
	6	Caribbean Ports - Panama Manuscript (KC2011.4.1)
	7	Date book 1950 (KC2011.4.1)
	8	Information on Johnsonian (KC2011.4.1)

Series 3: Alfred G. Kay (1899-1973)

Box	Folder
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- 5 1 Newspaper Clippings, Re: Intercollegiate Golf; Princeton University Hockey team. (1910-1915) **(KC2011.6.1)**

Series 4: History

- | Box | Folder | |
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| 3 | | Binder, "Translator's Notes", typed. (KC2011.4.3)
Binder, "Chastellux EDK 1 st Revision Page 1-167 journal with Carbon of Journal p1 to 367." (KC2011.4.3) |
| 4 | 1 | Book Transcript "Book II: A Year in Germany During War Time". (KC2011.4.3) |
| | 2 | Book Transcript, "Book III: The Red Cross Mission in Russia" (KC2011.4.3) |
| | 3 | Notes on French Participation in American Revolution. (KC2011.4.3) |
| | 4 | Travels in North America, transcript (KC2011.4.3) |

Series 5: Kay Property

- | Box | Folder | |
|-----|--------|---|
| 2 | 9 | Maps (KC2011.4.4) |
| | 10-11 | Deeds, Closing Agreements, Property and Financial Papers of Elizabeth Kay, Alfred Kay and Audry Kay. (KC2011.4.4) |
| | 12 | Papers regarding the Kay Estate compiled by Russ Meyers and Quentin Schlieder. Elizabeth Kay Obituary. (KC2011.4.4) |
| | 13 | Postcard of Leddell's Mill and mill dam in Jockey Hollow, Morristown, NJ, 1955. (KC2012.1) |
| | 14 | Renewal of Accreditation for Tuberculosis certificates and envelope (KC2013.1) |
| | 15 | Renewal of Accreditation for Tuberculosis frame glass with accreditation sticker (KC2013.1) |
| 4 | 5 | Maps & Blueprints: Map of proposed property line, Water Wheel Pumping Plant 1925, Property of Elizabeth Kay 1934, Proposed Right of Way 1933, Property of Nielsen and Cleary 1955, Cleary property 1951 (KC2013.3.1) |

- | Tube | |
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| | <i>Tubes are stored separately from boxes with other tubes.</i> |
| 1 | Hand-colored map, Floor plans of unidentified buildings (KC2013.3.1) |
| 2 | Kay kitchen plans, Town & Country Kitchens, 1956 (KC2013.3.1) |
| 3 | Lands of Elizabeth Kay 1937, Survey of Westerly Lines of Property 1932 (KC2013.3.1) |
| 4 | Property of Alfred Kay 1945, Hydroelectric Plant 1940 (KC2013.3.1) |
| 5 | Property of A.E. Borie, Floor plans Mrs. S.O. Van...1927 (KC2013.3.1) |

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| I Drive | Christmas Card from Casa Ananda, c. 1920s (KC2006.1.4) |
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Map Case Drawer 3 – Kay House Blueprints, 1958

Related Items in Morris County Park Commission's Historic Collections

KC2011.2.A-D horse shoes: Kay Center Collection, Object Box 1

KC2011.3 photos and slides: Kay Image Collection Box, KCP1-102

KC2011.5 film reels: Kay Boxes 6-10

Existence of related materials in other Collections

Princeton Library, Alfred Goddard Kay Autograph Collection

Historical Society of Chester, NJ