

Channel, Mary Brown, Architectural Collection

Mary Brown Channel Architectural Collection

1936-2002



Title Statement

Channel, Mary Brown, Architectural CollectionMary Brown Channel Architectural Collection, 1936-2002, bulk 1936-1950 Ms.2007.030

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.2007.030

Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/2317

Unit Date

1936-2002

Unit Date

1936-1950

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

After graduating from Randolph-Macon Woman's College in 1929, Mary Ramsay Brown Channel earned her degree in architecture at Cornell University in 1933. She returned to her hometown of Portsmouth, Virginia, and worked at a firm for two years before opening her own office as the first registered woman architect in Virginia. She became known for her residential and church designs. Her collection includes sketches and drawings for about 160 mostly residential projects in the Portsmouth area. Also included are some college drawings and projects.

Creator

Channel, Mary Brown, 1907-2006

Extent

11 Cubic Feet 10 boxes and 36 oversize folders

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

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Many of the college drawings and projects are extremely fragile and may require conservation work prior to access.

Source of Acquisition

The Mary Brown Channel Architectural Collection was donated to Special Collections in 2007.

Processing Information

The processing, arrangement, and description of the Mary Brown Channel Architectural Collection commenced and was completed in April 2010.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Mary Brown Channel Architectural Collection, Ms2007-030, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

Mary Ramsay Brown Channel was born December 8, 1907 to William Ambrose Brown and Mary Ramsay Brown of Portsmouth, VA.

She attended Randolph-Macon's Woman's College earning a bachelor of Mathematics in 1929. Channel wanted to follow her brother to the University of Virginia to study architecture, but women were not accepted into the University's graduate programs at the time. She instead applied and was accepted to Cornell University School of Architecture.

Graduating second in her class in 1933, she was also the first woman to win the Baird Prize Competition Medal. The Baird Prize was a six day design competition held by Cornell for architecture students in their junior and senior years. Channel was awarded the second prize medal for her design of a "monumental aeration fountain for the city reservoir."

Channel returned to Portsmouth, VA after graduation and began her career with the Norfolk architecture firm Rudolph, Cooke and Van Leeuwen. She drew no salary for her two years but gained valuable experience working with the team that designed the main post office in Norfolk as well as several other civic and organizational buildings. In 1935, Channel was one of three candidates in a class of five to pass the Virginia Examining Board's licensing exam becoming Virginia's first licensed female architect.

Following her licensure she opened her own practice. In October, 1941 she married local businessman Warren Henry Channel. After the birth of her first child she limited her practice to residences and churches. Channel retained her license until 1990 and was actively drawing plans into her eighties.

Channel designed structures throughout southeastern Virginia. Some of her projects include the Lafayette Square Arch housing the main entrance of the demolished American National Bank, the old Virginia Power Company Building on High Street, Channel Furniture Store in Greenbrier, numerous houses, church additions and renovations.

She was recognized in October, 1987, at an occasion honoring Portsmouth's local and statewide notables.

Mary Ramsay Brown Channel died on January 21, 2006. She was 98 years old.

Scope and Content

The Mary Brown Channel Architectural Collection contains sketches and drawings for approximately 160 Portsmouth area projects, the majority of the drawings represent residential designs but churches, retail stores, and institutional buildings are also included. Watercolor class projects from her days at Cornell University School of Architecture are also present; however, these drawings are extremely fragile and may require conservation work prior to access. The materials range in date from 1936-2002 with the bulk of the materials ranging from 1936-1950.

Related Materials

There is a one page article about the acquisition of the Mary Brown Channel Architectural Collection in the Fall 2008 IAWA Center News, the International Archive of Women in Architecture newsletter.

Keywords

Architects -- Virginia

Architectural drawings (visual works)

Architectural drawing -- 20th century

History of Women in Architecture

International Archive of Women in Architecture (IAWA)

Women -- History

Women architects -- Virginia

Rights Statement for Archival Description

The guide to the Mary Brown Channel Architectural Collection by Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, is licensed under a CC0 (<https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/public-domain/cc0/>).

Other Finding Aids

For Series II: Project Records, see Project Index for full details.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into two series, I: Personal Papers, 1952-2002, and II: Project Records, 1936-1978, bulk 1936-1950. Each series is arranged alphabetically.

Series II: Project Records primarily contains architectural project drawings. Mary Ramsay Brown Channel did not consistently label or date her drawings. The records are arranged in a project index alphabetically by client's name. When a client's name was not available the records were ordered by project description and/or title. Any text in brackets was supplied by the processor.

In order to determine a date range for each project Channel's signature has been recorded in the project index. MRB stands for Mary Ramsay Brown and would indicate projects undertaken before her marriage in 1941. MBC stands for Mary Brown Channel and would indicate dates post-1941.

On the reverse of a majority of projects there is a number in red ink. This number appears to be an organizational scheme and therefore has been recorded on the project index. They were very helpful in bringing together drawings that had become separated from their projects. However, the researcher should note, there are several cases where the same number appears on distinctly different projects.

Description of Subordinate Components

Series I: Personal Papers

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55174

Unit Date 1952-2002

Artwork

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55175

box 1

Container A (box)

Historical and ancient scenes

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55176

Minature portrait of a woman in a hat

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55177

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55178

Unit Date 1975

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Program, A Celebration of Portsmouth Architecture

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55179

Unit Date 2002

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Portrait, African-American male

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55180

Unit Date n.d.

box 9

Reference Files[?], re: food service

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55181

Unit Date 1952-1953

box 1

Container A (box)

Schoolwork

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55182

Unit Date 1932-1933

Monumental Stairs, Course 111, Major 2

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55183

Unit Date November 22

oversize Folder 1

Theater, Course 113

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55184

Unit Date April 1, 1933

oversize Folder 2

[Naval Entrance?], Course 113, problem #5

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55185

Unit Date December 17
oversize Folder 3

A Stock Exchange Building, problem #2

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55186
Unit Date November 5, 1932
oversize Folder 3

A Palace for an Exiled Monarch

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55187
oversize Folder 2

A Playhouse for Williamsburg, VA

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55188
oversize Folder 3

Small Auditorium Entrance

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55189
oversize Folder 1

Series II: Project Records

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55190

Unit Date 1936-1978

Unit Date 1936-1950

Scope and Content

The following is a sampling of architectural projects from the Mary Brown Channel Collection. For more information about each project, see the Project Index for full details.

Arrangement

The Project Index list is arranged alphabetically by Project/Client Name and contains information, where available, about the location, date, project type, collaborators, and formats for each project in the collection.

Alexander Dr. and Mrs. Lindon, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55191
box-folder 3 (box)
Container 2 (folder)

Atkins, Miss Margaret, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55192
box-folder 3 (box)
Container 3 (folder)
box-folder 10 (box)
Container 7 (folder)

Bain, Judge K.A., garage

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55193
oversize 17 (folder)

Bangel, Mr. and Mrs. A.A., residence, remodel

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55194
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 2 (folder)

box-folder 10 (box)
Container 7 (folder)

Bishop's Palace, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55195
oversize 2 (folder)

[Boyce], residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55196
box-folder 3 (box)
Container 12 (folder)
oversize 7 (folder)

Boyce, Mr. Clinton, residence, remodel

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55197
box-folder 3 (box)
Container 4 (folder)
oversize 7 (folder)

Brooks, Mr. and Mrs. John, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55198
box-folder 10 (box)
Container 7 (folder)
oversize 20 (folder)

Brown Jr., Mr. and Mrs. William A., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55199
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 3 (folder)

Brown Jr., William A. and Mary Ramsey Brown, residence, remodel

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55200
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 4 (folder)

Brown, Mary Ramsey, beach house

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55201
box-folder 1 (box)
Container 3 (folder)

Brown, Misses Myrtle and Violet, residence and remodel

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55202
box-folder 3 (box)
Container 12 (folder)
box-folder 10 (box)
Container 7 (folder)

Brown, Mr. and Mrs. J.E., residence and garage

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55203

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

oversize 3 (folder)

Carr, Sr. and Jr., Drs. George, offices

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55204

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Channel Furniture Co. Inc., logo, proposed addition and second floor remodeling

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55205

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

oversize 4 (folder)

oversize 11 (folder)

oversize 12 (folder)

Chapman, Robert W., residence and garage

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55206

box-folder 4 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Cherry, Mr. and Mrs. A.L., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55207

oversize 14 (folder)

College Garden Apartments, residential

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55208

oversize 4 (folder)

Cowdrey, Mr. and Mrs. Residence, remodel

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55209

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 10 (folder)

Crockin, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55210

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Darden, Miss M. A., arcade from house to stable

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55211

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 11 (folder)

De Vane, Mr. and Mrs. F.D., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55212

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 19 (folder)

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

Dulany, Mr. and Mrs. J.R., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55213

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

box-folder 4 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Ellis, Mr. R. M., residence and garage apartment

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55214

box 7

Emmanuel Episcopal Church, new Sunday School

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55215

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

oversize 6 (folder)

oversize 15 (folder)

Emmanuel Episcopal Church, rectory covering

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55216

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

First Baptist Church of Taylorsville

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55217

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 16 (folder)

Fraternal Order of the Eagles #558, new home

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55218

oversize 5 (folder)

Frohman, Mr. and Mrs., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55219

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Glensheallah, entrance and neighborhood layout

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55220

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Grice, Dr. Joseph, store front

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55221

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 11 (folder)

Hamilton, Mr. Norman, residence, remodel into 6 family apartment

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55222

oversize 5 (folder)

Harcum, Mr. and Mrs. O.L., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55223

box 5

oversize 11 (folder)

Harrell, Mr. and Mrs. O.L.

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55224

oversize 9 (folder)

Hatcher, Maynard, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55225

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

Hill, Mr. and Mrs. J. Robbin, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55226

map case 3 (folder)

Hundley, Mr. and Mrs. J. Bowden, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55227

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

oversize 5 (folder)

Jones, Dr. and Mrs. T. Elmore, residence, Crawford Place

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55228

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Joy, Mrs. J.H., two family house

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55229

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

[Kaufman]

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55230

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Kempsville Church

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55231

oversize 5 (folder)

[Kline, Buddy], residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55232

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Landerburg's Department Store, new store front

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55233

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 11 (folder)

L'Anson, Judge, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55234

oversize 3 (folder)

oversize 6 (folder)

Lawler, Mr. and Mrs. Weston, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55235

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

oversize 16 (folder)

Lawrence, Mr. and Mrs. Frank, rear porch for residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55236

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Levitin, Mr. and Mrs. A., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55237

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 16 (folder)

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

[Littleton], addition to residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55238

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 13 (folder)

Maupin, Mr. and Mrs. William G., addition to residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55239

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 10 (folder)

McCready, Mr. Harry, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55240

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

box-folder 4 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Meads, Dr. and Mrs., proposed porch

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55241

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Meads, Dr. Vincent, offices

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55242

box 5

Methodist Church

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55243

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. H.R., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55244

oversize 1 (folder)

Payne, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55245

oversize 20 (folder)

Pivot, Mr. and Mrs. Wood, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55246

oversize 13 (folder)

Richel's Fur Shop, store front

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55247

oversize 9 (folder)

Riddick Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Alfred T., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55248

oversize 8 (folder)

oversize 18 (folder)

Rodman's [Bar-B-Q restaurant], alterations and additions

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55249

oversize 4 (folder)

Sears Shop, alteration and additions

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55250

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Shadrick, Thomas, H.W. Brown Florist, addition

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55251

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 14 (folder)

Shadrick, Thomas, Camp Robert Hunt

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55252

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 14 (folder)

Shepard, Mr. and Mrs. T. H., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55253

oversize 2 (folder)

oversize 10 (folder)

Shepherd, Mr. and Mrs. Richard, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55254

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

oversize 10 (folder)

Smith, Esq. C.G., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55255

oversize 5 (folder)

[Smith, J.J.], bungalow

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55256

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 16 (folder)

Smith, Mr. Lawrence, remodeling of apartment

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55257

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 10 (folder)

Smith, Oscar, pantry

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55258

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 19 (folder)

[Snyder], residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55259

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 16 (folder)

St. Andrews Church, proposed plans for Sunday School

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55260

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

St. John's Episcopal Church, proposed addition to Sunday School and Parish Hall

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55261

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 12 (folder)

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

oversize 2 (folder)

oversize 8 (folder)

oversize 10 (folder)

St. Luke, Episcopal Church, proposed Sunday School and Parish house addition

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55262

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

oversize 3 (folder)

oversize 9 (folder)

oversize 19 (folder)

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, addition to parish house

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55263

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 13 (folder)

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

Stedhens, Mr. and Mrs., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55264

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 11 (folder)

Stimpson, Miss Mary, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55265

oversize 7 (folder)

Stokes, Mr. and Mrs. R.M., residence, remodel

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55266

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 14 (folder)

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

Syer, Mr. and Mrs., residence and garage

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55267

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 15 (folder)

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Tuberculosis Clinic

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55268

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Virginia Electric and Power Co., preliminary sketches

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55269

oversize 9 (folder)

Walker, Mr. and Mrs. J.F. and son, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55270

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 12 (folder)

Warner, Mrs. T. D., residence, remodel

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55271

box-folder 10 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

oversize 8 (folder)

Historical Note

There is a discrepancy in the client name. The plans list the client as Mrs. F.D. Warner while the specifications (Box 10, folder 9) list the client as Mrs. T.D. Warner. Special Collections has received communication from the family of Mrs. Warner and they confirm that the house was remodeled for Mrs. Thomas Dickens Warner.

Waters Esq., C.R., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55272

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 10 (folder)

Webb, Mrs. and the Misses Ponton, two family apartment

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55273

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 18 (folder)

Whittle House

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55274

box 6

Willet, Mr. and Mrs. H.I., residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55275

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 17 (folder)

Winborne, Mr. and Mrs. Waverly, addition to residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55276

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 11 (folder)

Wiseley, Dr. and Mrs. Martin, residence

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55277

oversize 2 (folder)

oversize 10 (folder)

Wishart House

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55278

box 6

And other unidentified materials

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/55279

Other Finding Aids

See Project Index for full details.