

# Kelly, Hugh P. and Ethel C., Collection

Hugh P. and Ethel C. Kelly Collection

c. 1930s-2000



## Title Statement

Kelly, Hugh P. and Ethel C., CollectionHugh P. and Ethel C. Kelly Collection, c. 1930s-2000 Ms.2024.060

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## Profile Description

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## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

Ms.2024.060

### Unit Date

c. 1930s-2000

### Language

Most of the materials in this collection are in English. Two items are in French.

### Abstract

This collection contains materials related to Hugh P. and Ethel C. Kelly, including a scrapbook, portrait, Telstar artifact, and a medal. Hugh P. Kelly earned a bachelor's and master's degree in engineering from Virginia Tech in 1937 and 1938. He worked on the Telstar project in the 1960s, and Mrs. Kelly later established the Hugh P. and Ethel C. Kelly Professorship in the VT College of Engineering.

### Extent

2 Cubic Feet 3 boxes

### Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

# Administrative Information

## Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

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## Source of Acquisition

The Hugh P. and Ethel C. Kelly Collection was donated to Special Collections and University Archives in 2015.

## Processing Information

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## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Hugh P. and Ethel C. Kelly Collection, c. 1930s-2000, Ms2024-060, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

# Biographical Note

The son of Hugh Powell and Clara Bartlett Kelly, Hugh Powell Kelly, Jr. (1916-1989) grew up in Richmond, Virginia, and received his bachelors and masters degrees in electrical engineering from Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 1937 and 1938. He went on to work for the Richmond telephone company, where he met Ethel E. Cross (1917-2012), the daughter of Ethel Mae Cumber and Davis Sydney Cross. They married on September 18, 1941.

Later that year, Kelly was selected to work for Bell Labs in New York before moving to corporate headquarters in New Jersey. He remained at the company, and in 1960, he was placed in charge of developing the Trans Atlantic Cable. His efficiency and good work persuaded the French government to buy into the Telstar proposal, later recognizing Kelly's efforts with a prestigious award when the Telstar link between the United States and France was completed in 1962. Telstar made world-wide telephone service possible and allowed communications industries such as cable television and international electronic data transfers to take off. After retiring from AT&T in 1979, Kelly remained active in the field, working to develop a computer for handicapped users.

Ethel Kelly continued to celebrate her husband's legacy, establishing the Hugh P. and Ethel C. Kelly Professorship of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Virginia Tech in 1999. She was inducted into Virginia Tech's Ut Prosim Society in honor of her generosity and devotion to the college.

External sources:

"Hugh P. Kelly", Academy of Engineering Excellence, Virginia Tech, <https://eng.vt.edu/about/distinguished-alumni/academy-of-engineering-excellence/hugh-p-kelly.html>, accessed June 5, 2024.

"Hugh Powell Kelly" in the Virginia, U.S., Marriage Records, 1936-2014, Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/11682576:9279>, accessed June 5, 2024.

"Hugh Powell Kelly Jr.", Findagrave.com, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/35685032/hugh-powell-kelly>, accessed June 5, 2024.

Ethel Cross Kelly obituary, Bennett Funeral Homes, January 5, 2012, <https://www.bennettfuneralhomes.com/obituary/1358410>, accessed June 5, 2024.

"Ethel Edmonia 'Dee' Cross Kelly", Findagrave.com, [https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/178165146/ethel\\_edmonia\\_kelly](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/178165146/ethel_edmonia_kelly), accessed June 5, 2024.

# Scope and Content

This collection contains materials related to Hugh P. and Ethel C. Kelly, including a scrapbook, portrait of the

couple, a Telstar artifact, and a French medal and menu honoring Hugh P. Kelly. The scrapbook contains information about a dinner honoring Ethel Kelly for the establishment of the Hugh P. and Ethel C. Kelly Professorship in the Virginia Tech College of Engineering. There is also a collage of items about Hugh Kelly's college days at Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

## Keywords

Archives of American Aerospace Exploration (AAAE)  
Aerospace engineers  
Science and Technology  
Students and alumni  
University History  
Kelly, Hugh P., Jr. (Hugh Powell), 1916-1989  
Kelly, Ethel C. (Ethel Cross), 1917-2012  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (1970-)  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute (1944-1970)

## Rights Statement for Archival Description

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## Arrangement

This collection is arranged chronologically.

## Description of Subordinate Components

### **Framed Arrangement of Hugh P. Kelly's Virginia Polytechnic Institute Materials**

**Unit Date** c. 1930s

**box** 3

### **Mérite Postal from France**

**Unit Date** 1962-07-11

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 4 (folder)

### **Telstar Artifact**

**Unit Date** c.1960s

**artifact** 1 (box)

### **French Lunch Menu for Café de Paris, Pré Catalan, Armenonville, and Fouquet's**

**Unit Date** c.1960s

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

### **Photo of Hugh and Ethel Kelly**

**Unit Date** c. 1960s

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container** 3 (folder)

### **Scrapbook of Virginia Tech College of Engineering Dinner in Honor of Ethel Kelly**

**Unit Date** 2000-06-06

**box-folder** 2 (box)

**Container 2** (folder)