

Kikuchi, Florence Masao, papers

Florence Masao Kikuchi papers (Other name Florence Masao Kikuchi Toy)
1934-1975

Title Statement

Kikuchi, Florence Masao, papers Kikuchi, Florence Masao, papers MSS 16905

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

MSS 16905

Unit ID

[Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

/repositories/3/resources/1791

Unit Date

1934-1975

Language

Japanese English

Creator

Toy, Florence Masao Kikuchi , 1920-1988

Extent

1.09 Cubic Feet 2 letter size document boxes, one half-size document box, one oversized scrapbook flat box (short)

Repository

Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

This collection was a purchase from McBride Rare Books to the Small Special Collections Library at the University of Virginia Library on 17 March 2025.

Preferred Citation

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Biographical / Historical

Florence Masao Kikuchi or Florence Masao Kikuchi (Toy), a Nisei woman (second generation of Japanese immigrants) and longtime member of the Japanese American Citizen's League. Florence was born in West Hiawatha, Utah on December 22, 1920. Both of her parents, Unzo Kikuchi and Hisa Suzuki Kikuchi were Japanese-born, and the family likely moved to the mining town of Hiawatha area of Utah because her father was a miner. Hiawatha was founded in the early 20th century as a company town for the United States Fuel Company, and was for a short time a vibrant center for mining, though it is now practically a ghost town.

In 1929, the family moved to Kaysville, just north of Salt Lake City. Florence married Harry Gee Toy in 1944 in Grand Junction, Colorado; no information has been found with regard to internment during WWII.

According to the 1946 Salt Lake City directory, the couple was living together while Harry was a cook at the King Joy Cafe.

At some point the couple divorced, evidenced by a small undated newspaper clipping present here listing "Divorces Asked" which includes: "Florence Toy from Harry Gee Toy, mental cruelty." She requested to have her name changed from Toy back to Kikuchi.

Florence passed away from a heart attack in Los Angeles on November 14, 1988.

Also in the collection are photographs of her younger brother Shigeo Kikuchi and her daughter Candace "Candy" Jean Toy.

Content Description

This collection contains three photograph albums, about 600 loose photographs, some annotated, thirty-eight studio photographs, many in their original housing, postcards with written messages, various greeting cards, two diplomas, report cards, newspaper clippings and a deed of Florence Masao Kikuchi Toy (1920-1988), a first-generation Japanese American Mormon living in Utah during the mid-twentieth century.

The albums document Florence's life from 1934 to the 1950s. One photograph album titled "Florence Kikuchi Private" is dated 1934 to 1940 and includes her high school portraits, events with classmates during two school picnics- one in Layton, Utah as part of the Layton Japanese School, and the other in the Tohoku region of Japan, which may relate to a local Japanese Seinen-Kai (Young Men's Association). Pictures of Florence's father and classmates are also included. A second album, dated roughly from 1936 to 1939, contains inscribed portraits of a California pen pal, Masao Kitada, images from school-related events, pictures of schoolmates, and several portraits of her younger brother Shigeo. The final photograph album is undated and features baby photos of Candace Jean Toy, Florence's daughter, who was born sometime after her marriage to Harry Gee Toy in 1944. Many photographs in the three albums are dated and feature dedications to Masao by their subject on the verso.

The loose photographs date roughly from the 1930s to the 1960s. They are a mixture of her photos and additional photographs sent to Florence from various friends and family, some of which are inscribed. The studio portraits were sent to Florence from a variety of friends and family photographed at the Broadway, Echer, and Terashima studios in Salt Lake City, but some came from other states, including Nevada, Washington, and California. Several of the studio photographs of young Japanese American servicemen, most of which are dedicated to her as "Flo." Many photographs have writing on the verso outlining subjects, dates, and dedications.

The non-photographic content among Florence's papers includes postcards and cards, an envelope of newspaper clippings which include her divorce clipping, obituaries of deceased friends and family members, stories on her hometown of Kaysville, and an article on Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Candace Toy's Deed of Trust from the State of Washington dated 1975 diplomas including, a certificate of graduation from the LDS Seminary is included, dated April 25, 1937 as well as her Davis County High School diploma dated May 20, 1938 and report cards.

Keywords

Japanese American soldiers
Japanese American women
Mormon Church
Asian Americans
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Arrangement

The collection has 3 series. Series 1. Personal papers, Series 2. Photographs, Series 3. Oversize Photo Albums. Most of the photographs in the folders are not arranged in any order and may be duplicates.

Description of Subordinate Components

Personal papers

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/273946

Unit Date 1925-1938

Scope and Contents

Report cards and diplomas for Florence Kikuchi. Mostly greeting cards some signed, some with news, and some blank. Newsclipping include information about Florence's divorce from Harry Gee Toy and an obituary for her mother, Hisa Suzuki Kikuchi.

Report cards, certificates, and diplomas (including from the Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints)

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/273953

Unit Date 1925-1938

Mixed Materials [X032784958] 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Letters, greeting cards, and postcards

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/273954

Unit Date 1945; undated

Mixed Materials [X032784958] 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Newspaper clippings and miscellaneous

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/273956

Unit Date 1945; undated

Mixed Materials [X032784958] 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Photographs

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/273948

Unit Date 1938-1969

Scope and Contents

Loose vernacular photographs and studio portraits documenting the life of Florence Masao Kikuchi. There is a combination of images of Florence, her family, and additional inscribed photographs from the 1930's to the 1960's. There are also photographs inscribed to Florence from Japanese American servicemen from World War II. There are many photographs of social events and also of children, including her daughter Candace "Candy" Jean Toy, and Florence's husband, Harry Gee Toy. Also her brothers Shigeo Kikuchi and

Paul Kikuchi. Included are photographs of their bowling teams at the Japanese American Citizens League National Tournament in 1962.

Photographs

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/273955

Mixed Materials [X032784958] 1 (box)

Container 4-8 (folder)

Photographs

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/273957

Mixed Materials [X032669515] 2 (box)

Container 1-10 (folder)

Photographs

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/273958

Mixed Materials [X032669516] 3 (box)

Container 1-6 (folder)

Photograph albums

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/273947

Unit Date 1934-1950

Photograph album with classmates and events from Layton Japanese School in Utah

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/273949

Unit Date 1934-1950

Mixed Materials [X006178807] 1 (Flat_Box)

Scope and Contents

Includes photographs of Unzo Kikuchi, father of Florence Kikuchi. Might have named this Box 4.

Photograph album with portraits of Shigeo Kikuchi, school events, classmates, and California pen pal

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/273950

Unit Date 1936-1939

Mixed Materials [X006178807] 1 (Flat_Box)

Photograph album with photographs of Candace "Candy" Jean Toy

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/273951

Unit Date ca. 1944

Mixed Materials [X006178807] 1 (Flat_Box)

Scope and Contents

Candy is daughter of Florence Masao Kikuchi and Harry Gee Toy.