

Archive
Lakeshore Museum Center
Gabrielson Collection

Collection: Gabrielson Collection

Object ID Numbers: x95.051.28-34, x95.051.36, x95.051.39, x95.051.42, x95.051.50-53, x95.051.55, x95.051.72, x95.051.97-109, x95.051.112, x95.051.117-123

Location: LMC, Archive, room 204, Back Room, Top on Orange Cabinet
Certificates on Shelf V 2 in Box S

Dates: 1870s to 1990s

Quantity: 2 document boxes (4 cubic feet -16in x 10in x13 in), 1 Oversize Box

Restrictions: No Restrictions

Abstract: This collection of archival materials includes letters, certificates, notebooks, scrapbooks, photo albums, publications, slides, newspaper clippings, and photographs that provide valuable information about the life of Mildred Nelson Gabrielson, her family, and her husband's family. Born in 1911 in Muskegon, Mildred Nelson Gabrielson began a life of travel and community involvement. This collection gives researchers valuable insight into Mildred's life and travels, the experiences and community involvement of Swedish-Americans and women accountants, and information about Muskegon High School during the late 1920s and early 1930s. This collection also provides information about Mildred's family. The majority of the materials in this collection are from the early 1910s to the 1990s, with a few exceptions from the late 1800s.

Historical Information: Mildred Genevieve Nelson Pierre Gabrielson was born on December 5, 1911 and was the only child of Oscar Nelson and Jennie Nordlund Nelson. Born into a primarily Lutheran Swedish family, her father, Oscar Albert Nelson, was born on August 20, 1884 in Matfrs Medelpod, Sweden. At some point in his life Oscar moved to Muskegon where he worked at Sealed Power for some time. Mildred's mother, Jennie Otilia Nordlund, was born on December 11, 1887 in Muskegon to Olof Nordlund and Selma Anderson Nordlund Nyberg. Both Olof and Selma were born in Sweden. Selma was born on May 17, 1866, and came to the United States in 1884 at the age of 18. Olof owned a store in Muskegon during the 1890s that was located near Samuel Lutheran Church and sold shoes and candy and cut hair. At some point Selma remarried a man with the last name Nyberg with whom she had a daughter named Esther Charlotte Nyberg. Esther was close in age to Mildred and they were in the same confirmation class at Samuel Lutheran Church in 1926. Esther passed away around 1937. In 1949, Selma passed away in Muskegon. Oscar Nelson and Jennie Nordlund were married on June 25, 1910 in Muskegon, Michigan. Jennie passed away on May 12 1961, a year after their 50th wedding anniversary. Oscar died on June 27, 1968.

Religion was important to the Nelson family and in Muskegon they attended the Samuel Lutheran Church. Jennie, Esther, and Mildred were all confirmed at the Samuel Lutheran Church. The typical gift given at these confirmations were either a Bible, given to Jennie in Swedish and Esther in English, or a Hymnal, which Mildred received on her confirmation from her grandmother Selma.

Mildred Gabrielson attended elementary school at Hackley School and she graduated from Muskegon High School in 1930. After graduation, Mildred followed in her father's footsteps and worked at Sealed Power from 1930 to 1940. From there she moved on to Eckrich Meat Company from 1940 to 1944. In 1950, she began work at Norge Division Borg Warner until 1961. She then worked at Muskegon Bank & Trust until 1968.

Unlike her parents, Mildred chose to get married much later in life. On March 3, 1969 Mildred Nelson married Eric A. Pierre. Pierre was a Swedish native who moved to the United States. After his death in 1974, Mildred married John Gabrielson on June 26, 1982. Gabrielson came to the United States from Finland around 1920. He passed away on September 24, 1993. Mildred did not have any children of her own, but instead she had six stepchildren.

Mildred enjoyed traveling and she kept scrapbooks and slides of her adventures in the United States. In 1939, Mildred and her friend Birtha Look traveled to Washington, D.C, Philadelphia, Atlantic City, New York City, the World's Fair, Niagara Falls, and then by boat from Buffalo to Detroit. Mildred enjoyed traveling with her friend Nellie J. Nobes. In July of 1960, the ladies took a trip out to the Great Pacific Northwest. They also spent two weeks in August exploring out west, where they made stops in places including Yellowstone National Park, Seattle, and Denver.

Along with travel, Mildred Gabrielson also enjoyed cooking. She received two certificates for the Home Service Department Cooking Course in 1934 and 1935. Scrapbooking was another favorite hobby. Mildred created many scrapbooks with photographs of her trips and her graduating class of 1930. Many of her scrapbooks contained newspaper articles, letters, and booklets relating to a certain topic like Muskegon High School, everyday life, and others.

Because of her Swedish heritage, Mildred Gabrielson was a member of the Vasa Order of America, a Swedish-American Fraternal Organization named for Gustav Vasa. Mildred was a member of the Local Lodge Trygg No. 536 which was based in Muskegon. She was also part of the Vasa Sewing Club. Mildred received many of Vasa's publications, like their historical reviews and song books.

Mildred was also a member of the Muskegon Chapter 14 of the American Society of Women Accountants (ASWA). At one point she was the treasurer for the Muskegon Chapter and participated in volunteering for the chapter. Mildred died on December 1, 2005, and she is buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Muskegon.

Scope and Contents: This collection is arranged into the following 9 series: Cookbooks, Songbooks, American Society of Women Accountants (ASWA), Muskegon High School,

Miscellaneous, Vasa Order of America, Religious, Scrapbooks/photo albums/slides, and Certificates.

The Cookbook series contains: six cookbooks, mainly from local Muskegon churches and includes one cookbook from Sealed Power, and a Trinity Lutheran cookbook that belonged to Gerda Gabrielson.

The Songbook series contains: three different songbooks, including the *Golden Book of Favorite Songs*, *Christmas Songs & Other Lore*, and *Barnvännens Lyrá* (in Swedish). The *Christmas Songs* book was given to Oscar Nelson from Sealed Power.

The American Society of Women Accountants (ASWA) series contains: the lyrics to the ASWA song, a newspaper clipping of the group volunteering, and 2 sets of slides of the members of the ASWA Muskegon Chapter from 1952-1968.

The Muskegon High School series contains: the 1929-1930 Muskegon High School Directory, a ticket to a 1928 MHS football games, Mildred Nelson's commencement announcement, and two scrapbooks about the students of MHS from 1927-1928 and 1930, and a photo album of the class of 1930.

The Miscellaneous series contains: artifacts about her parents, including their marriage license/guestbook, wedding invitation, 50th wedding anniversary invitation, napkin, and newspaper articles, and biographical papers. The series also contains a naturalization book belonging to John Gabrielson, a booklet on how to display the flag, a Christmas card poster from Fred Benschel, a Muskegon Bank Newsletter 1965, an Olle I Skratthultsvisor *Och Historier* booklet in Swedish, and biographical information on Carl Folke Agestrand put together by John and Mildred Gabrielson.

The Vasa Order of America series contains: the sub-series correspondence and meeting minutes/note, which includes promotional Vasa items, a letter from Summer & Associates with an appraisal for property, the Vasa Park Club Sewing Circle event dates and sign-in from 1947 to 1974, and the Vasa Sewing Club 1940 meeting minutes and notes; the sub-series publications, which includes Vasa historical review books, annual convention booklets, and Vasa published songbooks (one songbook in Swedish).

The Religious series contains: three confirmation bibles belonging to Esther Charlotte Nyberg, Jennie Nordlund Nelson, and Selma Anderson Nordlund Nyberg (the last two in Swedish), *Tabernacle Hymns No. 22* book, *The Hymnal* confirmation book belonging to Mildred Nelson Gabrielson, and a Swedish bible belonging to Andreas Peason.

The Scrapbooks, Photo Albums, and Slides series contains: snapshots of a guided tour around the East Coast with Mildred Nelson and Birtha Cooks, a photo album of a trip with Mildred Nelson and Nellie Nobes to Yellowstone, Seattle, and Denver, a scrapbook of a trip to the Great Pacific Northwest with Mildred Nelson and Nellie Nobes, a scrapbook of newspaper clippings related to Dr. William Bradley, a cooking scrapbook with recipes, an everyday scrapbook containing clippings about family and friends, a miscellaneous scrapbook of newspaper clippings, slides of

Muskegon before the mall, miscellaneous slides of Muskegon, and slides of 1956 Muskegon parade and 1958 Grand Haven parade.

The Certificates Series contains: marriage certificate for Oscar and Jennie Nelson, baptismal certificates for Esther Nyberg and Mildred Nelson, a confirmation certificate for Eugene Nordlund, certificates from Hackley Manual Training School for courses completed, and two diplomas awarded to Esther Nyberg and Mildred Nelson.

Arrangement: This collection of papers and other archival materials was previously processed prior to 2012. The original order is not known. The majority of the items within this collection were numbered individually and catalogued by that number on Past Perfect. The collection was re-processed in 2012 to best meet researchers' needs and the individual object identification numbers were kept the same. The slides included in the collection do not have a number assigned to them.

This collection is composed largely of paper materials in different formats. The bulk of the collection consists of loose papers, publications, photographs, scrapbooks and photo albums with mixed materials, and also included several boxes of slides.

This collection is arranged into 8 series placed by series and size into two white document boxes.

Contents:

Series 1: Gabrielson Cookbooks

x95.051.32.1-6

Found in Box 1

Series 2: Gabrielson Songbooks

x95.051.33.2, x95.051.53, x95.051.55

Found in Box 1

Series 3: Gabrielson American Society of Women Accountants (ASWA)

x95.051.112, x95.051.122

Found in Box 1

Note: Includes 1 box of Slides (not numbered) in Box 1

Series 4: Gabrielson Muskegon High School

x95.051.29-31

Found in Box 1

Note: Includes 3 Scrapbooks, x95.051.28, x95.051.28.3, x95.051.72, in Box 2

Series 5: Gabrielson Miscellaneous

x95.051.34, x95.051.36, x95.051.42, x95.051.50-52, x95.051.97, x95.051.117-121,
x95.051.123

Found in Box 1

Series 6: Gabrielson Vasa Order of America

Sub-Series: Correspondence and Meeting Minutes/Notes

x95.051.39, x95.051.112

Found in VASA Folder 1 Box 1

Sub-Series: VASA Publications

X95.051.39

Found in VASA Folders 2-3 Box 1

Series 7: Gabrielson Religious

x95.051.33.1, x95.051.105, x95.051.107, x95.051.109

Found in Box 1

Note: x95.051.106 and x95.051.108 laying flat in Box 1

Series 8: Gabrielson Scrapbooks/Photo Albums/Slides

x95.051.28.1-2, x95.051.28.4-6, x95.051.29.1-2 (Scrapbooks and Photo Albums)

Found in Box 2

5 boxes of slides (no number)

Found in Box 1

Series 9: Certificates

x95.051.096, x95.051.098 to x95.051.104

Located on Shelf V 2 Box S Oversize