

Gratz College Special Collections Finding Aid

Title

Lena Allen-Shore Papers

Dates

1932-1967, bulk 1939-1947

Creator

Allen-Shore, Lena, 1921-2018

Quantity

3 linear feet (3 boxes and 69 folders).

Repository

Bachman Rare Book Room, Gratz College Tuttleman Library.

Language

Materials in Polish, German, and French.

Abstract

This collection, which dates from 1932 to 1967, with bulk dates of 1939 to 1967, consists of letters and diaries primarily during the period of World War Two, the Nazi Occupation of Poland, and post war Poland and Quebec. The records document Allen-Shore's life surviving the Nazi occupation as a Jewish woman hiding in plain sight as a Christian. The records also describe her experiences in the Polish Resistance and her life in Paris, as the wife of a diplomat, and in Montreal after the war.

The collection provides a personal account of the day to day life of wartime Poland and a productive and hopeful life after the war.

Biographical Note

Lena Allen-Shore née Herzig, was born in Kraków, Poland, in 1921, and later moved to Lviv. After the Nazi invasion of Poland, her family obtained new identification papers listing their religion as Roman Catholicism. This allowed the family to survive the remainder of the war in the open. Working for the Polish Resistance in the Nazi occupation government, Allen-Shore put herself in danger by forewarning others of impending arrests.

After the war, she married Sigmond Shore and moved to Paris where she worked as a journalist and continued her studies at the University of Paris. In 1951, Allen-Shore and her husband moved to Montreal where Shore built an import-export business and Allen-Shore wrote music, poetry and short stories. Allen-Shore then moved to Philadelphia and earned a doctorate from Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning.

Founder of the Lena Allen-Shore Center for the Advancement of Human Potential in Philadelphia, (which was affiliated with Gratz College), Allen-Shore created 28 accredited interdisciplinary courses which addressed issues including: how to find meaning in life, Holocaust studies, combating prejudice, communication between religions. Allen-Shore was also the author of 17 books and publications and has composed over 100 songs, including a cantata about the liberation of Auschwitz.

In 1978, just after Karol Wojtyla was elected Pope, Allen-Shore wrote a letter urging him to use his position to improve Jewish-Christian relations. Allen-Shore accompanied Pope John Paul II on his visit to Jerusalem in 2000. Allen-Shore died in 2018.

Organization and Arrangement

The collection is arranged into two series as follows:

Series 1: Letters, 1932 to 1967, bulk 1939-1947

Subseries 1a: Prewar Poland, 1932-1938,

Subseries 1b: World War Two Poland, 1939-1945

Subseries 1c: Post-war Years, 1945-1967

Series 2: Journals

Subseries 1a: Prewar Poland, is arranged chronologically and dates from 1932 to 1938. This subseries includes letters concerning Allen Shore's late adolescence and time in university before the outbreak of World War Two.

Subseries 1b: World War Two Poland, is arranged chronologically and dates from 1939 to 1945.. This subseries includes letters to Allen Shore's family and friends throughout Poland during the war, and her work in the Polish Resistance.

Subseries 1c: Post-war Years is arranged chronologically and dates from 1945 to 1967, with the bulk of the letters between 1950 to 1962. This subseries includes letters to Allen Shore's surviving family members, her husband, and the US Army in France.

Series 2: Journals series dates from 1940- 1959 with the bulk of materials dating from 1928 to 1971. The journals document Allen Shore's life living in Poland during World War Two and her life in post-war Europe.

Research Access

Collection is restricted to a small number of items. Please consult with the librarian on the availability of the collection.

Technical Access

Digital copies of the collection, with translations, are currently in process and are expected to be available in early 2022.

Condition Note

Collection consists of letters written on various types of paper, many are delicate, many are creased.

Publication and Copyright Information

Copyright has been assigned to Gratz College by Jacques Shore. For permission to publish materials in the collection contact the Director of Library of Information Services at the Tuttleman Library of Gratz College.

Preferred Citation

[Description and date of item], [Box/folder number], Lena Allen-Shore Papers, Bachman Rare Book Room, Gratz College Tuttleman Library , Melrose Park, Pennsylvania.

Acquisition Information

Donated by Jacques Shore in 2018, the collection was previously stored at The Lena Allen-Shore Center for the Advancement of Human Potential.

Processing Information

Collection processed and finding aid prepared in September 2021 by Timothy D. Bostic, Project Archivist.

Index Terms

Subjects:

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)

Jews--Persecutions.

Refugees--Europe--1940-1950

World War, 1939-1945

World War, 1939-1945--Underground movements--Poland

Places:

Montreal, Quebec

Paris, France

Warsaw, Poland

Material Types:

Letters

Journals