

Finding Aid

To the

GRACE BUSCHER GUSLANDER COLLECTION

1953 - 1985

Kauai Historical Society

Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii

MS 94

MS 94**Grace Buscher Guslander Collection**

Extent: 2500 items consisting of books and objects including furniture.

Abstract:

Grace Buscher Guslander was the general manager of the Coco Palms Resort on Kauai. She arrived on Kauai in 1953 and retired 32 years later. She was the “matriarch of Kauai tourism,” well known for using Hawaiian practices, artifacts, and books to enhance guests’ experiences. The items donated to KHS are primarily from the hotel’s museum and library.

History:

Grace Guslander (nee Grace Walters Bucher but later changed to Buscher) was born in Rudy, Pennsylvania on October 25, 1910. Her early years were spent on her father’s farm but she struck out for the big city (Atlantic City) during the depression and took on various jobs. Eventually she worked as a manager of a hotel in Collegeville, Pennsylvania. In 1949 she flew to Hawaii to help her brother’s wife care for their children. Grace became well versed in Hawaiian history while living in Honolulu. In 1953, Lyle Guslander a regular attendee at the Buscher parties offered Grace a job managing the Coco Palm Lodge on Kauai. Grace created a unique “Hawaii” experience complete with a gallery of books and artifacts of Hawaii and a torch-lighting ceremony. She was the first woman to win the “Man of the Year” award at the International Hotel and Restaurant Show in New York City in 1979. Grace married Lyle Guslander in 1969 and eventually retired from the Coco Palms Resort Hotel in 1985.

Mr. R. Wichman, the collection’s manager, provided the following overview:

This large private collection of Hawaiiana was acquired between 1953 and 1985 by Mrs. Grace Buscher Guslander for the purpose of providing historical information in the form of a museum and library for her houseguests at the Coco Palms Resort Hotel where she was general manager and vice president for 32 years. Of the approximately 2500 items in the collection, the Hawaiiana resource books constitute the majority and are of superb quality.

The majority of the Collection’s books were printed between 1801 and 1950, describing many aspects of Hawaii’s history, culture, religion, politics, agriculture and ethnic groups. There are some excellent early world exploration accounts, early missionary reports of activities in the South Pacific, original volumes, circa 1840s to 1930s, on Hawaiian law, language, music, legends, and Hawaiian bibles. There are valuable annual reports of the Hawaiian Historical

Acquisition information: These items came to the historical society June 1990, deposited by Grace Buscher Guslander. **Restrictions:** These records are open to research.

Kauai Historical Society Accession Number 1990.001

Processed in 1992 by R. Wichman. Funding provided by Robert E. Black Memorial Trust, Mabel I. Wilcox Foundation, G.N. Wilcox Trust and the Cooke Foundation Lts..

Society from 1893-1984, a complete set of Mid-Pacific Magazines from 1918-1932, and collections of books on shells, botany and horticulture. The collection contains very rare primary accounts by the first Western visitors to the Hawaiian Islands between 1780 and 1799, among them: The Complete History of Captain Cook's Voyages by George Anderson Esq. printed in 1784, Voyages by Captain Cook and Captain Clerke 1776-1780 by W. Ellis (Surgeon for Captain Cook's expedition) printed in 1784 (3rd Edition), Voyage Round the World in 1785-1788 by Captain Nathaniel Portlock printed in 1789, and the Voyage of La Perouse Round the World 1785-1788, Vol I & II by John De La Perouse printed in 1798. This collection contains almost every book written on the 1893 Hawaiian Monarch Overthrow that was published prior to 1900. These accounts were written by people who played primary roles in this historic period.

The varied object collection is also excellent. Some objects of importance are King Kalakaua's calabashes, Hawaiian quilts, and pre-contact artifacts including a stone house god carved in the Necker Island style, a basalt mirror, and two stunning full-sized kapa moe. There is an extensive collection of ceramics, mainly tea cups and saucers, plates and various dishes from France, England, Ireland, China, and USA displayed in a large ornate breakfront secretary formerly of the Ward Estate. The silver collection is numerous and of good quality and includes a complete sterling silver tea service in its original shipping case. Of special note, the large oil painting by Hubert Vos of his wife "Kaikilani" painted in 1890 ranks among the finest pieces of this collection.

Scope and Content:

The Guslander collection was originally assessed and cataloged using a numeric system beginning with the letter G. The book collection was numbered from G0001 to G1999, objects in the Library was numbered from G2001 to G2999 and the objects in the Gallery were numbered from G2001 to G3999. In 2013 the book collection was cataloged into the Library World online catalog where they can be searched by author, title, and subject as well as G number. Some books were de-accessioned if they were duplicates within the Guslander collection and/or when duplicates existed in the KHS book collection.

The objects have been stored in various locations such as in the library, library closet, safe, archive room, and off-site archive.

Note: This collection was originally received in 1990 and inventoried in 1992 but no Deed of Gift was issued at that early date. A Deed of Gift was created retroactively with the accession number of 1990.001. The designations G0001 to G3999 are retained as discrete identification numbers for this collection as opposed to the standard (ex. 1990.001.001, 1990.001.002, etc.).

Container List

For a more detailed description of each item see the Guslander inventory stored in the archives.

Number	General Description of item
G0001 -1999	Guslander books cataloged in Library World and currently located in the Guslander Book Collection on the north wall of the library. Call numbers for this collection begin with "GUS" followed by the Library of Congress call number.
G2001 -2019	2D Images on prints, paintings, engravings
G2020 - 2288	3D Objects such as fireplace tools, figurines, coat of arms, lauhala hat and bracelets, porcelain doll in muu muu, busts, adzes, poi pounder, Necker Island figurine, basalt bowls, umeke, gourd container, kukui lei, wooden containers from local wood, Hawaiian games, model outrigger canoes, fish trap, kapa, Hawaiian instruments for music and hula, fishhooks, kapa beaters and kapa fragments, kou bowls and calabashes, lei hulu, flutes from Pacific islands, wooden sculptures & war clubs, clock, shells, photographs, dolls, desk, chairs, sofa, plates, and flags.
G3002 -3563	3D objects such as plates, dishes, teapot, teacups, silverware, child's velvet coat, tapa, photographs, desk sets, chairs, kahilis, dragon, Japanese rice paper and hopi coat and fans, figurines, dresser, 2D images paintings and photos and needlepoint, feather cloak, lamp, pendant, watch chain, keys, clock, military drum, settee, rocker, table, pump organ and bench, sculptures, candelabra, silver tea set, chests, quilts, breakfront, armoire, four poster bed, rugs, chandeliers
Drawers 5, 6, 8 12, 3, 9	History/Culture Files These files are currently located in the KHS work room and in the offsite area.