The Jean Redpath Archive, 1906-2015
Collection: Mss. 2017: 4

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Descriptive Summary

**Title:** The Jean Redpath Archive, 1906-2015

**Collection Number:** Mss. 2017: 4

**Creator:** Jean Redpath

**Extent:** 4 boxes

Administrative Information

**Provenance:** Gift, 2017

**Processed by:** Raef Mills

**Access Restrictions:** Open to research

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Scope and Contents Note

Jean Redpath (1937-2014) was considered by many to be the preeminent interpreter and performer of Scottish folk music. Born to musical parents in Edinburgh in 1937, Redpath was exposed to traditional Scottish music from an early age. While attending the University of Edinburgh, she met Hamish Henderson, whose recordings of traditional Scots music helped provide inspiration for Redpath to pursue a musical career.

She arrived in San Francisco in 1961 and quickly earned a reputation as a knowledgeable and moving performer. Making her way to Greenwich Village, she gained the respect of Ramblin’ Jack Elliott and Bob Dylan. Around this time a glowing New York Times review of one of her performances helped to launch her career. During her lifetime she recorded dozens of albums featuring Scottish
folksongs and ballads. She received particular acclaim for her recordings of songs collected and written by Robert Burns. These recordings were undertaken in a decades-long project with composer Serge Hovey which lasted until his death in 1989.

Outside the studio, Redpath was renowned for her ability to engage and entertain live audiences, spending much of her time performing across the United States and Europe. In particular, she made several appearances on A Prairie Home Companion and was a frequent performer at various Robert Burns societies and celebrations. She also served as artist in residence at both Wesleyan and Stirling University.

Throughout her career she received recognition for her talents in numerous ways and was awarded several honorary doctorates, as well as being appointed both a Kentucky Colonel and, in 1987, Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE).

The collection contains material of both personal and professional interest spanning her lifetime but predominantly from the 1980s onward. Personal items include photographs and letters from friends and family, a brief series of journal entries, and vacation itineraries and mementos. Redpath’s interests outside of music are further highlighted by her collection of recipes, humorous cartoons and records of psychic readings she had done for her.

Material related to her professional career occupies the larger portion of this collection. Recording and performance contracts, financial records, fan mail, and performance notes can be found. Several collections of Scottish folk song lyrics, indexed by Redpath, are also included, along with listings of her recorded material. One series is dedicated to her later work with Serge Hovey, an undertaking especially dear to her. Of particular interest is the Manuscript series, as it contains several versions of an unpublished manuscript of traditional Scottish folksongs (Scottish Songs: A Personal Collection) selected by Redpath. The manuscripts contain her reflections and notes on these particular songs and why they were chosen, as well as photographs she selected to accompany them.

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Series IX: Clippings

Series X: Serge Hovey Related Material

Series XI: Oversized

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**Container List**

**Series I: General**

Most items in this series are of a biographical nature.

**Box 1**

- Biographical Information, 1984-1996, no date
- “Cartoons”, 1993, no date
- "Folklore Productions" 50 year anniversary booklet, 2007
- Green card renewal and related research
- “Humor file”, 1992-2000, no date
- Journal entries, including transcript of psychic tape, 1987-1999
- Redpath genealogy, 1906-1980,
- Obits and condolence letters, 2014-2015
- Kentucky Colonel Certificate (copy), 1987
- Photographs, no date
- Postcards unused, (no date)
- Psychic readings, 1991-1997
- Recipes, 1982-2001, no date
- Scotland-themed bumper stickers, no date
- Travel itineraries, 1997-2005
- Travel mementos, 1992, no date
- Typescript by John Cairney: "And then he made the lassies o!", 1988
- University of St. Andrews honorary degree ceremony, 1990

**Series II: Performances**
Ballad Folk BBC TV series notes, 1978
Conference on Aging script with additional music, no date
Lord Byron Documentary, 1992, no date
Notes from performances with Abby Newton, 1987-1996
Performance and lecture flyers, playbills, programs, 1965-1993
Performance and lecture flyers, playbills, programs, 1994-2010
Performance and lecture flyers, playbills, programs, no date
Performance notes and related material, 1993-1998, no date
Prairie Home Companion materials 1987-2004, no date
Research on Scotland, 1984-2003, no date
Robert Burns celebrations material, 1983-1987
Robert Burns celebrations material (incl. photos), 1988-1989
Robert Burns celebrations 1995-2009, no date
Tour date calendar 1987
Tour date calendar 1988
Tour date calendar 1989
Tour date calendar 1990
Tour date calendar 1991
Tour date calendar 1992
Tour date calendar 1993
Tour date calendar 1994
Tour date calendar 1995
Tour date calendar 1996
Tour date calendar 1997
Tour date calendar 1998-1997

Box 2
Tour date calendar 1998
Tour date calendar 1999
Tour date calendar 2000
Tour date calendar 2001
Series III: Compositions

"Celtic Society" tunebook, no date
"Irish Folk Club" tunebook with notes by Redpath, 1980
"The Music of Scotland" teacher packet, 1985
Indexed alphabetical lyric list with additional unindexed lyrics included in original packet, no date
Lyrics, loose, typed and photocopied, 1975, no date

Subseries A: Binders

Binders 1-3 are a set. Binder 4 was collected separately and has some overlap with the songs in 1-3.

Lyric binder 1 of 3 diskette files (micro floppy disk), no date
Lyric binder 1 of 3 index and notes, no date
Lyric binder 1 of 3 lyrics A-B, no date
Lyric binder 1 of 3 lyrics C-E, no date
Lyric binder 1 of 3 lyrics F-G no date
Lyric binder 2 of 3 index, no date
Lyric binder 2 of 3 lyrics H-J, no date
Lyric binder 2 of 3 lyrics K-M, no date
Lyric binder 2 of 3 lyrics Me-O, no date
Lyric binder 3 of 3 index, no date
Lyric binder 3 of 3 lyrics P-R, no date
Lyric binder 3 of 3 lyrics S-T, no date
Lyric binder 3 of 3 lyrics U-Z, no date
Lyric binder 4 index by song title no date
Series IV: Recordings
Album advertising mailers, 1995-1997, no date
Album liner notes, 1973-1999 (original and copy), no date
Albums list, chronological, 1962-2005
Recorded Burns tracks alphabetized by title, no date
Recorded tracks alphabetized by album, 2 lists, no date
Recorded tracks alphabetized by first line, no date
Recorded tracks alphabetized by title, no date
Recorded tracks partial lists, no date

Series V: Manuscript
In the early years of the twenty-first century, Redpath worked on a book that would collect Scottish folk songs which she considered to be of particular import. The book, never published, was to contain pictures of the Scottish countryside and notes by Redpath herself. The documents in this series are the research and draft of this unpublished work.

Box 3
Correspondence re: unpublished book, 2000-2004, no date
Notes to accompany lyrics (rough draft), no date
Photos to be used, no date
Proof copy of unpublished book (photocopy), no date

Series VI: Correspondence
Fan Mail 1987-2010, no date
Personal Correspondence, 1992-2014
Personal Correspondence, no date
Professional Correspondence, 1987-2010
Songs sent to Redpath (collected and original), 1985-2003, no date
To and from E.S. Dall re: family tree, 1981-1987, no date

**Series VII: Financial and Legal Materials**
Copyright forms, copies, and related research, 1999-2002
Divorce papers re: Jean Redpath and Rob Johnson, 1969, 2004
Expense Records 1986
Expense Records 1987
Expense Records 1988
Expense Records 1989
Expense Records 1990
Expense Records 1991
Expense Records 1992
Expense Records 1994
Expense Records 1995
Materials related to compilation album, 2004-2005
Mechanical license requests, 1999
Performance contracts, 1987-1991
Performance contracts, 1992-2006
Recording Contracts, 1961-1997
Recording Contracts (unsigned), no date
Rounder Records royalty statements, 1996-2003
Rounder Records royalty statements, 2004-2010

**Box 4**
Royalty statements (other than Rounder), 1986-2000
STEORRA financial ledger (copy), 1991-1992
STEORRA invoices, 1985-2005

**Series VII: Audio Visual Materials**
CD of scanned slides (Photoshop 2.0), May 2003
CD's 1-4 (some duplicate) with visual files, printed contents, no date

**Series IX: Clippings**

Clippings, 1983-1991
Clippings, 1992-1998
Clippings, no date
Clippings re: JR's family
Magazine articles, 1993-1994
Obits and memoriams other than Redpath, 2000-2010, no date

**Series X: Serge Hovey Related Material**

Jean Redpath and Serge Hovey collaborated for more than 20 years on a project to record all of Robert Burns’s songs. During this time they developed great respect for one another; so much so in fact, that after Hovey’s death Redpath would not allow anyone else to arrange the music for future albums in the series, opting to sing them a cappella instead. These items are all related to Redpath’s work with Hovey and were kept together by Redpath.

Hovey obits, 1989, no date
Information re: Timothy Neat, no date
Interview transcript (discusses Hovey p.13-14, 19), October 31, 1986
Partial list of Hovey compositions, 1948-1990
Performance notes, set list, August 23, 1987

**Subseries A: Robert Burns**

"Burns Songs: Book 1" (music and lyrics), no date
Esther Hovey correspondence re: Burns recordings, 1987-1990, no date
Material re: Burns recording 7, 1989, no date
Material re: Burns recording 8, 1994, no date
Notes (handwritten) re: Burns, no date
Notes and instrumentation for Burns recordings 1-6, 1987
O Guid Ale Comes' sheet music, arr. by Hovey, no date
Sheet music for Burns 7 with minimal annotations, no date

**Series XI: Oversized**

Prints of poster "Jean Redpath Sings: 50 years", no date