

A Guide to the Charlotte Bowers Nelson papers MS.91

Charlotte Bowers Nelson papers
1946-1961



Title Statement

A Guide to the Charlotte Bowers Nelson papers MS.91

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Notes

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Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2026-03-05 18:01:31 +0000.

Language Usage: Description is written in: English, Latin script.

Descriptive Rules: Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

MS.91

Unit ID

[Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

/repositories/7/resources/1666

Unit Date

1946-1961

Mixed Materials

1 (box)

Language

English

Extent

12 folder(s)

Condition Description

Materials are in good condition but should be handled carefully.

Repository

Claude Moore Health Sciences Library

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

Even though this collection contains Protected Health Information (PHI) and Personally Identifiable Information (PII), the donors signed a HIPAA waiver to make this collection accessible to the public.

Biographical / Historical

Charlotte Bowers Nelson (June 28, 1931 — July 9, 2023) was born in Bristol, Virginia, and grew up in Bristol, Tennessee, the daughter of Dr. Thaddeus R. Bowers and Ruth Moore Bowers. Her husband was Dr. Gustav C. Nelson (May 19, 1927 — December 10, 2011).

In 1948, Nelson was diagnosed with tuberculosis during a routine screening at her high school. Her father contacted Dr. Frank B. Stafford at the Blue Ridge Sanatorium, persuading him to allow her to be treated at home. After a year of bed rest, she returned to school briefly but suffered a relapse after graduation, requiring another year of treatment. She later attended King College part-time before pursuing sociology at Duke University, where she graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa. Additionally, she earned a Master of Arts in Religion from Columbia University and a Master of Public Administration from Drake University.

Following her studies, Nelson directed teen programs at the YWCA in her hometown and taught religion and sociology at Beaver College in Pennsylvania. She held leadership roles in the League of Women Voters in Iowa, as well as in Beloit, Wisconsin, and she initiated the first women's studies course at Drake University.

After obtaining her MPA, Nelson interned for the Lieutenant Governor of Iowa and worked for the Iowa Department of Human Services. In 1985, she became the Executive Director of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, a position she held for 22 years under both Republican and Democratic administrations. Throughout her tenure, Nelson advocated tirelessly for women's rights, promoting pay equity, gender balance on state boards, and supporting legislation on equity, family planning, and combating domestic violence and sexual assault. Even after retiring, she remained active on boards including Iowa Friends of Legal Services, Iowa CareGivers, Westminster House, and the National Association of Commissions on the Status of Women.

In 1994, Charlotte Bowers Nelson was chosen as one of three "Visionary Women" by the Young Women's Resource Center in Des Moines. She is included in Who's Who of American Women.

Content Description

This collection consists of personal medical records for Charlotte Bowers Nelson when she was being treated for tuberculosis between 1948-1961. Regarding her treatments and health, there are letters of correspondence between her father Dr. Thaddeus R. Bowers, Jr. of Bristol, Tennessee and Dr. Frank B. Safford at the Blue Ridge Sanatorium. Additional authors of letters include doctors, family members, and administration from Duke University. There are also reports from her radiologist Dr. George W. McCall, x-ray reports, Nurses' Record charts, graphic charts, a Home and Health Calendar with doctor's appointments noted, hand-written notes, consultation notes, request for ambulatory service slips, an application for admission to the Blue Ridge Sanatorium, lab work request slips, a health data and physical status report, and nursing notes written by her mother, Ruth Moore Bowers.

Related Materials

See MS-12 (Blue Ridge Sanatorium records) for related content.

Keywords

Blue Ridge Sanatorium
Virginia
Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia--Bristol
Tennessee--Bristol
Tuberculosis
Tuberculosis in children
Consumption (Disease)

Arrangement

This collection does not have series and is arranged alphabetically.

Description of Subordinate Components

Correspondence

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/249316

Unit Date 1948

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/249317

Unit Date 1949

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/249318

Unit Date 1950

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/249319

Unit Date 1951

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/249320

Unit Date 1952

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 10 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/249321

Unit Date 1953

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 11 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/249322

Unit Date 1954

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 12 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/249323

Unit Date 1955

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 13 (folder)

Graphic Charts

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/249324

Unit Date 1948

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 14 (folder)

Home and Health Calendar

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/249325

Unit Date 1948

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 15 (folder)

Nurses' Records

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/249326

Unit Date 1948

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 16 (folder)

Photographs

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/273922

Unit Date circa 1940

Extent 3 itemsThe items consists of approximately 13.65 MB.

Conditions Governing Access

Please reach out to staff at Historical Collections for access of these digital files.

X-ray Records and Reports

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/7/archival_objects/249327

Unit Date 1946-1961

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Container 17 (folder)