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LG MS 015 May Sarton Scrapbook Finding Aid

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**JEAN BYERS SAMPSON CENTER FOR DIVERSITY IN MAINE
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**MAY SARTON SCRAPBOOK
LG MS 15**

**Total Boxes: 1
Linear Feet: 0.25**

**By
Kristin Morris and
Karin France**

**Portland, Maine
April 2009 and
April 2010**

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Administrative Information

Provenance: The May Sarton Scrapbook was compiled by William David Barry, and he and his wife Debra Verrier Barry donated it in 2008.

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Cite as: May Sarton Scrapbook, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer+ Collection, Jean Byers Sampson Center for Diversity in Maine, University of Southern Maine Libraries.

Biographical Sketch

Eleanor May Sarton (1912-1995) was a Belgian-born poet and novelist, who immigrated to the United States with her parents in 1916 and became a naturalized American citizen in 1924. Sarton chose to forgo college in favor of becoming an actress, forming her own theater company in the mid-1930s. She turned to an exclusively literary career after the failure of her company in 1935, focusing primarily on poetry, as well as writing novels and publishing her journals. She also taught at both Harvard University and Wellesley College at various stages of her career. Her work addressed, "The recurring themes of solitude, the conflict between marriage and women's freedom, relationships among women, and aging."¹ Reception of Sarton's work was affected by her openness about being a lesbian. In 1973, she moved to York, ME, where she spent the remainder of her life. Her book, *The House by the Sea: A Journal* (1977) was a selection for *The Mirror of Maine: One Hundred Books that Reveal the History of the State and the Life of its People* (2000).

William Barry is a local historian and writer from Portland, ME who serves as a Reference Assistant at the Maine Historical Society's Library, has authored/co-authored five books, and contributes reviews and articles to the *Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram*. In 1983, he was introduced to May Sarton by his friend Dorothy Healy, who was co-founder of the Maine Women Writers Collection at Westbrook College (now a campus of the University of New England) and an early member of the Baxter Society, a bibliophilic club in Portland, ME, among her many other pursuits. When Healy died in 1990, Barry contacted Sarton, requesting that she write an essay for a book being produced by the Baxter Society to honor Healy. Sarton agreed, and produced an essay for the book, which was published in 1992.

Description of the Collection

The Scrapbook contains correspondence between William Barry and May Sarton

¹ Sprague, Laura Fecych, ed., *The Mirror of Maine: One Hundred Distinguished Books that Reveal the History of the State and the Life of its People*, (Orono and Portland, Maine: The University of Maine Press and The Baxter Society, 2000), 298.

regarding her essay for the Dorothy Healy memorial book and Barry's reminiscences about his interactions with Sarton. Also present are an unbound copy of the Healy book; biographical information about Sarton; documents and newspaper clippings relating to celebrations of Sarton's life and work; and documents regarding Barry's effort to get Sarton's memorial essay about Healy in a Sarton bibliography. The Scrapbook was originally a binder with materials in sheet protectors. Documents have been removed from the binder and sheet protectors; each folder represents the contents of one original sheet protector.

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
1	1	Inventory of binder	undated
1	2	Letter of William & Debra Barry to Susie R. Bock, Director of USM's Sampson Center for Diversity in Maine, Re: Explanation of "A May Sarton Scrapbook"	2008 Aug 27
1	3	Photocopy, William Barry's journal entries (Annotated) for 1983 Mar 29 & 30, Re: Meeting Dorothy Healy, old friend and curator of the Maine Women Writers Collection, at the Payson Gallery, when she off-handedly suggested lunch with novelist May Sarton, phoned Barry, and lunch took place at York, Maine on the 30th	1983 Mar 29 & 30
1	4	Photocopies, biographical entries on May Sarton (1912-1995), from: The mirror of Maine, 2000; American national biography v.19, 1999; Wikipedia, 2008	1999-2000, 2008
1	5	Flyer, "A service to celebrate the life of Dorothy M. Healy ... October 21, 1990"	1990
1	6	Tape and transcript of phone message of May Sarton to Bill Barry, 1990 Nov 16; Post card, "Mr. Barry: Enclosed is May Sarton's contribution to the publication about Dorothy Healy. Nancy J. Hartley, Secretary to Miss Sarton."	1990
1	7	Essay (copy), "Dorothy Healy," by May Sarton, 1990 Nov 19	1990
1	8	Unbound copy, "A passionate intensity: the life and work of Dorothy Healy," ed. By Gael May McKibben & William David Barry (Portland, ME : Baxter Society, 1992).	[1992]
1	9	Photocopy, Endgame : a journal of the seventy-ninth year / by May Sarton, t.p. and pp. 161-164; contains entry about writing the "Dorothy Healy" contribution	[1992]
1	10	Flyer, "A Celebration of May Sarton and Her Work on Her Seventy-Ninth Birthday, Thursday, May 2, 1991"	1991 May 2
1	11	Photocopy, front cover of a Westbrook College publication and a biographical sketch of Dr. Bradford Dudley Daziel	undated
1	12	Letters, from Bradford Dudley Daziel to William Barry, the first regarding Barry's response to Daziel's anthology,	1991 Sep 9, 1992 Feb 2

"Sarton selected," as well as Dorothy Healy, the second inviting Barry to attend and report on a conference on Sarton to be held at Westbrook College in June 1992

1 13 Flyer, "May Sarton at 80: a Celebration of Her Life and Work, June 11-13, 1992" to be held at Westbrook College 1992

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
1	14	Flyer, "Poetry Reading, May Sarton, May Sarton will read her poetry and introduce her authorized biographer, Margot Peters" June 13, 1992	1992
1	15	Newspaper notice, "Westbrook College Salutes May Sarton on the occasion of her 80th Birthday" May 3, 1992, Maine Sunday Telegram	1992 May 3
1	16	Newspaper clipping, "The days and nights of May," by Greg Gadberry; also, large color photograph of May Sarton which accompanied the article, and Preview notice of the conference on Sarton at Westbrook College 11-13 June	[1992 June 7]
1	17	Newspaper clipping, "May Sarton, noted poet, novelist, and feminist, dies at age 83," and "Works by May Sarton," Portland Press Herald Tuesday, July 18, 1995	1995 Jul 18
1	18	Newspaper clipping, "All her worldly possessions," Portland Press Herald, Wednesday May 8, 1996, regarding auction of Sarton's estate	1996 May 8
1	19	Note, Bill Barry to Nancy Noble, Maine Historical Society, October 28, 2000, Re: "A Passionate Intensity" missing from Blouin's "May Sarton : A Bibliography" (Lanham, MD : Scarecrow Press, 2000); photocopy of Letter, Barry to Bruce Kennett, November 3, 2000, Re: his source for a statement made to Barry about Sarton and Berenice Abbott; Letter, Kennett to Barry, in reply to Barry's letter of 2000 Nov 3; photocopy of Letter, Barry to Kennett, December 1, 2000	2000 Oct-Dec
1	20	Newsletter, [Westbrook College?], entry "Brad Daziel donates May Sarton materials to Maine Women Writers Collection," [1993 May?]	[1993]
1	21	Letter, Lenora P. Blouin to Nancy Noble, September 29, 2000, Re: presenting Maine Historical Society with a copy of "May Sarton: a bibliography"; photocopy of Letter, Barry to Blouin, December 1, 2000, Re: gift of "A Passionate Intensity" from Baxter Society; Letter, Blouin to Barry, December 21, 2000, Re: thanks for copy of "Passionate Intensity"; printout of Email, Blouin to Noble, Re: asking about "Passionate Intensity" and Barry; photocopy of Note,	2000 Sep, Dec

Barry to [Blouin], December 27, 2000, delighted that you are
pleased with gift of Healy book