

Roanoke Public Libraries
Gainsboro Library
Heller Family Collection

Collection Description

Repository: Gainsboro Branch of Roanoke Public Libraries

Title: Heller Family Collection

Physical Characteristics: One (1) Document Storage Box

Donated by: George Heller

Arrangement: These items are arranged with the photo album first in order, followed by loose photographs and folders relating to each family member, ordered alphabetically. The items in the folders are arranged by item type and subject, multiple item types are then arranged chronologically.

Creator: George Heller

Reproduction Restrictions: No known restrictions on publication. Gainsboro Library copy fees apply.

Processor: Megan Koehler Mizak, September 2017, updated March 2019.

Biographical Note:

Moorman Pendleton Heller was born on 20 December 1898 in Pomeria, South Carolina to Evelena Garmany Heller and Ernest Heller. At a relatively young age he moved to Roanoke, Virginia and married Lucy Blanch Robinson on 28 August 1929 in Roanoke, Virginia. They produced one son, George Henry Robinson Heller, who was born on 8 October 1933. Moorman retired from the American Viscose Plant in Roanoke, Virginia. He was a member of First Baptist Church Gainsboro and was active in many organizations including the Hunton Branch YMCA, the Boy Scouts, and served as devotional leader for the Fellowship Breakfast Project. Moorman died on 8 October 1977.

Lucy Blanch Robinson Heller was born 21 March 1902 in Roanoke, Virginia to Ophelia S. Leftwich Robinson and George H. Robinson. She graduated from Hartshorn Memorial College in Richmond, Virginia in 1922 and then attended Virginia State College in Petersburg, Virginia. After completing her education, Lucy taught at schools in Maryland and North Carolina returning to Virginia to teach music at Susie G. Gibson High School in Bedford, Virginia and later at Gainsboro School in Roanoke. She was the founder and director of Heller Kindergarten, which is considered to be the first kindergarten in Roanoke for African Americans. Lucy was also active in many organizations including the Order of the Eastern Star, Phyllis Wheatley YWCA, and the National Council of Negro Women. She was also a member of the Jesse Fauset Reading Club at the Gainsboro Library. Lucy died on 23 June 1989.

George Henry Robinson Heller graduated from Lucy Addison High School in 1951 and attended Virginia Union University, graduating in 1955 with a degree of Bachelors of Arts in History

Education. He began teaching in 1956 in the Public School System of Nelson County, Virginia. From 1959 to 1962 he worked for the Public Schools of Shenandoah County, Virginia. He then taught at St. Emma's Military Academy in Powhatan, Virginia until 1965 when he began working for the Carver High School in Chesterfield, Virginia. George received his Masters Degree in History from Virginia State College in 1976. He married twice, first to Zeola C. Baldwin in 1962 and Emelda P. Johnson in 1976. After retiring from education, George moved back to Roanoke, Virginia where he became active in historical preservation. He served as President for Gainsborough Southwest Community Organization, Inc. and the Project Area Committee during the 1980s. George died on 15 January 2017.

Scope and Content:

- The Heller Family Collection is comprised of one (1) record storage box.
- The collection is made up of one (1) photo album, that is approximately 8x6", as well as loose photographs in both black and white and color; various ephemera, including a vinyl record, and social club programs; and various paper documents relating to the family and their careers.
- This collection dates from approximately the early 1910s until the 1980s.
- The collection primarily contains items related to the lives of Lucy Blanch Robinson Heller and George Henry Robinson Heller.

Container List:

Box 1 of 2

Heller Family Photo Album

- Lucy Blanch Robinson Heller's photo album including images of the Heller Family, Hartshorn Memorial College, Virginia State College, and Virginia Union University, about 1913-1934.

Folder 1 - Heller Family Photographs

HF 01	Unidentified woman with flower. Photographer: Irwin M. Wilson, Pittsburgh, PA.
HF 02	Unidentified woman standing on a rock. Photographer: Irwin M. Wilson, Pittsburgh, PA.
HF 03	Unidentified man and woman standing in front of a picket fence. Photographer: Irwin M. Wilson, Pittsburgh, PA.
HF 04	Unidentified woman standing in front of a picket fence. Photographer: Irwin M. Wilson, Pittsburgh, PA.
HF 05	Unidentified man standing in front of a picket fence. Photographer: Irwin M. Wilson, Pittsburgh, PA.

HF 06	Unidentified group photo – in back of a truck. Photographer: Irvin M. Wilson, Pittsburgh, PA.
HF 07	Unidentified woman holding a head of cabbage and unidentified man leaning on an automobile. Photographer: Irwin M. Wilson, Pittsburgh PA.
HF 08	Unidentified woman posing with an automobile. Photographer: Irwin M. Wilson, Pittsburg, PA.
HF 09	“Picnic, Hollins Old Baptist.” Center, George Heller.
HF 10	“Patton Ave.”
HF 11	“218 Harrison Ave. NW, 1st Family House 1897-1911, G. H. Robinson.”
HF 12	Loose, Heller Family Album, Page 8. George Heller ?
HF 13	“George Heller’s house at 322 Patton” George Heller?
HF 14	Loose, Heller Family Album, Page 24. “Beulah & Rebecca.”
HF 15	Loose, Heller Family Album, Page 24. Unidentified woman in front of a church.
HF 16	Loose, Heller Family Album, Page 8. Lucy Heller? 1920.
HF 17	Loose, Heller Family Album, Page 80. Unidentified woman.
HF 18	Lucy Heller, age 16. September 1916.
HF 19	George Heller, age 5, kindergarten graduation. Photographer: N. W. Pugh. 1938?
HF 20	Moorman Heller, Lucy Heller and George Heller – Virginia Union University Graduation. 1955.
HF 21	George Heller.
HF 22	Group photograph of children and a woman at a long table.
HF 22.1	Group photograph of children at a long table. Brenda James, Annette Woodbury, Sophronia Kier, Judith Ann Law, and David Taylor.
HF 23	James Heller and Cornelia Connor?
HF 24	Home of Joseph K. Trent, late 1930s to early 1940s. 300 block of Patton Ave.
HF 25	George Heller’s grades 1-3 class at Sunset Hills Elementary School, Shenandoah Public Schools. Early 1960s.

Folder 2 - Heller, George Henry Robinson

- Certificate: First Baptist Church Bible School, 11 June 1939.

Folder 3 - Heller, George Henry Robinson

- Handbook: Living at Virginia Union University, September 1951.
- Program: Virginia Union University Student Government Association Annual Variety Show, 3 April 1952.
- Program: Virginia Union University Concert Series, 1953.
- Program: Virginia Union University presents D Paur Infantry Chorus, 30 October 1954.
- Program: National Achievement Week, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, 9 - 15 November 1953.

Folder 4 - Heller, George Henry Robinson

- Thesis: A Study of Black Legislative and Political Involvement, Virginia 1865-1970, by George Heller, Graduate School of Virginia State College, December 1975.
- Program: Commencement Exercises, Virginia State College, 9 May 1976.

Folder 5 - Heller, George Henry Robinson

- Osbourn High School, Manassas, Virginia, Proposed Social Studies Curriculum, 1977-1978.
- Osbourn High School, Manassas, Virginia, Student Handbook, 1978.

Folder 6 - Heller, George Henry Robinson

- Vita, George Henry Robinson Heller.

Folder 7 - Heller, George Henry Robinson

- Poems by George Heller, 1960s to 1980s.
- Record: "My Funny Valentine," by George Heller and Clyde (Fats)Wright Trio, Recorded February 1963, Salem, Virginia, Clyde Wright on piano, Harry Jackson on drums, and Jim Baner on bass and "Summertime," by Zeola Heller and Clyde (Fats) Wright Trio.

Folder 8 - Heller, George Henry Robinson

- Correspondence: From George Heller to D. J. Mack, Virginia Mutual Life Insurance Co., regarding an insurance policy, 23 March 1982.
- Correspondence: From Louise Heller Spencer to George Heller, regarding contact information, 17 July 1993.
- Memo: Regarding the sale of an automobile, 11 March 1982.

Box 2 of 2**Folder 9 - Heller, Lucy Blanch Robinson**

- Exercise Booklet: Pupils' Outline Studies in the History of the United States.
- Invitation: Hartshorn Memorial College Commencement Exercises, 4-7 June, 1922.
- Program: Graduates of Hartshorn Memorial College, Richmond, Virginia, 1885 to 1928.

Folder 10 - Heller, Lucy Blanch Robinson

- Program: The Heller Kindergarten Pupils on Parade, circa 1940s.
- Program: Heller Kindergarten, circa 1940s.
- Program: Graduation Exercises of the Heller Kindergarten and Nursery School, 1943-1944.
- Program: The Class of 1944 Second Commencement Exercises, 1 June 1944.

Folder 11 - Heller, Lucy Blanch Robinson

- Words and Music, Part II.
- Announcement for 8th grade Exploratory Class Program.
- Sheet Music: Our 1st BandFolio: a supplementary course in the basic principles of band playing, designed to be used with, or follow, any elementary band method, by Ed Chenette.
- Sheet Music: First Steps in Band Playing: a class method for all instruments, by Harvey S. Whistler and Herman A. Hummel.

Folder 12 - Heller, Lucy Blanch Robinson

- Virginia Education Bulletin, March 1953, Virginia Teaches Association publication.
- Virginia Education Bulletin, January - February 1957, Virginia Teaches Association publication.
- Virginia Education Bulletin, March - April 1957, Virginia Teaches Association publication.
- Virginia Education Bulletin, May - June 1957, Virginia Teaches Association publication.
- Virginia Education Bulletin, March - April 1958, Virginia Teaches Association publication.
- Virginia Education Bulletin, May - June 1959, Virginia Teaches Association publication.
- VTA Bulletin, February 1961, Virginia Teaches Association publication.
- The Bulletin, Official Organ of the American Teachers Association, October 1961.
- VTA Bulletin, January 1962, Virginia Teaches Association publication.
- VTA Bulletin, October 1965, Virginia Teaches Association publication.

Folder 13 - Heller, Lucy Blanch Robinson

- Program: Bing Social Club Anniversary Ball, 26 April, 1929.
- Program: Silver Leaf Social Club First Anniversary, 11 April 1933
- Program: The Colonial Dames Fourth Anniversary, 22 February 1934.
- Program: The Silver Social Club Second Anniversary, 10 April 1934.
- Program: Bing Social Club Anniversary Dance, 27 April 1934.
- Program: The Venetian Social Club First Anniversary, 29 March 1935.
- Program: Bing Social Club Anniversary Dance, 26 April 1935.
- Program: The Venetian Social Club Third Anniversary, 26 March 1937.
- Program: Bing Social Club Fourteenth Anniversary, 30 April 1937.
- Program: Rose Bud Art Club, 22 April 1938.
- Program: Bing Social Club Sports and Organdy Dance, 17 July, year unknown.

Folder 14 - Heller, Moorman Pendleton Heller

- Funeral Program: Moorman Pendleton Heller, 12 October 1977.