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DeCordova and Dana Museum Collection

2002.003

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Collection Information

Abstract : Julian deCordova, wealthy businessman and resident of Boston and Lincoln, built the museum galleries as part of his residence in Lincoln to house an extensive collection of art works acquired during numerous world travels. Buildings and contents were given to the Town of Lincoln in 1930, to be retained permanently as a public museum for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Town of Lincoln.

Finding Aid : Finding Aid in print form is available in the Repository

Preferred Citation : Archives/Special Collections of the Lincoln Public Library, Lincoln, Massachusetts.

Provenance : Multiple donors, in part unknown.

MARC Access: Collection is catalogued in MARC under the following subject headings (lcsh, aat, gmGPC, etc.)

DeCordova, Julian, 1851-1945.

DeCordova, Mary Elizabeth Dana.

DeCordova and Dana Museum and Park (Lincoln, Mass.)

Lincoln (Mass.). DeCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Board.

Lincoln (Mass.). DeCordova and Dana Museum and Park -- Trials, litigation, etc.

Museums -- Massachusetts -- Lincoln.

Museums -- Massachusetts -- Lincoln -- Photographs.

Photographs. lcsh

Minutes. aat

Historical/Biographical Notes

Julian deCordova, born in 1851 in New York, employed by Thomas Dana & Co. of Boston in the 1870s, and was representative of several firms in China in the early 1870s. He was also a summer resident of Lincoln during the early 1870s. In 1877 DeCordova married Mary Elizabeth Dana, and they continued to spend part of the year in Lincoln. DeCordova was a successful businessman, and became wealthy through investments. His wife also had inherited wealth. The deCordovas spent much of the time in world travels, and collected art works from all cultures in all time periods. The dwelling in Lincoln was enlarged to provide gallery space for the art and artifacts brought back by deCordova.

In 1930 deCordova presented the property and the collections of art to the Town of Lincoln, retaining a life tenancy. He opened the collections to the public in 1938. Following deCordova's death in 1945, full control of the property passed to the town. Two trust funds were established to support the museum and park "in perpetuity as a public museum under the name of 'The deCordova and Dana Museum' in memory of myself and my wife for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Town of Lincoln."

During the ensuing years, the focus of the collections has changed from worldwide multi-culture to New England contemporary art. Programs presented by the museum feature contemporary art and music.

Scope and Content

The collection comprises administrative records of the DeCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Board, records of association, and legal opinions, 1946-1948. Included are records of a suit brought against the Merchants National Bank of Boston by the Inhabitants of the Town of Lincoln in 1948 to correct deficiencies in the administration of the trust funds; publications, programs, clippings, letters, histories; and a collection of photographs of the deCordova property and the original collections of the 1930s.

The collection is arranged topically.

Series Descriptions

Series 1: Administrative Records. Minutes of advisory board meetings, legal opinions, incorporation papers of the deCordova and Dana Museum and Park. (10 folders)

Series 2: Legal Records. Records and judgements in Charles V. Briggs et al. (Town of Lincoln) vs. The Merchants National Bank of Boston, trustee, et al., 1948, relating to disposition of trust funds. (13 folders)

Series 3: Publications, Programs, etc. (4 folders)

Series 4: Correspondence. (1 folder)

Series 5: Clippings. (1 folder)

Series 6: Histories. (1 folder)

Series 7: Building Plans. (1 folder)

Series 8: Photographs. (2 folders, 2 albums)

DeCordova and Dana Museum Collection
2002.003
Series 1, Administrative Records

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Identification #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	2002.003.1.1	Letter to Richard J. Eaton, from Elizabeth Causer, Clerk, Board of Selectmen, re first meeting of the committee to study the deCordova and Dana Museum and Park / July 24, 1946.
1	1	2002.003.1.2a-b	Minutes, deCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Committee, September 3, 1946. 2 p. (2 copies)
1	1	2002.003.1.3a-b	Minutes, deCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Committee, September 12, 1946. (2 copies)
1	1	2002.003.1.4a-b	Letter, to Citizens of Lincoln from the deCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Committee, relating to activities of the committee. (2 copies)
1	1	2002.003.1.5a-b	Report to the townspeople from the deCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Committee, September 23, 1946. 2 p. (2 copies)
1	2	2002.003.1.6a-b	Discussion of DeCordova Museum : transcript / October 2, 1946. 4 p. (2 copies)
1	2	2002.003.1.7a-b	Minutes, deCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Committee, October 12, 1946. (2 copies)
1	2	2002.003.1.8a-b	Questions for Mr. Samuel Hoar, Counsel, relating to provisions of the bequest. 3 p. (2 copies)

Series 1, continued

1	2	2002.003.1.9	Expenditures by the Selectmen, deCordova and Dana Museum and Park account, December 1, 1945 to October 31, 1946. 2 p.
1	3	2002.003.1.10a-b	Response to Mr. Walter B. Taylor from Goodwin, Proctor & Hoar, Counselors at Law, Boston, relating to concerns of the committee. 10 p. (2 copies)
1	3	2002.003.1.11a-b	Minutes, deCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Committee, November 8, 1946. 4 p. (2 copies)
1	4	2002.003.1.12a-b	Minutes, deCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Committee, December 19, 1946. (2 copies)
1	4	2002.003.1.13a-c	Report of the deCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Board for 1946. 3 p. (3 copies)
1	4	2002.003.1.14	Financial resources, 1946; with projected financial resources for 1947 and subsequent years. 1 p.
1	5	2002.003.1.15a-b	Minutes, deCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Committee, February 1, 1947. 4 p. (2 copies)
1	5	2002.003.1.16a-b	Minutes, deCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Committee, February 13, 1947. 3 p. (2 copies)
1	5	2002.003.1.17	Cover letter for selection of method of selecting Trustees / Frederick B. Taylor, Secretary.
1	5	2002.003.1.18a-b	Suggested methods of securing Trustees for

deCordova and Dana Museum and Park.
(2 copies)

Series 1, continued

1	5	2002.003.1.19a-b	Proposed Warrant Articles relating to the deCordova and Dana Museum and Park. (2 copies)
1	5	2002.003.1.20a-c	Form of Articles in Warrant, relating to deCordova and Keep Museum and Park. (3 copies)
1	6	2002.003.1.21	Letter from Goodwin, proctor & Hoar, Counselors at Law, to Frederick B. Taylor, relating to Agreement of Association and draft by-laws of de Cordova and Dana Museum and Park. 2 p.
1	6	2002.003.1.22	Proposed Agreement of Association of de Cordova and Dana Museum and Park. 5 p.
1	7	2002.003.1.23a-b	Minutes, deCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Committee, April 2, 1947. 3 p. (2 copies)
1	7	2002.003.1.24	Memorandum on the deCordova-Dana Museum and Park in the town of Lincoln, Massachusetts / William Germain Dooley, April 10, 1947. 4 p.
1	8	2002.003.1.25a-b	Minutes, deCordova and Dana Museum and Park Advisory Committee, May 22, 1947. 3 p. (2 copies)
1	9	2002.003.1.26	Letter from Frederick B. Taylor, Secretary, to Sumner Smith, Chairman, Lincoln Board of Selectmen, re trust income / February 20, 1948. 4 p.
1	9	2002.003.1.27	Letter from Lincoln Board of Selectmen to Frederick B. Taylor, Secretary, deCordova and

Dana Advisory Committee, expressing appreciation for work of the committee / December 13, 1948.

1	10	2002.003.1.28	Memorandum on Briggs et al. vs. Merchants National Bank of Boston et al., relating to report of the Master on issues relating to the deCordova bequest. 12 p.
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Series 1, continued

1	10	2002.003.1.29	Memorandum relating to qualifications for Director of deCordova and Dana Museum and Park / n.d.
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1	10	2002.003.1.30	Sketch map of property of deCordova and Dana Museum and Park / n.d.
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DeCordova and Dana Museum Collection
2002.003
Series 2, Legal Records

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Identification #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	11	2002.003.2.1	Petition for leave to commence suit under MGL Ch. 214, Sect. 3 (11), in re Town of Lincoln vs. Merchants National Bank of Boston, ca. 1946. 3 p.
1	12	2002.003.2.2a-b	Petition in equity in re Town of Lincoln vs. Merchants National Bank of Boston, draft copy, December 13, 1946. 14 p. (2 copies)
1	13	2002.003.2.3	Petition in equity in re Town of Lincoln vs. Merchants National Bank of Boston, 1947. 17 p.
1	14	2002.003.2.4	Petition in re Town of Lincoln vs. Merchants National Bank of Boston, ca. 1946. [Draft copy of Petition in equity] 17 p.
1	15	2002.003.2.5a-b	Exhibit "D", Proposed Agreement of Association of Decordova and Dana Museum and Par. 5 p. (2 copies)
1	16	2002.003.2.6a-c	Exhibit "E", Proposed By-Laws of deCordova and Dana Museum and Park. 12 p. (3 copies)
1	17	2002.003.2.7a-b	Final decree after rescript, in re Town of Lincoln vs. Merchants National Bank of Boston, exhibits "A" and "B" (Agreement of Association and By-Laws) attached, ca. 1948. 24 9. (2 copies)
1	18	2002.003.2.8a-c	Charles V. Briggs & others vs. The Merchants National Bank of Boston, Trustee, & others; May - October 1948 / Opinions of the Supreme Judicial Court, Wright & Potter, Boston. 19 p. (3 copies)

Series 2, continued

1	19	2002.003.2.9	Brief for the Petitioners, Charles V. Briggs et al. vs. The Merchants National Bank of Boston, Trustees, et al. / Supreme Judicial Court for the Commonwealth, May sitting, 1948. BV, 73 p.
1	20	2002.003.2.10	Brief for Respondent Trustees, ... / Supreme Judicial Court for the Commonwealth, May sitting, 1948. BV, 65 p.
1	21-23	2002.003.2.11a-c	Reservation and Report in re Charles V. Briggs et al. vs. The Merchants National bank of Boston, Trustees, et al. / Supreme Judicial Court for the Commonwealth, 1948. BV, 142 p. (3 copies)

DeCordova and Dana Museum Collection
2002.003
Series 3, Publications, Programs, etc.

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Identification #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	24	2002.003.3.1	The life and mind of Julian deCordova / Herbert Levine, DeCordova Museum Press, Lincoln, Mass., ca. 1951. 32 p.
1	25	2002.003.3.2	DeCordova Museum Annual Report 1968.
1	25	2002.003.3.3a-b	1999 Annual Report, DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, Lincoln, Mass. 32 p. (2 copies with cover letter)
1	26	2002.003.3.4	DeCordova Museum Members Newsletter, August 1971.
1	26	2002.003.3.5	Newsletter for Associated of the deCordova Museum, Summer 1957.
1	27	2002.003.3.6-.10	Programs for various events.
1	27	2002.003.3.11	Dedication of new buildings program, ca. 1960s.

DeCordova and Dana Museum Collection
2002.003
Series 4, Correspondence

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Identification #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	28	2002.003.4.1	Letter from Julian deCordova, E. Dana, and Mary E. Dana deCordova to Assessors, Town of Lincoln, relating to non-resident status, April 16, 1895. [encapsulated]
1	28	2002.003.4.2	Letter from Anne M. Swanson to E. R. Todd, relating to gift of an article about the deCordova property, December 3, 1973, with envelope.

DeCordova and Dana Museum Collection
2002.003
Series 5, Clippings

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Identification #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	29	2002.003.5.1	"DeCordova gift accepted at special town meeting" / Waltham News-Tribune, December 5, 1930. .1a aqp
1	29	2002.003.5.2	"7 ½ ton steel sculptures decorate museum lawn" / Springfield (Mass.) Daily News, August 25, 1977. .2a aqp

DeCordova and Dana Museum Collection
2002.003
Series 6, Histories

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Identification #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	30	2002.003.6.1	DeCordova at the crossroads / Francis S. Andrews, December 12, 1979. Article relating to past and future of the deCordova and Dana Museum, by former President and Director Andrews. 3 p.

DeCordova and Dana Museum Collection
2002.003
Series 7, Building Plans

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Identification #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	31	2002.003.7.1	A Plan of the Decordova & Dana Museum, Lincoln, Mass. : ink, 12 x 15 in. / n.d. (ca. 1930s)

DeCordova and Dana Museum Collection
2002.003
Series 8, Photographs

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Identification #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	32	2002.003.8.1	Exterior view of deCordova and Dana Museum, showing entry : 8 ½ x 11 in. / Christian Science Monitor, 1938.
1	32	2002.003.8.2-.4	Interior views of the deCordova and Dana Museum, showing rooms, furnishings, museum pieces, etc. : 8 ½ x 11 in. / Christian Science Monitor, 1938.
1	32	2002.003.8.5	Statue : 7 x 9 in. / Holbrook, Newton, n.d. (ca. 1950s)
1	32	2002.003.8.6-.10	Interior views of the deCordova and Dana Museum, showing rooms, furnishings, museum pieces, etc. : 8 ½ x 11 in. / ca. 1940. (10 items)
1	33	2002.003.8.11-.18	Interior views of the deCordova and Dana Museum, showing rooms, furnishings, museum pieces, etc. : 8 ½ x 11 in. / ca. 1940. (8 items)
2	BV	2002.003.8.19	Photograph album, interior and exterior 8 ½ x 11 in. photographic prints of deCordova and Dana Museum, art works, and artifacts; color halftone prints of European, Asian, African scenes; pencil sketches and drawings.
3	BV	2002.003.8.20	Photograph album, snapshots taken on world tours by deCordova; 8 x 10 in. photographic prints of interior and exterior of deCordova Museum; pencil sketches and drawings.