FINDING AID FOR THE PAPERS OF
SR. GRETCHEN BOGAN, CSJ
IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE SISTERS OF SAINT JOSEPH OF BOSTON
(BOSTON CSJ ARCHIVES)

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Boston CSJ Archivist

Collection Processed by
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Boston
Sisters of Saint Joseph
2021

Boston CSJ Archives | 637 Cambridge Street | Brighton, MA 02135
Ellen Gertrude Bogan was born on August 6th, 1915 in Boston, Massachusetts to Elizabeth O’Connor and Edward H. Bogan. She was baptized at St. Columbkille Church in Brighton. After graduating from Mount Saint Joseph Academy in 1933, she entered with the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Boston. She took her final vows in 1939 in Framingham, taking the religious name Gretchen. Among her many ministry assignments, she taught Drama for three decades (save for one year of sabbatical) at Regis College in Weston. She is remembered within the Congregation as an accomplished poet and playwright as well as an inspirational teacher at both the university and high school levels. In addition to her formal ministry assignments, she volunteered in a community service capacity, using her talents as an artist and teacher for outreach ministries. She died on June 30, 1999 at Bethany Health Care in Framingham at the age of 83.

Timeline of Ministry Assignments of Sr. Gretchen Bogan:

1933 Entrance into the Congregation  
1934 Reception into the Congregation  
1936 First Vows  
1938-1939 Secondary teacher at Our Lady Help of Christians Church, Newton  
1939 Final Vows  
1940-1946 Speech teacher in Quincy, Everett and Jamaica Plain elementary schools  
1946-1947 Elementary teacher at St. Matthew, Dorchester  
1947-1948 Secondary teacher at St. Aidan, Brookline  
1948-1963 Drama teacher at Mount Saint Joseph Academy, Brighton  
1963-1966 Drama teacher at Fontbonne Academy, Milton  
1966-1983 Drama teacher at Regis College, Weston  
1983-1984 Sabbatical (Regis Convent)  
1984-1989 Drama teacher at Regis College, Weston  
1989-1997 In residence at Regis Convent, Weston  
1997-1999 In residence at Bethany Convent, Framingham

Education Completed:
Mount Saint Joseph Academy, 1933 (High School)  
Regis College, 1938 (Home Economics)  
Mary Frances Rooney, 1940 (Speech/Theatre)  
Regis College, 1948 (English)  
Fordham University, 1951-1952  
Catholic University, 1958 (Creative Drama)  
Kentucky College (Black Studies)

List of Published Plays:
(This list may not be inclusive of all plays published by Sr. Gretchen. All are original.)

*Genesis*, 1958  
*The Finger on My Soul*, 1953  
*In the Middle of Plenty*, 1954  
*The Big Help*, 1955  
*Two Only Children*, 1959
Overview of the Collection

The Papers of Sr. Gretchen Bogan, CSJ Collection contains seven boxes, with eight series. The date of accession is uncertain but the collection was preliminarily processed as early as 2004. The collection was donated to the Boston CSJ Archives by Peggy Bogan, sister of Sr. Gretchen. In preparation for this finding aid, the collection went through a final processing in February of 2021 by Sr. Kay Decker, CSJ and Sr. Elizabeth Toomey, CSJ, volunteers in the Boston CSJ Archives. In many cases, the original name of the folder was kept; in others, it was given a new folder name.

Access and Use

Please contact the Congregation Archivist at archives@csjboston.org to reference or view the collection. Access to the collection must be approved by Congregation Leadership and the Congregation Archivist. For citations at the item-level, please reference the folder title and box number according to APA or Chicago Style standards.

Preferred Citation:
Papers of Sr. Gretchen Bogan, CSJ, Archives of the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Boston (Boston CSJ Archives), Brighton MA.

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Related Collections

Oral History of Sr. Gretchen Bogan, CSJ. U.S. Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph collection. Martha Smith, CSJ, Ph.D. Archives & Research Center, Avila University, Kansas City, MO.

Items within the Boston CSJ Archives outside of this collection:

- Personnel File for Bogan, Gretchen.
- Memoir (compilation of remembrances) for Bogan, Gretchen.
The collection spans the 1930s to 1990s, with the majority of the collection being from the 1950s-1970s. Estimated at five linear feet, the collection contains notes, edits and drafts of original plays (some of which were published and performed publicly), poems and other creative writings authored by Sr. Gretchen Bogan, CSJ. Interweaved into these files are correspondence, contracts, photographs, reviews and critiques. Materials in the collection relate to the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Boston, Regis College, Fontbonne Academy and Mount Saint Joseph Academy.

The collection is divided into eight series:

- **Series I. Biographical & Personal Materials**
  - Box 1
- **Series II. Play Scripts**
  - Box 2, 3
- **Series III. Theatre Programs, Sheet Music & Lyrics**
  - Box 3
- **Series IV. Poetry & Writings**
  - Box 4
- **Series V. Miscellaneous**
  - Box 4
- **Series VI. Scrapbook**
  - Box 5
- **Series VII. Photographs**
  - Box 6
- **Series VIII. Audio Tapes**
  - Box 7

**Detailed Description of the Collection**

**Box 1**

**Series I: Biographical & Personal Materials**

**Folders:**
- Biography
- In Memoriam
- Catholic University Lifetime Achievement Award
- *Mai*
- Contact/Soundings Articles
- Correspondence: Gretchen to Mother and Peggy
- Letters to Sister Gretchen
- Letters from Sister Gretchen (not family)
- Letters, Sr. Gretchen to Peggy
- Talks & Articles
- Miscellaneous Prose
- Authors, Poets – Favorites of Sister Gretchen
- Ecology Interests
- Art of Communication
- Thoughts on Religious Life
- Essential for Thinking
- Scholarly Work for University Classes (1 of 2)
- Scholarly Work for University Classes (1 of 2)
Box 2

Series II: Play Scripts

Folders:

- When Spring Comes to Cherry Street (1 of 3)
- When Spring Comes to Cherry Street (2 of 3)
- When Spring Comes to Cherry Street (3 of 3)
- Rustle of Spring (1 of 2)
- Rustle of Spring (2 of 2)
- Finger on My Soul
- The One House
- In the Middle of Plenty (1 of 2)
- In the Middle of Plenty (2 of 2)
- A Twist O’ The Tongue
- The Immortal Oaf (1 of 9): Map of the Immortal Oaf
- The Immortal Oaf (2 of 9): Oaf - Introduction to
- The Immortal Oaf (3 of 9)
- The Immortal Oaf (4 of 9)
- The Immortal Oaf (5 of 9)
- The Immortal Oaf (6 of 9)
- The Immortal Oaf (7 of 9): Sisters and 50 People from the Boston Theatre World
- The Immortal Oaf (8 of 9): New Immortal Oaf
- The Immortal Oaf (9 of 9): New Oaf Part II
- Genesis (1 of 2): Published
- Genesis (2 of 2): 1st Genesis without Adam, 2nd Genesis with Adam
- A Little Girl Named Mary
- Pilate (1 of 5)
- Pilate (2 of 5)
- Pilate (3 of 5)
- Pilate (4 of 5)
- Pilate (5 of 5): Notes
- Mount – Miscellaneous (Mount Saint Joseph Academy)
- Regis Miscellaneous
- Regis: A Listing of Plays and Dates
- Theatre on the Green
- Close to the Wind
- A Sighting
- Golden Touch (1 of 2)
- Golden Touch (2 of 2)
- The Enchanted Shirt
- Folk Journey
- An Exposé (1 of 2)
- An Exposé (2 of 2)
- Beach Rites (1 of 2)
- Beach Rites (2 of 2)
- Worthy of the Whale (1 of 2)
- Worthy of the Whale (1 of 2)
Box 3

Series II: Play Scripts (cont.)

Folders:

Rubin’s Jordi

Dido and Aeneas (1 of 2)
Dido and Aeneas (2 of 2)
Century (1 of 9)
Century (2 of 9)
Century (3 of 9)
Century (4 of 9)
Century (5 of 9)
Century (6 of 9)
Century (7 of 9)
Century (8 of 9)
Century (9 of 9)

We Rejoice That There Are Owls
Day of No Dissent: Hiroshima (1 of 2)
Day of No Dissent: Hiroshima (2 of 2)
Cadillac
Your If Is the Only Magician
A Search for Voices (Hiroshima, radio script)

Resurrexi

Landfall (1 of 9)
Landfall (2 of 9)
Landfall (3 of 9)
Landfall (4 of 9)
Landfall (5 of 9)
Landfall (6 of 9)
Landfall (7 of 9)
Landfall (8 of 9)
Landfall (9 of 9)

Women-Song

Earth
Exxon Exposed
La Belle Dame

Judith
Ruth and Naomi (World’s Wedding Song)

Genesis (with Adam)

Samuel and David
Sarah and Abraham

The Enchanted Shirt

Everyman’s Christmas / inside: Faustus, Edipus and Everyman

Eve Comes to Bethlehem
Befana
Little Girl Named Mary

Summons to Be Born
Christmas Poems; Miscellaneous Stories

The Long Journey
Voyage to the Moon
Box 4

**Series III: Theatre Programs, Sheet Music & Lyrics**

**Folders:**
- Mount Saint Joseph Academy: 1949-1963
- Fontbonne Academy: 1956-1965
- Regis College: 1966-1990
- Newsclippings, Publicity
- Sheet Music (1 of 4)
- Sheet Music (2 of 4)
- Sheet Music (3 of 4)
- Sheet Music (4 of 4)
- Lyrics for Music

**Series IV: Poetry & Writings**

**Folders:** [Folder names in italics denote a book of poems compiled by Sr. Gretchen.]
- Important or Commemorative Poems
- Miscellaneous Poems
- Early Poems (1 of 2)
- Early Poems (2 of 2)
- 10 Poems sent to Mass. Poetry Contest
- 10 Poems in separate folder
- Computer poems
- Evaluation of a few poems
  - *One Day’s Dusk* (1 of 3)
  - *One Day’s Dusk* (2 of 3)
  - *One Day’s Dusk* (3 of 3)
- *Ask the Seagull* (with Index)
- *Thou Dearest Stage of All*
- Completed Poems
- Unmarked Poems (1 of 2)
- Unmarked Poems (2 of 2)
- *God My Adversary* (short story)

**Series V: Miscellaneous**

**Folders:**
- Judges’ Comments on Plays
- Children’s Elocution Recitals and Programs Designed by Gretchen

Box 5

**Series VI: Scrapbook**

The Scrapbook series contains a homemade college yearbook (1938) filled with writings, poems, cartoon art and a few photographs, compiled by Sr. Gretchen and her friends, Sr. Williamina Cahill, Vianney Pearce, and Etheldrita Shay. These young women compiled their own yearbook because nuns enrolled at Regis College were not typically included the student yearbook.

**Items:**
- Yearbook (homemade, 1938)
Box 6

Series VII. Photographs
The Photographs series was kept in its original order. Photographs originally in envelopes were kept in the original envelopes; photographs in folders were kept together and re-folded. The folders, unnamed, contain black-and-white photographs of theatre productions at Mount Saint Joseph Academy circa 1957-1968. Further processing may be done in an attempt to identify these photographs further.

Envelopes: 1. *The Swan*  
2. *Rustle of Spring*  
3. *First Lady*  
4. *Far-off Hills*  
5. *The Matchmaker*  
6. *Middle of Plenty*

Folders: 1  
2  
3  
4  
5

Box 7:

Series VIII: Audio Tapes
Four open-reel recordings were moved to the Archive’s audio collection.

Tapes:  
*Rustle of Spring*  
*Genesis*  
*Immortal Oaf* – Part I  
*Immortal Oaf* – Part II

Weeded Items
A vitals certificate was removed from the collection as all vital records in the Boston CSJ Archives are contained within confidential personnel files. Two A/V items were deemed irrelevant to the collection, as they appear to have no connection to Sr. Gretchen other than they were likely owned (but not created) by her: Bell Buoys, copyright 1973 by Psychic Tapestries, Brunswick Maine (1 cassette tape, 1 “Psychic tapestry” roll of film negatives). Additionally, original folders and binders which were empty were discarded.