



Guide to the Elizabeth Olive Thomas Densmore Diaries, 1958-1971

Administrative Information

Title and Dates:

Elizabeth Olive Thomas Densmore, 1958-1971

Repository:

New Hampshire Historical Society
30 Park Street
Concord, NH 03301
603-228-6688
<http://www.nhhistory.org/>

Collection Number:

2014.080

Author of Finding Aid:

Suzanne Huggard

Creator:

Densmore, Elizabeth Olive Thomas, 1921-2011

Language:

The materials in this collection are in English.

Extent:

1 box

Abstract:

Diaries, 1958-1971, of Elizabeth Olive Thomas Densmore (1921-2011), who lived primarily in Concord, NH.

Access and Use

Acquisition Information and Provenance:

The Elizabeth Olive Thomas Densmore Diaries were a gift of the family of Elizabeth T. Densmore in August 2014.

Processing Information:

This collection was processed by Suzanne Huggard in September 2014. The finding aid was written by Suzanne Huggard in September 2014. This finding aid follows the standards set forth by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Access Restrictions:

Available for research.

Location:

The collection is housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:

The diaries are in excellent condition and may be used without any special precautions.

Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:

For permission to reproduce or publish materials from this collection, please contact the New Hampshire Historical Society. Researchers are responsible for following all copyright and intellectual property laws.

Preferred Citation:

Item title, Elizabeth Olive Thomas Densmore Diaries, 2014.080. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH. Date Accessed.

Collection Overview

Biographical Information/ Administrative Information:

Elizabeth Densmore was born in Farmington, CT, in 1921. She died in 2011. Known as "Betty," Densmore graduated from Concord High School in Concord, NH, in 1937 and from Colby Junior College (now Colby-Sawyer College) in New London, NH, in 1940 with an associate degree in Secretarial Science. She lived at 28 South Spring Street in Concord for 61 years. In 1948, she married Charles Densmore, who died in 1970.

Betty was an active member of the Concord community. She was a clarinetist in the Nevers Band, a hiker with the Concord Mountain Goats, and a bird watcher with the Concord Bird Club and the Audubon Society. She was a devoted member of the South Congregational Church and found special satisfaction being a Compassionate Caregiver.

Her husband, Charles Densmore, was from Vermont and every summer, they spent time at his family's farmhouse. He was buried in his family's cemetery plot in Vermont. After

Charles' death, Betty became more involved with civic affairs and headed the local annual heart fund drive.

Collection Scope and Content Note:

The diaries in this collection cover the period from 1958 to 1971, missing the years 1968 and 1969. The material largely covers day-to-day life in the Concord, NH, area with yearly visit to Densmore Corners, VT, and her husband's family farm.

The details contained in the diaries give a picture of daily life of the period, such as food preparation, dealing with auto service, and home care. There are many references to local shops in Concord, where she purchased food and clothing. The diary entries also point to an active, caring social life with many visits to parents and siblings. See attached processor notes from 1958 diary to get a sense of what is found in the diaries.

Arrangement:

The diaries are arranged chronologically within a single box, and the folders are arranged chronologically in the back of the box.

Contents List

Diaries, 1958-1971

- Folder A Finding Aid and Biographical Information
- Folder 1 Loose papers found in diary, 1959
- Folder 2 Loose papers found in diary, 1962
- Folder 3 Loose papers found in diary, 1963
- Folder 4 Loose papers found in diary, 1964
- Folder 5 Loose papers found in diary, 1966
- Folder 6 Loose papers found in diary, 1967
- Folder 7 Loose papers found in diary, 1970
- Folder 8 Loose papers found in diary, 1971

Subject Terms

People:

- Densmore, Charles, 1905-1970
- Densmore, Elizabeth Olive Thomas, 1921-2011

Organizations:

- Audubon Society of New Hampshire

Subjects:

- Farm life

Locations:

- Concord, NH
- Densmore Corners, VT

Processor Notes from Elizabeth Olive Densmore's 1958 Diary:

1958

January 17 – reference to Kancamangus Highway, not yet completed

January 29 – read *Peyton Place* – “what a dirty book!”

February 11 – went to see the new Bow – Concord road

February 12 – went to a matinee of the color, wide screen movie, *Old Yeller*

February 24 – went to a debate about water fluoridation

March 11 – was asked to look at a metal clarinet to check whether it was okay for a student

March 13 – Vermont Electric to put a power line on lower woods and pasture at the Vermont farm, signed papers today to allow

March 15 – ate dinner in the living room on tray tables to watch a golf match on television

March 19 – argued “fluoridation issue” with Jackie Freese

March 20 – Charlie played (music) at the state hospital tonight

March 28 – plan to see the movie *Ten Commandments* but decided not to go due to the duration of the movie

March 29 – signed revised papers for Vermont Electric Company deal at the farm

April 1 – Peg (Betty's sister) lost her job but does not know the reason

April 3 – received a \$350 check for power line land use at the Vermont farm; spring cleaning

April 13 – took friends to see new roads being built in the suburbs

April 14 – Charlie worked on Eleanor's clock store (possibly indicating Charles' job as a clock repair person)

April 20 – Peg committed to the state hospital for a nervous breakdown

April 23 – told people about Peg, a difficult experience

April 29 – played Scrabble

May 10 – went to the Vermont farm; walked to the lower pasture where Vermont power cut trees for St. Lawrence Seaway power lines

May 11 – Vermont community named Densmore Corners

May 21 – played golf at Beaver Meadow, Concord, NH

June 2 – went to Barney's in Penacook to buy flowers

June 4 – shopped at Mohican – store close out

July 2 – went to Barney's in Penacook to buy flowers

July 7 – Charlie applied for Social Security for June payment

July 9 – played clarinet at a band concert at Dame's (school in Concord, NH)

August 1 – played for a lawn party in Henniker, NH

August 6 – Charles played at Dunbarton; went to Dame's

August 24 – walked the Vermont property with Peg; also walked up Keyes and Beacon Hill

August 26 – Charlie played at the prison

August 29 – there was no hurricane as had been predicted

September 16 – took radio home from Cole's for trial; Charlie worked on a watch in the evening – stayed at the store until 10 pm looking for a lost part

September 27 – traveled to Chelsea for vacation

October 17 – Hudson car in for repairs

October 31 – played for Halloween dance in Penacook, NH; did not work at the store

November 7 – got water from a spring in prison

Each year following 1958 is much the same – weather, food prep, neighbor visits, shopping in town, and trips to the Vermont farm in the summer. The diaries include many references to Concord area shops and locations.

In 1970, Betty's husband dies and is buried in his family plot in Vermont. Entries continue much as before, but the author becomes much more active and frequently travels with her new companion, Gus.