Register to the Records of the
American Ethnological Society

Compiled by John Posniak and Jane Sessa
1975-76

Updated by Patricia Penon
2004

National Anthropological Archives
Smithsonian Institution
INTRODUCTION

The American Ethnological Society is the oldest anthropological association in America. It has been interested in publishing and promoting study of different cultures in the Americas from its founding in 1842 to the present.

The collection consists of seven linear feet of material.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The records of the American Ethnological Society (AES) document its activities from its founding in 1842 through the mid-1960s.

The early years of the AES (1840s to 1880) are documented through correspondence, newspaper clippings, and proceedings. The bulk of the collection relates to the administrative functions of the AES from its reorganization in 1906 through 1965 including changes to the constitution and the elections of officers. The offices of Secretary-Treasurer and Editor are well documented through correspondence and reports. There is also a significant amount of correspondence to and from members, financial records, and information on the AES’ interactions with other organizations such as the American Anthropological Association and the New York Academy of Sciences.

RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS

This collection is stored off-site. Advance notice must be given to view the collection.
HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN ETHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The American Ethnological Society was founded in 1842 by Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury under Thomas Jefferson and founder of New York University. Early members were doctors, lawyers, businessmen and included Henry Schoolcraft, William Prescott and Theodore Dwight. Meetings were usually held at the home of the President and accounts of missionaries and explorers, who were “corresponding” members, were read. Local papers frequently covered these meetings. The Society published three periodicals in its early years including Transactions which first appeared in 1845. Interest in the Society declined after the Civil War. In 1906 a group of professional anthropologists led by Franz Boas joined the Society and reorganized it, adding the Office of Editor. Since then, the Society has been very active and has had a strong publications program, beginning with a linguistic series begun by Franz Boas. The Society holds annual meetings, usually in the spring at which prominent anthropologists present their findings. In addition to Franz Boas, the Society has included among its members such famous anthropologists as Ruth Benedict, E. Adamson Hoebel, Margaret Mead and Ward Goodenough.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

EARLY RECORDS
1840’S – 1880. Five inches.

Correspondence, financial records, newspaper clippings, notes, and ethnological materials including hand drawn maps, vocabularies and hieroglyphics.

MEETINGS

Correspondence and minutes from Board of Directors meetings and annual meetings (including programs).

OFFICERS REPORTS

Annual reports of the officers of the Society, primarily of the Secretary-Treasurer and Editor.
ELECTION RECORDS; CONSTITUTIONS; AND OFFICER LISTS

Correspondence and voting records pertaining to constitutions and amendments to the
constitution (1917, 1952, 1959). Election materials including ballots, lists and correspondence on
nominations

OFFICERS CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence of the officers of the Society – files are more complete for some years than
others. The bulk of the material relates to the office of Secretary-Treasurer and concerns issues
such as publications and membership.

MEMBERSHIP

Consists of membership lists and dues related correspondence. Includes a card file of members
as of 1960.

PUBLICATIONS

Correspondence of editors Marian Smith, Verne Ray and Viola Garfield including contracts with
the publisher, J.J. Augustin, and sales statements.

FINANCIAL RECORDS

Financial records and statements from various years. Majority of the records are from the years
1950 – 1960. Records include bank statements, checkbooks, cancelled checks, mortgage held on
property in Ogden, Utah and records of AT&T stock held by the Society.

MISCELLANY

Miscellaneous reports of the Society including correspondence with and publications of other
associations such as the American Anthropological Association and the New York Academy of
Sciences.
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Jan. 31, 1952 - Minutes
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Apr. 25 & 26, 1952 - Minutes, Programs, List of Members, Memorandum from the Editor
Oct. 16, 1952 - Minutes
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May 5-7, 1955 - Joint AES & Folklore Soc. Meeting – Program, Notes, Finance Statement
Jan 5, Feb 16, Mar 13, May 12, Sep 7, 1956 - Minutes
May 11-12, 1956 - Program, Attendance List, Correspondence
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1940 - Secretary, Treasurer
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1943 - Secretary, Treasurer, Editor
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Box 5  Series 4  ELECTION RECORDS: OFFICER LISTS; CONSTITUTIONS & AMENDMENTS

Amendments
Officer Lists
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1941, 1949 - Ballots, Letter to Members
1951 - Ballot, Letter to Members
1952 - Ballot, Letter to Members
1952 - Constitution & By-Laws
1954 - Letter to Members on Nominations Letters
1955 - Constitutional Amendments & Nominations, Correspondence (Chronological), Ballot, Memorandum to Board
1956 - Correspondence on Nominations
1957 - Info. On Officer Candidates, Report of Election Committee, Ballot: Amendment, Nominations
1958 - Constitutional Amendments, Ballot, Votes Counted
1959 - Constitution
1959 - List of Candidates, Correspondence, Ballots

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Draft of Reorganization of AES as Drawn up by Franz Boas
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1934 - Alexander Lesser (Sec-Treas.), Chronological
1937 - Alexander Lesser (Sec.-Treas.)
1938 - Frederick Pough (Sec.)
1940, 1941 - Marian Smith (Treas.)
1941 - Alexander Lesser (Sec.)
Box 6  Series 5  OFFICER CORRESPONDENCE, 1924-1956 (continued)

1942 - Marian Smith (Sec.), Chronological
1943 - Adamson Hoebel (Sec.-Treas.), Incoming (Incl. Benedict & Murdock)
1943 - Adamson Hoebel (Sec.-Treas.), Outgoing- Incl. “A Resolution” on Boas’ Death
1945 - Esther Goldfrank (Sec.-Treas.)
1947 - Esther Goldfrank (Sec.-Treas.)
1948 - Esther Goldfrank (Pres.)
1949 - Dorothy Keur (Sec.-Treas.)
1949 - Committee on Academic Freedom- Swadesh Case
   (Chronological)
1950 - Marian Smith (Editor), Elman Service (Sec.-Treas.)
1950 - Marian Smith/Helen Codere
1951 - Marian Smith (Editor), Elman Service (Sec.-T.)
1951 - Elman Service (Sec.-Treas.), Incoming
1951 - Elman Service (Sec.-Treas.), Outgoing
1952 - Ernestine Friedl (Sec.-T.), Incoming
1952 - Ernestine Friedl (Sec.-Treas.), Outgoing
1952 - Marian Smith
July, 1952 - Esther Goldfrank (Editor), Replacing Smith
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1953 - Ernestine Friedl (Sec.-Treas.), Incoming
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1953 - Esther Goldfrank (Editor)
1954 - Alice James (Sec.-T.), Incoming
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1954 - Alice James, Address Changes to Human Rel. Area Files
1954 - Verne Ray (Pres.)
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1956 - Alice James (Sec.-Treas.), Outgoing

Box 7  Series 5  OFFICER CORRESPONDENCE, 1956-1959

1956 - Alice James (Sec.-Treas.), Chronological/Verne Ray
   (Editor)
1956 - Verne Ray (Editor), Incoming & Outgoing
1956 - Willard Rhodes (Acting Sec.-Treas.), Incoming
1956 - Willard Rhodes (Acting Sec.-Treas.), Outgoing
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1957 - Helen Codere (Sec.-Treas.), Incoming
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1958 - Catharine McClellan (Sec.-Treas.), Outgoing
1958 - Catharine McClellan/Sarina Hirshfeld
1958 - Kitty McClellan (Sec.-Treas.)/Verne Ray (Edit.)
1959 - Gertrude Dole (Sec.-Treas.), Incoming, A-K
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1959 - Catherine French (Treas.), Gertrude Dole (Sec.)
1960 - Viola Garfield (Editor), Incoming
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1960 - Viola Garfield (Editor)/Katherine French (Treas.)
1961 - Viola Garfield (Editor), Incoming
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1943 - Statement of Membership
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1955 - Member Lists, Applications, Dues, Address Changes
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1959 - Dues Correspondence
1959 - Member Lists
1960 - Membership question on separation of AES-AAA

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Card File, Officer Lists, 1960

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1934 - Statement on Publication Prices
1935 - List of Pub.
1938 - Establishment of Monograph Series
1940 - Agreement between AES and J.J. Augustin, Inc.
1943 - A. Hoebel & Augustin Correspondence
1944 - Contract
1945 - Authorization for Augustin
1946 - Statement of Sales
July 1949 to Nov 1950 - Statement of Sales
1950 - Invoices, Statement of Sales
1951 - Marian Smith Corres. With Publisher, Statement of Sales, Invoices
1940-1951 - Publication Record
1952 - Marian Smith Corres. With Augustin, Publication Plans, Statement of Sales, Invoices
1953 - Augustin Corres. (Chronological), Address Changes
1954 - J.J. Augustin Correspondence & Address Changes (Chronological)
1954 - Sales Statement, Invoices
1955 - J.J. Augustin Corres. & Invoices (Chronological), Sales Statement
1956 - Univ. of Wash. Press- Invoices and Monograph List
1956 - J.J. Augustin Sales Statement & Invoices
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1959 - AES Publications Policy & Response
March 1958-Jan 1959- McClellan?Read Correspondence
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1959 - Letters: Gertrude Dole to William Read (Dir. of Univ. of
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1960 - Letters of Murdock, Woodbury, Underhill, on Subsidizing
   New Journal
1961 - Publication Orders
1962 - Letter from Woodbury to Univ. of Wash. Press
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1906-11 - Cancelled Checks (Chronological)
1912 - Financial Statement
1914 - Financial Statement
1914-16 - Cancelled Checks
1916 - Manhattan Savings - Statement Letter from Franz Boas
1926 - Letter from AES Treasurer
1926 - Mortgage & Photos of Ogden, Utah property
1927 - Financial Statement
1928 - Financial Statement
1929 - Financial Statement
1930 - Berthold Laufer Corres. (Alphabetical) Collecting
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1938 - Mortbon Corp. Bonds
1943 - Financial Statement
1943 - The Mortbon Corporation - Bonds
1947 - Exemption Affidavits, Finance Statements, Corres. with
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1950-53 - Checkbook
1951 - Tax Report
1952 - Corres. AT&T, Treasury Dept.
1952 - Tax Report
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1954 - Corn Exchange Bank- Statements, Cancelled Checks, Corres.
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1955 - Corn Exchange Bank - Statements
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1955 - AT&T
1955 - Operating Expenses
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1956 - Operating Expenses
1957 - Chem. Corn Exchange Bank - Statements
1957 - Bowery Savings
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1960 - Financial Statement
1962 - Expense Accounts
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American Association for the Advancement of Science -
   1951, 52, 56 - Corres., Brochures, Programs, Constitution
AAA - 1953-56 - Bulletins
Amer. Anthro. Assoc. - 1957 - Correspondence
Amer. Council of Learned Societies Bulletin - 1927
N.Y. Academy of Sciences Bulletins - 1916, 29-32
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1933-37 - N.Y. Academy of Sciences Bulletins
1938 - N.Y. Academy of Sciences Letter on Publications
1955 - Seattle Anthropological Society
1954 - Various Organizations and Their Objectives
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