

PURDUE

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INVENTORY TO VIRGINIA KELLY KARNES PAPERS, 1910-2006

**Purdue University Libraries
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Descriptive Summary

Creator	Karnes, Virginia K., 1909-2006
Title	Virginia Kelly Karnes Papers
Date Span	circa 1910-2006
Abstract	Photographs, certificates and awards, correspondence, memoir and publications relating to the life of Virginia K. Karnes and her husband, William Karnes.
Quantity	4.5 Cubic Feet
Language	English
Repository	Archives and Special Collections, Purdue University Libraries

Administrative Information

Access	Collection is open for research.
Preferred Citation	Virginia Kelly Karnes Papers, Archives and Special Collections, Purdue University Libraries
Copyright Notice	Copyright retained by the heirs of the Karnes family
Acquisition	Donated by Susan Nelson and Charles C. Snyder, 2006-2007
Provenance/Custodial History	Materials were in the custody of Virginia Kelly Karnes upon her death in 2006 when they were donated to the archives by her niece, Susan Nelson, and her attorney and the executor of her estate, Charles C. Snyder
Accession Number	20061028
Location	AS-OS
Processed By	Latanya N. Jenkins, August 2007

Subject Headings

Persons

Karnes, Virginia Grace Kelly
Karnes, William George

Organizations

Beatrice Foods Company

Form and Genre Types

Awards & certificates
Books and publications
Correspondence
Memorabilia
Multimedia
Photographic prints

Biography of Virginia Kelly Karnes

Virginia Kelly Karnes (1909-2006), and her late husband Bill were long-time benefactors of Purdue University. Virginia was named the first woman chair of the President's Council of Purdue, as well as being elected to the Mortar Board at Purdue. The Purdue University Libraries honored her by naming the Archives and Special Collections research center for her in recognition of her generosity to the libraries.

A native of Warsaw, Indiana, Virginia Grace Kelly worked at a box factory for three years after graduating from high school, saving enough money to enroll at Butler University in 1929. When the Warsaw Bank closed in 1930, tying up her money, she had to go back to work. In 1932, she resumed her education at Purdue University and graduated in 1935 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics. She was a member of the Alpha Chi Omega Sorority and did housework at Alpha Chi Omega to pay for her room and board. In 2002, she endowed a financial assistance program for qualifying members of the Alpha Chi Omega attending Purdue.

She met William George Karnes in 1928, and after a nine-year courtship, they were married on May 1, 1937. She became his closest friend, confidant and most valued counsel as he advanced from the position of law clerk to become president and chief executive officer of Beatrice Foods Company in Chicago, Illinois. During Bill's early years at Beatrice Foods, Virginia frequently would travel with him by train from city to city meeting the company's various division managers. They had been married for 63 years when Bill passed away on November 17, 2000.

Virginia Karnes served Rush University Medical Center for fifty years as a member of its Woman's Board (serving as president 1974-1976) and was a member of the Medical Center's Board of Trustees. Her volunteerism and philanthropy were recognized with membership in several of the Medical Center's premier giving groups, including the Anchor Cross Society, Rush Heritage Society, and Board of Benefactors.

Scope and Contents of the Papers

The Virginia Kelly Karnes Papers (circa 1910-2006; 4.5 Cubic ft.) document the life of Virginia Kelly Karnes. Types of materials include correspondence, notes, awards and certificates, printed material, electronic media, photographs, and artifacts. The Papers are organized into 5 series:

- 1. Correspondence, 2001 and undated (9 items)**
- 2. Awards and Certificates, circa 1980-2006 (9 items)**
- 3. Publications and Printed Material, 1935-2006 (4 items)**
- 4. Photographs, circa 1910-2006 (18 items)**
- 5. Artifacts, 1935 (1 item)**

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

1. Correspondence, 2001 and undated (9 items)

The series includes letters and notes written by or to Virginia Kelly Karnes.

Location AS-OS Box 8 Correspondence, undated

Note from President Arthur G. Hansen to Virginia Karnes, thanking her for her service to Purdue, undated

Location AS-OS Box 10 Correspondence, 2001

Notes written by Virginia Kelly Karnes, circa 2001

Letter from Virginia Kelly Karnes to Martha Graham, 2001

Thank you card for donation in memory of William Karnes, 2001

William G. Karnes memorial service pamphlet, 2001

2. Awards and Certificates, circa 1980-2006 (9 items)

The series documents the achievements of Virginia Kelly Karnes. Types of materials include certificates and plaques. Materials in the series are oversized and arranged according to size.

Location AS-OS Box 5 Awards and Certificates, circa 1980-1987

Sagamore of the Wabash awarded by Governor of Indiana Robert D. Orr, 1987

Board of Governors award for philanthropy and commendable service on behalf of Purdue University awarded by then President of Purdue University Arthur G. Hansen undated c. 1980

Location AS-OS Box 9 Awards and Certificates, 1983-1984

Framed gavel plaque, Chairman, Purdue University President's Council, 1983-1984

Location AS-OS Box 7 Awards and Certificates, undated [circa 2000]

Purdue University's R.B. Stewart Society certificate, undated

Location AS-OS Box 8 Awards and Certificates, 2000 and undated

Hovde fellow, awarded to Mr. and Mrs. William G. Karnes from the Purdue University President's Council, signed by President Steven C. Beering, undated

Sigma Delta Phi, President's Council, bestowed by Purdue President Arthur G. Hansen, undated

Framed testimonial commemorating Virginia Karnes' sixty-fifth anniversary of graduation from Purdue University, issued by President Steven C. Beering, 2000

Location AS-OS Box 6 Awards and Certificates, 2006 and undated

Distinguished Service Award on behalf of the Purdue University President's Council, signed by President Steven C. Beering, undated

Distinguished Pinnacle Award on behalf of the Purdue University President's Council, signed by President Martin C. Jischke, circa 2006

3. Publications and Printed Material, 1935-2006 (4 items)

The series includes a memoir, books, pamphlets, and a DVD. William Karnes wrote about his wife, Virginia, in his memoir *My Life and Times*.

Location AS-OS Box 10 Publications and Printed Material, 1935-2006

Purdue University yearbook, *The Debris*, property of Virginia Grace Kelly [Karnes], 1935

Book, *Beatrice: From Build Up Through Breakup* by Neil R. Gazel. Preface by William G. Karnes. University of Illinois Press: Chicago, 1990.

Manuscript, *My Life and Times* by William Karnes. Unpublished memoir (photocopy). Includes a chapter on William Karnes' relationship with Virginia Karnes. Undated.

DVD, President's Council brunch documenting Virginia Kelly Karnes' gift announcement to Purdue University Libraries, 2006

4. Photographs, circa 1910-circa 2006 (18 items)

The series includes photographs of Virginia Kelly Karnes and her husband, William Karnes. Also included are two group photographs, Alpha Chi Omega sorority sisters and Phi Kappa Psi fraternity brothers, both circa 1935.

Location AS-OS Box 1 Photographs, circa 1970

Virginia Karnes eating at an event, circa 1970 (11X14, color, framed)

Virginia Karnes, seated, circa 1970 (11X14, color, framed)

Location AS-OS Box 2 Photographs, undated

Virginia Karnes, seated, undated (11X14, color, framed)

Location AS-OS Box 3 Photographs, undated

Virginia Karnes playing golf, undated (black and white, framed)

Virginia Karnes eating a meal, undated (black and white, framed)

Virginia Karnes in a suit, seated, undated. (8X10, color, framed)

Location AS-OS Box 4 Photographs, undated

Virginia Karnes and William Karnes dancing at a formal event, undated (black and white, poster)

Location AS-OS Box 10 Photographs, circa 1910-2006 and undated

Two babies, unidentified, circa 1910 (small black and white photo)

Virginia Karnes in graduation cap, 1935 (small black and white photo)

Virginia Karnes and William Karnes standing outside of their home with a Purdue University flag and United States flag in front, undated (4X6, color)

William Karnes, seated, undated (4X6, color)

Virginia Karnes in formal dress, 1996 (5X7, black and white)

William Karnes and Virginia Karnes, dressed in formal attire, undated (5X7, color)

Virginia Karnes, seated, with a flower in her hair, undated (8X11, black and white)

Virginia Karnes wearing a scarf with brooch, undated (8X11, color)

Virginia Karnes, seated, wearing butterfly shirt, circa 2006 (8.5X11, color; non-photographic color printout on paper)

Alpha Chi Omega (ΑΧΩ) sorority sisters, seated and standing outside a house (small, black and white)

Lists of names, possibly of sorority and fraternity members shown in photos, 1935

Phi Kappa Psi ($\Phi\text{K}\Psi$) fraternity brothers, seated and standing outside a building (small, black and white)

Phi Psi letter about Virginia Kelly [Karnes], 1935

5. Artifacts, 1935 (1 item)

The series includes one three-dimensional object, an academic hood.

Location AS-OS Box # 10 Artifacts, 1935

Virginia Kelly [Karnes] graduation hood from Purdue University, Bachelor of Science degree, 1935