Sturgis Library Archives
Town and Local History Collection

Kurt Vonnegut Collection

MS. 82

Extent: 1 box

Scope and Content Note: The collection consists of newspaper and magazine articles by or about Kurt Vonnegut, a copy of his letter of resignation from the Sturgis Library Board of Trustees, programs and other materials from the Vonnegut Celebration, a Kurt's Farmhouse beer bottle, first edition copy of Welcome to the Monkey House, Kurt Vonnegut "Little Thinker" doll, signed prints by Morley Safer, a poster by Marc Leeds, and more.

Biographical and Historical Information: Kurt Vonnegut, noted author, journalist, artist, teacher, car dealer, and actor, lived with his family in Barnstable Village in a house on the corner of Route 6A and Scudder Lane, near Hinckley/Coggins Pond. He was an active member of the community, becoming a Trustee of the Sturgis Library in the 1960s and participating in many productions at the Barnstable Comedy Club. He owned a Saab dealership in West Barnstable, and spoke at many community events. His daughter Edie and her family still reside in the Vonnegut homestead on Scudder Lane.

In 2014 Sturgis Library organized a village-wide Vonnegut Celebration which was held October 10-12, 2014. The Celebration featured lectures, exhibits, film screenings, a dramatic reading of Happy Birthday Wanda June, a panel discussion, historical Village walking tour, Chowderfest, and much more. These events were held in conjunction with Tales of Cape Cod, Barnstable Historical Society, St. Mary's Church, the Unitarian Church of Barnstable, Barnstable Comedy Club, Barnstable Fire Department, and the Cape Cod Art Association.

Access: Unrestricted access. Credit Sturgis Library for reproduction.

Processed by: Lucy Loomis, June, 2008

Contents:

Loose in large box:

- Kurt Vonnegut Memorial Library poster by Marc Leeds
- Kurt's Farmhouse beer bottle made by Cape Cod Beer
- Two signed, framed prints by noted journalist and friend Morley Safer
- Signed caricature of Vonnegut by Joe Quigley
- Ex-Library first edition of "Welcome to the Monkey House."
- Kurt Vonnegut "Little Thinker" doll

- Kurt Vonnegut Finger Puppet/Fridge Magnet
- Round container with one of Vonnegut's half-smoked Pall-Mall cigarettes (donated to the Library by a friend who had kept it)
- Memory stick with images of and by Vonnegut, documents related to the Vonnegut Celebration, and a film trailer by Cathy Pastva.
- Playbill for "Wings & Tails : A New Musical" by Edie Vonnegut (Kurt's daughter)
- Life Magazine, July 25, 1969 with article on page 53 "There's a Maniac Out There" by Kurt Vonnegut Jr. "A novelist probes the tale of four horrible murders on Cape Cod." Vonnegut writes of the Truro murders and the convicted killer Tony Costa.

- **Smaller box inside large box with the following contents:**

  Fldr 1: 1966 letter from Vonnegut on University of Iowa letterhead, resigning his post as library Trustee

  Fldr 2: Original copy of Vonnegut's "You've Never Been to Barnstable?" which was retitled "Where I Live" and was the first chapter of *Welcome to the Monkey House*

  Fldr 3: Miscellaneous articles by and about Vonnegut
  - Venture Magazine Oct/Nov 1960 "Brief Encounters on the Inland Waterway -- By Leisurely Yacht from Hyannis Port to West Palm Beach Without a Millionaire in Sight"
  - Register article Oct 23, 1969 "Text of Vonnegut's Message -- Let the Killing Stop" antiwar speech
  - McCall's article April, 1970 by Vonnegut on Biafra
  - Unknown date/publication "Biafra Starvation Not Exaggerated Vonnegut Reports"
  - The Register May 21, 1970 "Conflicting Advice Given Peace Rally -- Vonnegut Cautions, But Panther Challenges"
  - Mademoiselle August 1970 "We Talk To..." interview with Kurt Vonnegut.
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  - Cape Cod Standard Times article Aug 26 1970 "Sturgis [Library] Too Stodgy, Vonnegut Claims"
  - Cape Cod News article, Nov 18 1970, "Eliot Rosewater is Alive and Well and Living on Cape Cod" by Joseph Knight.
  - New Bedford Standard Times article Nov 22, 1970 "Barnstable author Delighted by Challenge -- Kurt Vonnegut Jr. Teaching at Harvard"
  - Register article Jan 7, 1971 "Student Actors to Premiere Vonnegut's Monkey House."
  - Cape Cod Standard Times Jan 23, 1971 "Vonnegut -- from a Dresden Slaughterhouse"
  - Saturday Review article Feb 6, 1971 "The War Novel from Mailer to Vonnegut"
  - Saturday Review Article May 1, 1971 "Vonnegut's Otherworldly Laughter"

- Cape Cod Standard Times article May 6, 1973 Book Review of Breakfast of Champions "The Self-Destruct of Kurt Vonnegut."
- Cape Cod Times Date Unknown (circa 1990?) "Libraries Now Valued by Caustic Vonnegut"
- USA Today Oct 6, 2005 "Vonnegut on Politics, Presidents, and Librarians" Book review of A Man Without a Country"
- New York Times April 12, 2007 “Kurt Vonnegut, Novelist Who Caught the Imagination of His Age, is Dead at 84”

Fldr 4: Articles from the Barnstable Patriot and the Dennis/Yarmouth Register circa 1950s through the 1970s

Fldr 5: Copy of Vonnegut letter to Bill Breisky, longtime editor of the Cape Cod Times, regarding a play Breisky wrote.

Fldr 6: Original program and inset, autographed by Vonnegut, for the Orleans Arena Theatre production of “Something Borrowed: A Comedy in Three Acts” by the “brilliant young Cape Cod novelist,” Kurt Vonnegut. July 23-27, 1957.

Fldr 7: Programs and art exhibit poster for Sturgis Library’s Vonnegut Celebration, October 10-12, 2014.

Fldr 8: *American Dissident* broadside. “Vonnegut’s Clapboard Tomb…and its Gravediggers of Liberty,” by G. Tod Slone. October 2014.

Fldr 9: Letter from Morley Safer dated Aug 7, 2014 which accompanied a gift of the two signed prints listed above.

Fldr 10: So it Goes bumper sticker from the Kurt Vonnegut Memorial Library.

Loose in rear of box: Binder with entries in the Kurt Vonnegut Writing Challenge held during the Vonnegut Celebration, October 10-12, 2014.