

## **Eleanor and Charles Rawls**

### **Side 1:**

Introduction: Eleanor Rawls was born in Lumberton N.C. (1916) and designed furniture in High Point. Married 1941 and moved to Richmond. Charles served as naval officer and, on the death of his pilot brother, they moved to Asheville to be with family.

[25] She did not take up fine arts until her sons were in school. Studied once a week, starting in 1960.

[41] She showed her water colors in the Charlotte Street Museum of Art and Peacock Alley in the Manor (enclosure).

[53] Six people started the Western Carolina Conservatives and later the Asheville Chapter of American Artists Professional League (enclosure).

[65] A group of 45 people met to discuss forming an auxiliary for the museum (enclosure). [Mary Anne (Mrs. J. Nathan) McCarley, Lily (Mrs. William) McKee, Peggy (Mrs. M. Polsky) Dodge, Barbara Keleher, Virginia (Mrs. M. H. Jr.) Winger, Maurice H. "Murray" Winger Jr., Betsy Jean Pritchard]

[89] The board of the Art Museum gave permission and the group was called the "Muses" - later "Auxiliary." [Pat Hammil]

[94] The first headquarter for the Art Museum was 324 Charlotte (a building that had been used for maintenance for the park). Later one floor of the Northwestern Bank [now BB&T] was given for the Museum use and the first art auction held. This is the main fund-raiser and alternates yearly with the Decorator Showhouse.

[142] Corporations and Banks support the fund-raising project by purchasing paintings.

[152] The house on 152 Pearson Drive was another home for the Museum. The owners were in Europe and, while the interior could not be redesigned, flats were erected and windows covered. Children's art classes were held in the garage. [Gay Green]

[191] When the Museum moved to the Civic Center it was possible to start developing a permanent collection. A handicap entrance was opened and a gift shop, manned by volunteers, was open four days a week.

[220] The Museum Board is composed of 50% artists and 50% business men. [Ed Ritts, Richard Van Vleck]

[261] The influence of the Museum has effected small communities outside Asheville.

[290] She paints or sketches while traveling and is working on several commissions now.

[300] She studied heraldry for 2-3 years and has made several thousand crests. She always keeps one copy and will turn her collection over to the Buncombe County Genealogical Society. There is not adequate space in the Pack Library. [Dr. Foster A. Sondley, Ken Brown]

[421] She discusses the growth of the Art Museum and feel that admission charges are in line with other eastern museums.

[476] She painted flats for the ACT shows. [Charleton Heston]

[535] Because of insurance costs, hanging a traveling show can be very expensive. [Dr. Benjamin Franklin]

[602] She worked with a decorating group redoing the Montreat Anderson College. She also worked with the Presbyterian Home for Children in Black Mountain.

## **Side 2:**

[2/5] She tells more about decorating and her two sons. [John Rawls, Charles Rawls]

[2/65] Charles: His father's family came to Asheville in 1880 and his mother's family in 1900. His grandfather had Mica mines. Mica was used in wood-burning stoves - a window on front. He was born in the Biltmore Hospital and attended school in Montford, then Dr. Thrall School for Boys (Pastor of Congregational Church on Merrimon). He graduated from University of N.C. and 2 years of Harvard with an MBA. He worked for, then owned, a wholesale lumber company, selling soft wood to retail lumber dealers for house construction. [Rev. J. Brainerd Thrall]

[2/149] The real estate boom and bust before the stock market crash is described. Bonds were sold at a discount and used by owners to pay off taxes so their property could not be foreclosed.

[2/202] Changes in the city - cut/tunnel - various studies made - French Broad River plans (see enclosure). Eleanor gave paintings to an art sale in the Haywood Park Atrium as a fund raiser for RiverLink. [Jean Webb (Mrs. Robert), Charles Webb]

[2/274] He doesn't see how Haywood Hotel and Pack Place can pay off. The malls are more attractive for shoppers than the center of the city because of traffic and parking.

[2/391] He feels that people in the city have come from all over the world and the resulting cosmopolitan feeling is welcomed by the natives.