

**McLean County Museum of History**

**Sandra Brenneman Oldendorf Collection**

Processed by  
Mary Alice Wills  
Summer 2021

**Collection Information**

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1921 - 1975
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	

## Brief History

This collection covers the Brenneman ancestry as well as Sandra Brenneman Oldendorf's personal interests. A handwritten family history of births, marriages, and deaths begins in 1824 with an account from Otto J. Brenneman. There are journals of daily events starting in January, 1916 and continuing through December of 1921, along with an account of chickens and eggs for the last year.

Sandra's great Aunt Elsie Brenneman's acquaintance with Amelia Earhart is noted as well as Earhart's appearance in Bloomington in 1936. Elsie's Professional Business Women's membership and its presidency is documented along with newspaper articles and photos.

Also included in the collection are letters from Sandra's high school friends serving in Vietnam and Germany.

The organization of NOW and the effort of passing the ERA amendment in the 1970s were of prime interest to Sandra. There are minutes of meetings, strategies, newspaper clippings, and photos of campaigns in which she was a part.

Sandra was appointed Director of the core staff program at Camp Peairs on Lake Bloomington for the summers of 1972 and 1973. There are newspaper photos and a large folder of material for camp instruction and events.

## Scope

This collection includes the Collection Information for Sandra B. Oldendorf, Brenneman's family records and journals. Elsie Brenneman's connection to Amelia Earhart, her appearance in Bloomington, and the Professional Business Women's Club with photos and newspaper articles. There are letters from 1966 servicemen in Viet Nam and Germany. Also included are papers from Sandra's 1972-1975 involvement with NOW and the ERA bill. Newspaper clippings from 1974-75 reflect her interests. There is a folder on the Myra S. Peairs Girl Scout Camp of which Sandra was a camp leader.

### Folder 1: Collection Information

- 1.1 McLean County Historical Society Gift Agreement by Sandra B. Oldendorf, July 16, 2020.
- 1.2 Donor's summary of collection, 2 pages.
- 1.3 Brenneman/Kemp correspondence about collection

**Folder 2: Otto Brenneman papers; Elsie Brenneman journals**

- 2.1 Copy of legal paper for personal estate of Valentin Graff, and list of receipts for settlement, 1903 - 1922.
- 2.2 "O. J. Brenneman, Prominent Resident of Minier, Is Dead," "Funeral of O. J. Brenneman," 3 undated newspaper articles.
- 2.3 "Family Records Written by Otto. J. Brenneman," handwritten entries in notebook from 1824 of marriages, births and deaths.
- 2.4 "Daily Events," Elsie Brenneman's journal January, 1916 through December, 1918, includes 1917 clothes account
- 2.5 Elsie Brenneman's entries for journal January, 1919, through December, 1921, also includes chicken and egg expense and sales.

**Folder 3: Amelia Earhart materials, newspaper articles *Pantagraph*, unless noted.**

- 3.1 *The Daily Pantagraph* letterhead note dated December 28, 1934 to Miss Elsie Brenneman signed Davis Merwin, Publisher, enclosing a picture of recent flight.
- 3.2 (Back Then) by Gene Smedley, "Amelia Earhart dropped in on Twin Cities in 1936," w/photo.
- 3.3 Handwritten envelope addressed to Miss Elsie Brenneman c/o Business and Professional Women's Club, from Amelia Earhart, date not legible, 1 photocopy.
- 3.4 "Woman Flyer Will Speak," newspaper article, no date
- 3.5 "Amelia Earhart Lecture," Monday, April 6, newspaper ad.
- 3.6 "Amelia Earhart comes to Bloomington Coliseum," April 6, 1936 brochure, and small picture of Amelia Earhart and Elsie Brenneman dated April, 1943 (?)
- 3.7 Headline lettering about Earhart's appearance cut from newspaper.
- 3.8 "Answers Their Fears," article, no date
- 3.9 "Miss Earhart Unhurt as Auto Tire Blows," article, no date
- 3.10 "Amelia Tells About Flight," article, no date
- 3.11 "Planes for Average Person Next Development, Miss Earhart Says," article w/photo.
- 3.12 "Miss Earhart, Who Will Speak Here April 6, Has Own Whims" article, no date and "Amelia Earhart Will Speak In Bloomington Next Monday Night" article no date.
- 3.13 "Amelia Tells About Flight," article no date.
- 3.14 "Amelia Earhart, World's Premier Aviatrix," full page copy of information w/photo on appearance at Coliseum, Monday, April 6, 1936, 8:00 P.M.
- 3.15 "Amelia Earhart, World's Premier Aviatrix," copy w/full page photo, no date.
- 3.16 Copy of 2 newspaper articles: "Women's Club Presents Amelia Earhart in Lecture Monday Night," w/photo, and "Amelia Earhart to Speak for Business Women's Club," w/photo, no date.
- 3.17 Copy of newspaper article, "B. and P. Group Busy Planning," w/photo of Amelia Earhart, no date.
- 3.18 Photo of Amelia Earhart 6 1/2" x 8" on reverse side of 4.13 entry.
- 3.19 Glossy 9" x 7" of Amelia Earhart.
- 3.20 Glossy 10" x 8" of Elsie Brenneman with 2 gentlemen (names illegible) next to small aircraft.

#### **Folder 4: Business and Professional Women's Club**

- 4.1 "Business and Professional Women's Club Prepares for Thousand," w/photo no date, 2 copies.
- 4.2 "Will Direct Business and Professional Women's Club," 7 ¾ x 6 ¼ photo includes Miss Elsie Brenneman as president, copy of newspaper article, no date.
- 4.3 Photo, 4 x 5 ½, of Miss Elsie Brenneman as general chairman of arrangements for upcoming BPWC event.
- 4.4 "Former registrar at ISU, Elsie Brenneman, dies," *Pantagraph* obit w/photo, August 3, 1974.

#### **Folder 5: Vietnam Letters, Magnus R. Mehl to Sandra Brenneman**

- 5.1 Letter 15 Nov '64 ... Really loves boot camp, but made a mistake not studying at ISU.
- 5.2 Letter Jan. 7, 1965 ... Tell Jane, Linda, Diane and rest of girls to write and send cookies.
- 5.3 Letter Jan. 22, 1965 ... I am a Marine now, done with boot training and off to Recon – Recon is frogman and paratroopers, toughest and meanest.
- 5.4 Letter Feb. 9, 1965 ... Remind the girls to send cookies
- 5.5 Letter 20 Feb. '65 from Camp Pendleton, going to sea for 18 days.
- 5.6 Letter 18 March, '65 ... liked being at sea, but Marines look better, want to go to war for excitement and be in a war like my Dad.
- 5.7 Letter 21 May '65 ... Finally going to Viet Nam, wants glory to uphold name of Marine Corp, hopes to get Purple Heart like Dad's, a coward to express true feelings toward you.
- 5.8 Letter 14 Sept '65 ... Has not seen action, very dirty, sweat turns to mud, long hair, woman like Tokyo Rose gives pep talks every night. Have seen some rough things.
- 5.9 Letter 13, Jan. '66 ... won't be home until late summer, then writes will spend next year and half in Viet Nam, gets out Aug. 24, 1967.
- 5.10 Letter May 1, 1966, from Delmar Witham ... Duty driver for 24 hour shifts, stationed in Germany, will be 22 when get home.
- 5.11 "Stanford Marine Mehl Writes From Viet Nam," *Pantagraph*, March 27, 1966, w/photo, ½ page

#### **Folder 6: NOW 1972-1975 and ERA**

- 6.1 National Organization for Women – Application for Provisional Chapter Charter, 1970
- 6.2 Member's newsletter minutes summary postal date Jul. 14, 1972
- 6.3 "Dear Friend," Letter to perspective members.
- 6.3 "Now is Here," one page info for meeting at First United Methodist Church, Normal
- 6.4 Sample letters to advertisers and employers using the *Pantagraph* urging use of job descriptions as "managerial" or "secretarial," not male or female.
- 6.5 "Bloomington-Normal NOW Chapter Officers," list, 2 pages.
- 6.6 "NOW Membership List," 6 pages – many duplicate entries
- 6.7 The B/N Chapter of NOW deploras "Little Miss Eastland" beauty contest, lists 4 objections urging reader to contact merchants and managers of Eastland Shopping Center. 1 page.

- 6.7 Letter from State Representative, John R. Laur, dated June 26, 1974 to Mrs. Sandra Pearson, denying request to vote for Equal Rights Amendment.
- 6.8 Letter from State Senator Harber H. Hall, dated June 29, 1974 to Ms. Sandy Pearson, denying request to vote for Equal Rights Amendment.
- 6.9 "Dear Church Leader:" NOW 2 page rebuttal attached to a 2 page "Dear Church Leader:" from a Stop Equal Rights Amendment group.
- 6.10 "Dear ERA Supporter:" need help for phone message to politicians and trips to Springfield, 2 pages
- 6.11 "Who's For Equal Rights For Women?" 2 sided flyer promoting ERA
- 6.12 "Failure Is Impossible," ERA sticker
- 6.13 Information on House Bill 1851, anti-abortion Bill and Title IX, which need needs approval.
- 6.14 NOW National Organization for Women, Bloomington-Normal Chapter, August 6, 1974, meeting agenda, 5 pages.  
NOW National Organization for Women, Bloomington-Normal Chapter, Sept. 11, 1974, bi-monthly December, 1975, meeting agenda, 14 issues.

**Folder 7: NOW and ERA, *Pantagraph* clippings 1974-75**

- 7.1 "Employment topic for NOW chapter," 2 ½"x 2 ½" no date
- 7.2 "NOW elects new officers," w/photo, 2 ½ x 5 ½" no date
- 7.3 "NOW members to participate in state session," 2 ½ x 4 ½, no date
- 7.3 "Books stereotype sex roles," by Jean Crouch, w/photos, Feb 17, 1974.
- 7.4 "Peace, Equality goals of IWY," by Suzanne Kridner, w/photo  
"Equal rights a struggle for Susan B. Anthony," w/photo  
"Display symbols." 4 ½ x 5 ½"photo  
All above one page Feb. 12, 1975.
- 7.5 "Changes come slowly for rape laws," w/photo of Ms. Wiatt & Ms. Horenberger, on same page "Updating rape legislation long overdue, says Dozier," w/photo, Apr. 6, 1975.
- 7.6 "ERA boosters," w/photo ERA boosters use banners to cheer on legislature-bound train in Bloomington.
- 7.7 "Twin Citians join ERA lobby,' w/photo of Rep. Gil Deavers, on same page  
"Demonstrate for causes," w/photo, Apr. 10, 1975.
- 7.8 "Frustration, unity found at IWY Tribune," w/photo of Leta Kruegr, Luellen Laurenti, July, 1975.
- 7.9 "Towanda girl wins protested beauty title," 2 photos, Aug. 4, 1975.
- 7.10 "Equality Day talks stress ERA, violence," Aug. 28, 1975.

**Folder 8: Peairs Girl Scout Camp, 1972-73**

- 8.1 "Centrillio names Pearis personnel," *Pantagraph*, 3 ½ x 2 ½, no date
- 8.2 "British girl to join staff of Scout camp," *Pantagraph*, 5 ½ x 2 ½, no date
- 8.3 "Water scouts," 8 photos of camping activities including Director Pearson, *Pantagraph*, Aug. 12, 1973.
- 8.4 "Myra S. Peairs Girl Scout Camp, Summer 1972 – 73, Pocket folder with detailed information for different levels of campers, as well as staff.

**Folder 9: Obituaries**

- 9.1 Magnus Richard Mehl, 63 died at Heartland Health Care Center, Normal, August 3, 2008. Magnus Richard was the Marine Sandra corresponded with in 1966. (Folder 5)