Guide to the Staci Niemeyer paper "Folk Dancing at the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education"
MSS.0525

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April 04, 2013
Describing Archives: A Content Standard
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# Summary Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Repository</strong></th>
<th>University Libraries Division of Special Collections, The University of Alabama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>Staci Niemeyer paper &quot;Folk Dancing at the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date</strong></td>
<td>1990 April 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extent</strong></td>
<td>0.05 Linear feet (1 item, 17 pieces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Abstract</strong></td>
<td>Essay about folk dancing at the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education, a school founded in 1907 by progressive educator Marietta Johnson in Fairhope, Alabama.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Preferred Citation note**

Staci Niemeyer paper "Folk Dancing at the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education", W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama.
Biographical/Historical note

Born in 1864, Marietta Johnson, a native of Minnesota, was an educator who believed in the organic or natural education of children. Mrs. Johnson had been a teacher in the normal system in Minnesota and had radical ideas on education reform. She felt that children should live natural lives, study the outdoors, not be forced to read at too young an age. In 1902 she moved to Fairhope, Alabama, where she opened the School of Organic Education in 1907. In 2007, the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education celebrated its 100th anniversary.

In her "organic" school, tests were not administered, homework was withheld until high school, and grades were unknown. She required hand crafts and folk dancing along with the traditional academic curriculum. Her school was a magnet to young teachers and to artists, and was instrumental in building the reputation of Fairhope as an artists' colony. Encouraged and funded by friends in the small experimental community of Fairhope, Alabama, Mrs. Johnson began her revolutionary school on a ten-acre campus -- teaching, writing, training teachers in her method. Her little school attracted national attention, and she was one of the founders of the Progressive Education Association.

The school reached its zenith in the 1920s, in part because of John Dewey's book and its reference to Mrs. Johnson and her school. Through the great depression, two world wars and Mrs. Johnson's death in 1938, the Organic School has never closed its doors and is still operating in Fairhope.

Scope and Contents note

The collection contains an essay about folk dancing at the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education, a school founded in 1907 in Fairhope, Alabama. Marietta Johnson was a well-known progressive educator who founded this school in south Alabama that allows children to learn without examinations or grades.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

University Libraries Division of Special Collections, The University of Alabama February 2008

Revision Description
April 2013

Conditions Governing Access note
None

Conditions Governing Use note
None

Provenance
Gift of Staci Niemeyer, 1990

Processed by
Megan Quillivan and Donnelly Lancaster Walton, 2007; updated by Martha Bace, 2013

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

• School of Organic Education (Fairhope, Ala.).

Genre(s)

• Essays

Geographic Name(s)

• Alabama--History--1819-1950

Personal Name(s)

• Johnson, Marietta (Marietta Louise Pierce), 1864-1938
Subject(s)

- Alabama
- Education
- Education--Alabama
- Folk dancing
- Music and Performing Arts
- Students
- Teacher
## Collection Inventory

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