

Alaska State Library
Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

Kelsey, Claudia

Claudia J.D. Kelsey Botanical Illustrations, Circa 1949-1988

MS 240

3 Boxes
24 ½ x 20 ½ x 1 ½
1 Matted B&W photograph
8 Matted drawings
12 Botanical drawings in watercolor or ink
1 Matted B&W photo w/article
1 Illustrated newsletter

Processed By: Anastasia Tarmann
6/2008, 3/2011, 2013

12 x 15 x 5
2 Binders
111 Drawings. 5 color photographs

8x14x 1 ½

ACQUISITION: The collection was transferred to Bea Shepard by Claudia Kelsey and donated on March 13, 2008 by Bea Shepard via Judy Klein, and in person after the initial donation: Accession #2008-013, 2011-007, and Acc. #2013-014.

ACCESS: The collection is available for viewing; materials may not be photocopied.

COPYRIGHT: Requests for permission to publish or reproduce from the collection may be discussed with the Librarian.

PROCESSING: The bulk of the Claudia Kelsey Collection housed at the Alaska State Library Historical Collections consists of botanical illustrations in ink, pencil, and water color. Claudia made notes on the drawings, which were copied verbatim in the inventory below. Photographs and illustrated holiday cards are unnumbered in the original binder. All sketches and drawings are numbered. The collection was separated: 1. Two large drawings are held at State Museum [replicas are at the Historical Collections]. 2. Items that went to the Juneau-Douglas City Museum are listed in an inventory included in the Master File. Tissue separates items in Box one. Items in Box 3 were placed in Mylar sleeves. Some items received conservation treatment, such as double stick tape deposit removal. Intellectual arrangement: Biographical exhibit; matted botanical illustrations; botanical sketches with notes; cards and personal materials, including references to commissioned or volunteer work.

BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL NOTE

In the summer of 1951, Juneau botanical artist, Claudia Juanita Dona Kelsey packed up her crow quill pens and her India ink and set off on a great adventure. Her assignment: Draw the wild edible plants of interior and arctic Alaska for the first botanical reference of its kind in the Territory. The pen and ink drawings [in this collection are Claudia's] sketches for the original illustrations for [the publication, *Wild Edible Plants of Alaska*] ...The originals have been lost.

When *Wild Edible Plants of Alaska* was published in 1953, it was intended for military pilots who might be shot down without food in the northern wilderness...The study was directed by Dr. Christine Heller, territorial Department of Health nutritionist. The book was written under contract with the U.S. Air Force, with support from the Alaska Cooperative Extension Service...

Claudia Kelsey and Christine Heller traveled to villages and fish camps of arctic Alaska by small plane, flat-bottomed whaling boat and umiak, often landing on isolated air strips and beaches in search of the wild plants which Alaska Natives had long ago wisely recognized as indispensable food and medicine. Claudia is a botanist as well as a botanical illustrator. She identified and collected the plants in the field and sketched on the spot, noting color and surroundings. She avoided wind or rain, (but not mosquitoes) by taking her specimens to a shelter and drawing them that day. She never drew from photographs. She often signed her drawings with her initials, CJDK. [*Biographical notes were originally written by Bea Shepard?*].

According to the program for her wake [see Master File], Claudia Kelsey was born August 8, 1912 and died December 6, 2007. She worked in Los Angeles with immigrant children prior to coming to Alaska in the 1940s. She helped establish the Eagle River Camp, Artists in the Schools program, and Sea Week in Juneau. Claudia and her friend

and housemate, Bea Shepard, received the Juneau Chamber's Lifetime Achievement Award in October 2007.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

Inclusive dates: 1949-2003. Bulk dates: 1949-1987. Botanical sketches of Edible and poisonous plants native to Alaska. Drawings in ink, pencil, water color, some with hand written notes. Hand painted or drawn cards (mostly Christmas). Photo subjects: the creator and her paintings, plant specimen. 1 B&W photo, 5 color photos, hand drawn or painted cards (mostly Christmas). Photo subjects: Claudia, Bea and Claudia, paintings, plant specimen. Memorabilia including memorial program and business license.

SUBJECTS

Kelsey, Claudia J.D, Illustrations.
Edible and poisonous plants, Alaska

INVENTORY

Box 1 (*Located in MS Oversized*): Matted biographical exhibit, sketches

Accession 2008-013:

- 1 Unmatted sketch of V. Vitisidea
- 2 Claudia Kelsey, Illustrator
Wild Edible Plants of Alaska. 11.25' x 21.50
- 2a Matted photographic portrait of Claudia [Kelsey] wearing parka, Shismaref, July 1951. Biographical summary (See notes above).
17.75 x 17.50
- 2b Matted illustrations of Wild Cucumber hand dated Thane April 20, 1949 and V. Membranaceum [?] with handwritten notes describing the qualities of the plants. Biographical summary continued.
- 3 Matted Western Hemlock pen and ink sketch.
- 4 Pink Plumes Polygonum bistorta
Matted. Pink, brown, green watercolor.
- 5 Unnamed (Cloudberries?)
Matted. Pink, yellow, brown, green watercolor.
- 6 Juniperus Communis
Matted. Black ink.
- 7 Unnamed (Irises?)

- Matted. Purple and green watercolor.
8 CALTHA PALUSTRIS MARSH MARIGOLD COWSLIP
Matted. Black ink.

Accession 2011-007:

- 9 Biographical: Vitamins in Alaska Plants, article: 3-Woman Team to Study Edible
Alaska Plants, B&W Photograph of Christine Heller, Bea Shepard, and Claudia
Kelsey (left to right), 1951.
10 Vassinium. [watercolor illustration]
11 Claytonia Tuberosa, 7/26/49. [color illustration]
12 Williams, Maxcine. *Poisonous Plants of Alaska*. Alaska Health. June 1949, No. 6.
Drawings by Claudia Kelsey.
13 Unidentified [pen and ink]
14 Saxifraga Punctata [pen and ink]
15 Taraxacum Dandelion [pen and ink]
16 Angelica genuflexa, pen and ink
17 Streptopus Amplexifolius- Wild Cucumber [pen and ink]
18 Angelica Lucida [pen and ink]
19 Fireweed Shoots - Epilobium Angustifolium, May, 1949 [color illustration]
20 Spring Beauty - Claytonia Siberica [color illustration]
21 Nuphar Polysepalum [pen and ink]
22 Salix Pulchra [color illustration]

Accession 2013-014.

- 23 Young plant. Cicuta mackenziana. Potter Rd., Anchorage. 6, 7, 1951
24 Angelica Lucida
25 Cicuta Douglas II
26 Ligusticum Hultenii
27 Angelical Genuflexa
28 Cicuta Mackenziana
29 Angelica Genuflexa
30 Tayaruk. Goose Grass
31 Polygonum Alaskanum. Wild Rubarb.
32 Pre-run pull. [Red mushrooms]
33 Flowerhead
34 Sambucus Pubens. Elderberry
35 Vaccinium Alaskensis [berries]
36 Poisonous root of Cicuta mackenziana [matted]

Box 2: Cards and drawings

Accession 2008-013:

Binder 1

Botanical Illustrations. Black ink, pencil, photos, plant specimens. Pencil, ink, and color sketches with handwritten notes describing the qualities of the plants and referring infrequently to place names. One color photograph.

1. URTICA LYALLII Young Nettle Shoots
2. Antennaxia Monocephala
- 2a. Antennaxia Monocephala
3. Bog out highway - c. holostoma?
4. From plant at Nome, I think
5. Cloudberry - Rubus Chamaemorus
6. From: Edible Roots and Berries of Northern Canada by Porsild [three images]
7. Wild Onion
8. [Bulbs of unidentified plant - possibly Chocolate Lily]
9. Three flowerhead
10. Isetusa 1987
11. Start of Seedpod...[Possibly Iris]
12. Malaxis Paludosa
13. Malaxis Monophyllos - Use?
14. Juneau Rumex A ctosella Sour grass sheep sorrel - Same as that sent from Anchorage
15. Cypripedium Guttatum - My copy
16. Orchis Aristata
17. [Unnamed berry]
18. [Unnamed berry]
19. Rumex Arcticus - "Wild Spinach"
20. Rumex arcticus - See watercolor (1951) -CJDK 1988
21. Copy from watercolor-CJDK Rumex Arctic[?]. Bottom.
22. Copy from watercolor-CJDK Rumex Arctic[?]. Top.
23. Polygonum Alaskanum
24. Lambs quarters - chenopodium
25. Fireside cook books also give fiddlehead fern sprouts et. and nasturtium leaves as salad greens. Lambs quarters'?...
26. About 48 stalks in threes
27. from Life Anchorage
28. Montia tuberosa (= Claytonia Tuberosa)
29. Claytonia Tuberosa (Potatoes) Keep C.J.D. K. copy
30. Claytonia Tuberosa (Potatoes) Pale Shiny Pink 7/26/49
31. CLAYTONIA SIBERICA Spring Beauty - [rosy stem almost like a strawberry blossom] [3 images together]

32. *Sagina intermedia*
33. *Cerastrium fischerianum*
34. *Stellaria ruscifolia*
35. *Stellaria Alabama*
36. [Unnamed plant]
37. Kotzebue [3 images]
38. Beach Greens [2 images]
39. *Anemone richardsonii*
40. *Caltha Natans* used, but not good ink lines messy
41. *Papaver alboroseum*
42. *Papaver Alaskanum*
43. *Papaver Alaskanum* = *P. radicum* ssp *alaskanum*
44. Reduce
- 44a. Reduce
45. *Barbarea Orthoceras* - cress? - natural size [2 images]
46. BARBAREA ORTHOCERUS Cress
47. Are you sure we have this? *Draba Calsin*
- 47a. Are you sure we have this? *Draba Calsin*
48. ARABUS [*Arabis*] LYRATA Rock Cress
49. *Arabis lyrata* Small-Cress(?) 1949 [2 images]
50. *Parrya* or *cardamine*?? Signed, 1988
51. *Parrya nudicaulis* (Parry's wallflower)[2 images]
52. *Drosera angelica* - later in year droplets larger
53. RHODIOLA INTEGRIFOLIA SEDUM
54. *Saxifraga tricuspidata*
55. *Saxifraga Serphyllifolia*
56. *Saxifraga faliclasa*
57. *Saxifraga hieracifolia*
58. *Saxifraga Nivalis*
59. *Saxifraga reflexa*
60. [Unnamed berry, pink and green watercolor]
61. Photo-C. Kelsey enlargement B. Shepard from Auke nu laid
62. White Red Raspberry -
- 62a. Seed-Nutka rose Natural size
- 62b. Bog Cranberry seeds - Number of seeds? - Skin flaps together only wire hair coming out
- 62c. R. Nutkava 1987
- 62d. Like domestic Rasp. - red & green yellow Prickles not too heavy
63. Nagoon [blue ink] Lagoon berry [pencil, same as sketch] - From Kodachrome slides-Maxcene Williams A.D.H. poster-Heller - Salmon Berry - Wild rhubarb
Polygonum
64. *Epilobium latifolium*
65. Anchorage

66. 1987 *V. visil.idia*[?]
67. Rather stiff firm look - flowers 2-4 together on drooping pedicels most or all (flowers 4 parted and stamens 8) - [Blueberry?]
68. Marsh marigold *Catha* [2 images]
69. Marsh marigold - dull green
70. Nagoon berry - *Rubus Stellatus*
71. Nagoon berry - *R. acticus* Fairbanks 7/10/51
72. *R. Hudsonianum* - Back of leaf
73. *Ribes hudsonianum* - Black Currant
74. Growing in yd from brant Rd out by [?] Haines June 1986
75. *Potentilla biflora*
76. *Potentilla hypartica* (= *p. emargevata*)
77. [Unnamed berry?][3 sketches]
78. Thimbleberry *Rubus*
79. *Malus Fusca* Crab apple
80. Yukon Strawberry - yellow rose center flower
81. Bog Cranberry
82. Bog Cranberry - nagoonberry
83. *V. Ovalifolium*
84. Beach pea
85. *Viola Selkirkii* (Reduce -)
86. *V. selkirkii* - *Viola Selkirkii* Redo - also seems large [2 images]
87. Reduce 67% [*Viola Selkirkii*]
88. *Viola biflora*
89. *Viola Selkirkii* [2 images]
90. *viola biflora* [2 images]
91. Silverberry - keep CJKD copy
92. *V. oliginosum*-berry light blue
93. Soapberry - don't make berries too round some longish-[bottom part of plant]
94. Soapberry - warm yellow brown [top part of plant]
95. Young fireweed - willow weed shoots - May 12, 1994 - Life size - *Epilobium Angustifolium*
96. Young fireweed - Anchorage 1951
97. *Epilobium latifolium* - glacier flower
98. Seed Stalk - *Plantago maretima*
99. For Edible Plants 1949 - goose Tongue - *Plantago Maritima*
100. *Hippuris* [with dried specimen]
101. Slightly more than life size - Fairbanks 1957 -
- 101a. Mouse food *Elak* -
102. *Cicuta Douglasii*
- 102a. *Angelica Lucida*
103. Cow Parsnip
104. *Angelica Lucida*

105. ANGELICA GENUFLEXA
106. HERACLEUM LANATUM
107. MaryLou ANGELICA GENUFLEXA (NONPOISONOUS) LIGUSTICUM HULTENII (NONPOISONOUS) CICUTA DOUGLASII (POISONOUS) .
108. MaryLou CICUTA MAKENZIANA (POISONOUS) ANGELICA GENUFLEXA LIGUSTICUM HULTENII (NONPOISONOUS) HERACLEUM LANATUM (NONPOISONOUS) ANGELICA LUCIDA CICUTA DOUGLASII (POISONOUS)
109. Ligusticum
110. LIGUSTICUM HULTENII
111. July, seed pods Labrador tea (Fairbanks) 1951
112. Ledum groenlandicum Labrador Tea
113. Primula cuneifolia - Redo: more pointed ends
114. Primula cuneifolia
115. Dillingham 1951 Bark Bean
116. Fauria cristagalli - June 1987
117. Veronica stelleri
118. Paintbrush - Highway out of Haines-mile
119. C. hyperborea - from Haines ditch June [with dried specimen]
120. Pinguicula villosa
121. Valeriana Capitata
122. Lactuca...Haines - (Rainbow glacier camp) (very late Robust plants) [with dried specimen]
123. Hieracium triste
124. Koenigia islandica

Binder 2

Accession 2008-013:

Notebook containing Christmas and other cards (Children, winter scenes, animals, flowers); correspondence; print for Juneau Methodist Church cook book, 1967; photos of four paintings, photo of Bea and Claudia with: "2003 Picture Dick Heacock" on verso.

Box 3: Loose drawings, publications, memorabilia

Folder 1

Accession 2008-013:

Drawings, publications, (one matted); memorial program; letter from Department of Health and Welfare regarding publication; Sea Week drawings, *How to be a pioneer*; Business license.

Folder 2

Similar items from Accession 2013-014.

1. Young plant. *Cicuta mackenziana*. Potter Rd., Anchorage. 6, 7, 1951
2. *Angelica Lucida*
3. *Cicuta Douglas II*
4. *Ligusticum Hultenii*
5. *Angelical Genuflexa*
6. *Cicuta Mackenziana*
7. *Angelica Genuflexa*
8. Tayaruk. Goose Grass
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