Inventory for the Records of the Walter B. Lashar Residence / Hearthstone Hall / Bellarmine Hall

Creator: Various
Title: Inventory for the Records of the Walter B. Lashar Estate / Hearthstone Hall / Bellarmine Hall
Dates: 1920s – 2000s
Quantity: 7 storage boxes
Origin: Various
Repository: Fairfield University Archives and Special Collections

Scope and Content Notes

This collection consists of books, documents, photographs, publications, textiles and objects pertaining to the history of the Walter B. Lashar Residence, which was originally named Hearthstone Hall and was renamed Bellarmine Hall when purchased by the Jesuits to start Fairfield University.

Biographical and Historical Notes

Originally the residence of a five-member family, and subsequently the on-campus home of Fairfield University’s Jesuit community, Bellarmine Hall has, since 1981, housed the office of the University President and other administrative departments. The 44-room mansion was designed and built for Mr. and Mrs. Walter B. Lashar in 1921, on the highest point of a 105-acre plot of land that included a commanding view of Long Island Sound. They named the family home Hearthstone Hall, a reflection of its 13 fireplaces. Mr. Lashar was president of the highly profitable American Chain and Cable Company at a time when the United States was experiencing incredible growth and prosperity. Bridges, ships and buildings were all in need of Mr. Lashar’s chains and cables. Mr. and Mrs. Lashar were world travelers and enjoyed choosing exterior and interior finishes based on styles they had observed while touring Europe and Asia. The rooms include a potpourri of decorative styles ranging from Tudor to Adam to chinoiserie. The interior was built off-site in sections by the Haydon Company of Bridgeport, Conn. These were then brought to the hill and reassembled. Architects in Europe were employed as advisors on reproducing many of the decorative features of England’s great manor houses. Oak flooring in the house is, for most part, laid in a French herringbone pattern, and most lighting fixtures and hardware are original to the house. From 1922 to 1929, Hearthstone Hall was the site of many elegant social gatherings. However, Mr. Lashar lost much of his fortune in the stock market crash and, as a result, the house was turned over to the Town of Fairfield. In March 1942, the New England Province of the Society of Jesus bought Hearthstone Hall and its acreage from the Town for $62,000. The Jesuits renamed the mansion, dedicating it as St. Robert Bellarmine Hall in honor of the 16th-century Jesuit theologian who became a cardinal and saint. Some rooms became classrooms for the newly chartered Fairfield College Preparatory School, while the rest of the mansion housed Jesuits. Prep classes ultimately moved to permanent facilities across campus, and the Fairfield Jesuit Community continued using Bellarmine Hall as its residence until 1981.

Inventory for the Records of the Walter B. Lashar Residence / Hearthstone Hall / Bellarmine Hall

rev. 06-15-2016

Page | 2

BOX AND FOLDER/CONTENTS LIST

Box 1
- Contents of Hearthstone Hall – Public Auction Catalogue – Nov. 28\textsuperscript{th} and 29\textsuperscript{th}, 1941 – Plaza Art Galleries, Inc.
- Photographs of Hearthstone Hall – interior and exterior shots (note: includes print photographs and some negatives)
- Xerox copies of Bellarmine Hall documents
- Hearthstone Hall – Lashar Estate – 1920 – 1929: Research by Linda Gustavson (note: includes photocopies and photographs)
- Photos and information – Bellarmine Hall and Lashar Family
- Hearthstone Hall – Documents and Information

Box 2
- Box of Color Glass Slides from 1920s of Japanese Garden at Hearthstone Hall / Bellarmine Hall
- Administration: President - Search Committees- 1972
- Japanese Garden – Folder #1 - original photographs and information
- Japanese Garden – Folder #2 - original photographs and Arthur Shurcliff letters
- Photographs – Bellarmine Hall – 1942
- Bellarmine Hall – Misc.
- Bellarmine Hall – Blueprints and Misc.
- Bellarmine Hall Photos #1
- Bellarmine Hall Photos #2
- Bellarmine Hall Photos #3
- Bellarmine Hall Photos #4
- Bellarmine Hall Photos #5

Box 3
- Hearthstone Hall - Residence of W.B. Lashar, Esq., Fairfield, Conn. : A Descriptive Account of the Decorations and Furniture Showing Their Historical Origin (leather bound book)
- Hearthstone Hall – Interiors – by the Hayden Company (book of b&w photographs of the interiors of the Lashar mansion before it was converted to a Jesuit Residence).

Box 4
- Object: Lashar Estate Key-Ring Holder with Names of Rooms
- Oversized color photographs of Hearthstone Hall furniture, various, in a folder
Box 5
- Textiles: Green dressing gown of Mrs. Amelia Dickey Lewis Lashar (1876 - 1968), wife of Walter B. Lashar, Esq.

Box 6
- Object: 30 inch Bisque Doll, owned as child growing up in Hearthstone Hall by Amelia Lashar Houghton (1918 - 1998), daughter of Amelia Dickey Lewis Lashar (1876 - 1968), and mother of Sandra Houghton Carrillo.

Box 7
- Object: Paper fan autographed with various signatures and doodles of friends, many of them dated in the 1800s, belonging to the Lashars. Please refer to the many photographs we took of this to identify signatures, rather than the object itself which is VERY FRAGILE.