

## Finding Aid for Betty Solway Smith Collection

**Date range:** 1953-1960

**Finding aid created by:** Elizabeth Jones-Minsinger, June 2017

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**Extent:** 0.2 linear feet

**Abstract:** The Betty Solway Smith Collection consists primarily of newspaper clippings and programs related to Delaware theater productions from 1954 to 1960. It also contains materials regarding Ardensingers, the Arden Folk Gild, the Arden Club, the Arden Fair, Ardentown leaseholders, Arden and Solway family news clippings, and Solway family correspondence and cards.

**Accession number:** 2012.020

**Language:** Materials entirely in English

**Acquisition Information:** Gift of Bob Solway, August 2012

**Access Restrictions:** The collection is open for research.

**Conditions Governing Use:** Use of materials from this collection beyond the exceptions provided for in the Fair Use and Educational Use clauses of the U.S. Copyright Law may violate federal law. Permission to publish or reproduce is required from the copyright holder. Please contact Arden Craft Shop Museum, [ardencraftshopmuseum.com](http://ardencraftshopmuseum.com).

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**Cite as:** [item], folder, Betty Solway Smith Collection, Arden Craft Shop Museum

### Biographical Note:

Lisbeth T. "Betty" Solway Smith was born in 1919 and graduated from Wilmington High School. In her early years she was a singing waitress before becoming a tax accountant. Smith acted in New York in off-Broadway productions. She moved to Ardentown, Delaware in 1946 and quickly became involved in the Arden Players Gild, Robin Hood Theatre, and the Wilmington Drama League. In the 1950s she was married to local actor and director Ernie Solway. She also co-owned Solway's Jewelers in

Wilmington, Delaware.

Betty Solway Smith had a lifelong love of theater. She was a founding member of the Arden Shakespeare Guild. In 1998, she created the Young Actors' Workshop to introduce local children to theater. Smith died at her home in Ardentown on December 26, 2011 at the age of 92.

**Scope and Content:**

The Betty Solway Smith Collection consists primarily of newspaper clippings and programs related to Delaware theater productions from 1954 to 1960. It also contains materials regarding Ardensingers, the Arden Folk Guild, the Arden Club, the Arden Fair, Ardentown leaseholders, Arden and Solway family news clippings, and Solway family correspondence and cards.

Betty Solway Smith's extensive involvement in Delaware theater is evident in this collection. Smith collected programs for performances by the Arden Players Guild and for productions at Arden's Robin Hood Theatre and the Delaware Theater Festival, hosted at the University of Delaware. The collection also contains numerous newspaper clippings about the Players Guild, The Robin Hood Theatre, and the Wilmington Drama League from 1954 to 1960. Some notable productions include *Lysistrata* (1954), *Macbeth* (1955), *Twelfth Night* (1956), *Solid Gold Cadillac* (1958), *The Matchmaker* (1959), and *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1960). Smith performed in the majority of productions described in these articles.

This collection also contains clippings about Ardensingers, the Arden Folk Guild, the Arden Club, and the Arden Fair from the same time period. Also included are newspaper clippings about Arden and the Solway family, correspondence to Ernie Solway and Betty Solway Smith, and a letter regarding the assessment of land values in Ardentown for 1957 and 1958.

**Subjects:**

Smith, Betty Solway (1919-2011)  
Theater  
Theaters--Delaware  
Robin Hood Theatre (Arden, Del.)  
Arden Club (Arden, Del.)  
Arden (Del.)  
Ardentown (Del.)

**Separated Materials:**

36 black and white photographs have been removed and housed separately as part of the Betty Solway Smith Collection.

**Container List:**

	<b>Betty Solway Smith Collection</b>
F1	Arden Players Guild, 1954-1960
F2	Robin Hood Theatre, 1954-1955, 1959
F3	Wilmington Drama League, 1955-1956, 1958-1960
F4	University of Delaware Theater, 1958-1960
F5	Miscellaneous theater, 1958-1960
F6	Ardensingers, 1955
F7	Arden Folk Guild and square dancing, 1953, 1958, 1960
F8	Arden Fair, 1955
F9	Arden and Solway family newspaper clippings, 1959 and undated
F10	Correspondence and cards, 1959-1960
F11	Ardentown leaseholders, ca. 1957
F12	Arden Club calendar, 1960