Thomas Paul Sheffield, 1925-2013
Papers, 1953-1977
.2 linear ft.

Acquisition Number: 2015-05

Acquisition: The collection was donated to the Cranbrook Archives by Josephine Sheffield.

Access: Unrestricted access

Copyright: Copyright to this collection is held by the Cranbrook Educational Community.

Preferred Citation: Thomas Paul Sheffield Papers, Cranbrook Archives, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

Photographs: Are contained with the collection.

Processing: The collection was processed by Leslie S. Edwards in June 2016.
History

Thomas Paul Sheffield was born April 7, 1925 in Seattle, Washington. After graduating from high school, Sheffield attended the University of Washington (1942-1945) and at the same time was studying engineering and mathematics in the V-12 Naval College training program. He was commissioned as an ensign in the U.S. Naval Reserve before he was able to finish his degree. When he returned to the U.S., he reentered the university where he studied art under Ed Rossbach, and received his Bachelor of Science in 1948. Rossbach, a Cranbrook Academy of Art graduate, recommended Sheffield to the Academy’s registrar, Wally Mitchell. While Sheffield enrolled in Cranbrook’s department of ceramics under Maija Grotell in 1948 under the G.I. Bill, he changed his major focus to painting with Zoltan Sepeshy, and received his master of Fine Arts in August 1950.

Upon graduation, Sheffield received a position at the University of Nebraska as a ceramics instructor. Over the next thirty-seven years, Sheffield taught ceramics, sculpture, and bronze-casting, eventually becoming a Professor of Art with full tenure. Throughout his career, he continued to produce his own art work in ceramics, painting, and photography, and exhibited at the Denver Art Museum, Joslyn Art Museum, and the Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts among others. He was awarded the purchase prize at the 1951 invitational Cranbrook Alumni Exhibition.

In the 1970s, Sheffield became interested in wind powered electricity and exhibited his models for projected designs at the Sheldon Gallery in Lincoln, Nebraska. Sheffield was married for sixty-seven years to Josephine Marie Gunear, and they had three children. Sheffield passed away on November 30, 2013 in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Scope and Content of Collection

The small collection contains biographical material and correspondence relative to Sheffield’s education, employment, and art exhibitions as well as photographs of some of his ceramics. Also included in the collection is a report he wrote on wind generated electricity.
Box Number--Description

Box 1

1. Biographical, 1953-1966
2. Correspondence, 1942-1966
3. Photographs
4. Wind Generated Electricity, 1975-1977