Reference number: MLMSS 794

Guide to the Papers of Hal Porter

Mitchell Library,
State Library of New South Wales

Sydney
2000

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This finding-aid is published as part of the Australian Literary Manuscript Collections Project, which has received funding from the Australian Research Council's Research Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities (RIEF) Scheme.

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Summary

Creator: Porter, Hal, 1911-1984
Title: Papers of Hal Porter, 1924 - 1975
Date range: 1924-1975
Reference number: MLMSS 794
Extent: 64 vols., 4 boxes, 6 folders, 1 portfolio of Ms., typescript, carbon typescript, duplicated typescript, newscuttings, printed, illustrations
Repository: Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales
Abstract: The collection comprises literary manuscripts, literary papers, correspondence, papers and pictorial material of Hal Porter.

Biographical Note

Hal Porter, author and artist, was born in Melbourne in 1911, and educated mainly at Bairnsdale in Gippsland, Victoria. After leaving school he worked for a short time as a cadet reporter, and then as a schoolmaster. In 1942 fourteen of his short stories were published in a limited edition titled Short stories. After the Second World War Porter had numerous occupations, including cook, actor, director, schoolmaster and librarian. In 1961 he became a full time writer.

Administrative Information

Access
Collection is open to research

Restrictions on Use
Copyright of materials described in this guide is governed by copyright law in Australia.

Preferred Citation

Provenance
Acquired from Hal Porter

Additional Information

Related Material
Guide and index to correspondence compiled in the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, MLMSS 794/1.

Access Terms

Personal Names
• Davis, Beatrice, 1909-1992
• Dobson, Rosemary, 1920-
• Forshaw, Thelma, 1923-
• Lindsay, Norman, 1879-1969
• Lord, Mary, 1929-
• Mudie, Ian, 1911-1976
• Prichard, Katharine Susannah, 1883-1969

Subjects
• Authors, Australian -- 20th century.
• Dramatists, Australian -- 20th century.
• Poets, Australian -- 20th century.
Series List and Descriptions

I. Literary Manuscripts, 1924-1974
(Box MLMSS 794/2)

See also scrapbook, MLMSS 794 Vol. 67, for additional short stories and poems

A. Notebooks, 1924-1963 (Box MLMSS 794/2)

i. Notebooks, 1924-1935 (Box MLMSS 794/2)

Mainly poems by others transcribed by Hal Porter, but including some of his own poems, short stories and notes. Also contains a letter, 1935, from Katharine Susannah Prichard

ii. Notebooks, 1938-1942 (Box MLMSS 794/2)

Mainly short stories. Also includes poems and notes on the foundation of theatre in Australia.

iii. Notebooks, 1950-1963 (Box MLMSS 794/2)

Mainly short stories but including poems, notes, a list of published works and a review of 'Act one. Scene one'

B. Full length prose works, 1962-1973 (Box MLMSS 794/3-21X)

i. The watcher on the cast-iron balcony, 1962

Volume one of Hal Porter 's autobiography

a. Manuscript, n.d. (Folder MLMSS 794/3)

b. Typescript used by publisher (Volume MLMSS 794/4)

ii. Stars of Australian stage and screen, 1963-1965(Box )

a. Manuscript notes, ca.1965 (Box MLMSS 794/5-6, 7X)

b. Letters received, 1964-1964 (Volume MLMSS 794/8)

Being mainly biographies of actors and actresses
c. Typescript copy with manuscript additions, ca.1965 (Volume MLMSS 794/9)

iii. *The paper chase*, ca.1966 (Box)

    Volume two of Hal Porter's autobiography

a. Original manuscript, n.d. (Folder MLMSS 794/10, 11X)
b. Typescript with manuscript additions, n.d. (Volume MLMSS 794/12-13)


    Typescript with ms. corrections (Volume MLMSS 794/14)

    Publisher's typescript, with corrections by Hal Porter


a. Manuscript, including the last chapter which was later abandoned, n.d. (Volume MLMSS 794/15)
b. Carbon typescript, with manuscript corrections, n.d. (Volume MLMSS 794/16)
c. Typescript, with manuscript corrections, n.d. (Volume MLMSS 794/17)

vi. Untitled book about Bairnsdale, 1971 (Volume MLMSS 794/18)

    Not completed. Manuscript and typescript.


    Volume three of Hal Porter's autobiography

a. Manuscript, n.d. (Volume MLMSS 794/19)
b. Typescript, with manuscript corrections, n.d. (Volume MLMSS 794/20)

C. Plays, 1964-1970

i. “I am nothing”, 1964 (Volume MLMSS 794/21X)

a. Manuscript draft, n.d. (Volume MLMSS 794/21X)

    With the first act of an abandoned play and a partial draft of an article on Australian country towns

b. Typescript, with some manuscript sections, n.d. (Volume MLMSS 794/22)
ii. “Toda-San”, 1965 (Volume MLMSS 794/23)
   a. First manuscript draft, n.d. (Volume MLMSS 794/23)
   b. Typescript with manuscript annotations and a sketch of set by Hal Porter, n.d. (Volume MLMSS 794/24)
   d. The professor, previously called “Toda-San”, 1966 (Folder MLMSS 794/26)
   
   Page proofs

iii. Eden house, 1969 (Volume MLMSS 794/27)
   a. First and second manuscript drafts, n.d. (Volume MLMSS 794/27)
   b. Script, n.d. (Volume MLMSS 794/28)
      With annotations, used by St. Martin's Theatre Company Ltd.

iv. “Parker”, 1970 (Folder MLMSS 794/29)
    
    Manuscript draft

D. Short stories, 1949-1973

i. Individual short stories, 1949-1973 (Volume MLMSS 794/30-31)
   a. Short stories, 1961-1973 (Volume MLMSS 794/30-31)
   b. Short stories, 1963-1969 (Box MLMSS 794/32)
   c. Galley proofs, 1949-1973 (Box MLMSS 794/32)
   d. “Boy meets girl”, ca.1964 (Volume MLMSS 794/33X)

ii. Collected short stories, 1965-1970 (Volume MLMSS 794/34)
    
    Corrected stories used as manuscripts for printers
   a. The cats of Venice, 1965 (Volume MLMSS 794/34)
   b. Mr. Butterfry and other tales of new Japan, 1970 (Volume MLMSS 794/35)

E. Poetry, ca.1960-1974
i. Drafts of individual poems, ca.1960-ca.1968 (Volume MLMSS 794/36)

ii. Collected poems, 1968-1974 (Volume MLMSS 794/37)
   a. *Elijah's ravens*, 1968 (Volume MLMSS 794/37)
      Manuscript, typescript and volume ready for printers
   b. *In an Australian country graveyard*, 1974 (Box MLMSS 794/38)
      Corrected typescript, galley proofs and page proofs

F. Articles, reviews and other items, 1963-1974 (Volume MLMSS 794/39)
   See also Vol. 21X.
   Includes a broadcast interview and extracts from works by Hal Porter

II. Papers re publication and production, 1952-1974

A. Letters received, 1962-1974 (Volume MLMSS 794/40-47)
   Mainly letters received from publishers and agents and including letters re literary grants, appearances on radio and television, the *Hobart Mercury* court case and some royalty statements and contracts. Also includes a small number of letters by Hal Porter

   Mainly royalty statements

C. Miscellaneous papers, 1952-1973 (Box MLMSS 794/49, 50X)
   Include contracts, papers re *Hobart Mercury* court case and theatre programmes of plays produced or written by Hal Porter. See also scrapbook, volume 67, for additional theatre programmes featuring Hal Porter.
III. Personal letters received, 1947-1975  
(Volume MLMSS 794/51-66)  

Guide to the papers of Hal Porter, compiled in the Mitchell Library, located at MLMSS 794/1 includes a comprehensive index to correspondents in MLMSS 794.  

Include fan letters, Christmas cards, letters of reference and letters re talks and lectures given by Hal Porter. Correspondents include Beatrice Davis, Rosemary Dobson, Thelma Forshaw, Barc Jamieson, Ian Mudie, Katharine Susannah Prichard and other writers and literary figures. Also includes a small number of letters by Hal Porter.  

IV. Miscellaneous, 1926-1973  

A. Scrapbook, 1926-1963 (Volume MLMSS 794/67)  

See also Literary Manuscripts for short stories and poems.  

Includes theatre programmes of productions featuring Hal Porter, newspaper cuttings, short stories and poems by Hal Porter, publishers' catalogues, reviews, photographs and letters received, including two from Norman Lindsay.  

B. Papers concerning overseas trips, 1949-1972 (Volume MLMSS 794/68-69)  

Includes airline tickets, passport, hotel bills, tickets to places of interest and tourist brochures  

C. Sketchbook, n.d. (Box MLMSS 794/69)  

Containing sketches by Hal Porter. Also includes a statement by him on the protest at the banning of Mary McCarthy's novel The group  

D. “The short stories of Hal Porter”, 1968 (Box MLMSS 794/69)  

Thesis by Mary Lord, nee Salas  

E. Other papers, 1963-1973 (Box MLMSS 794/69-70)  

Including biographical details
V. Newscuttings, 1945-1974
(Box MLMSS 794/71-72)

A. Writings by Hal Porter, 1945-1974 (Box MLMSS 794/71-72)
   Includes articles, short stories and reviews

B. Reviews of Hal Porter's works, 1956-1973 (Volume MLMSS 794/73-74)

C. Cuttings concerning Hal Porter, 1950-1973 (Volume MLMSS 794/75)

VI. Pictorial Material, n.d.
(Folder Pic.Acc. 132; Pic.Acc.888)