

The Seal Yearbook Collection, 1911-2017

Collection number: TCNJ007

Collection title: *The Seal Yearbook Collection*

Dates: 1911-2017

Creator/Collector: The College of New Jersey

Extent: 15.5 linear feet (4 boxes and 163 loose volumes)

Repository: Archives and Special Collections, R. Barbara Gitenstein Library, The College of New Jersey, PO Box 7718, Ewing, NJ 08628-0718

Abstract: *The Seal Yearbook Collection* contains a complete run of The College of New Jersey's yearbook from the first year of publication in 1911 to its last in 2017.

Language(s): English

Accession number/s: 2020.01; 2024.08; 2003.03

Acquisition information: The bulk of the yearbooks came from interdepartmental transfers and intentional collection by librarians. Several copies have been donated by individuals including: a 1912 yearbook, which was a gift of Margaret Boehly, Class of 1951, in November 2000; 1923 yearbook, which belonged to Levora "Lee" Rodda that was a gift of Butler Museum in 2003; 1938 yearbook, which was a gift of Rosemary Colleluori in 2005; 1977 yearbook, which was a gift of Debbie Gardner, Class of 1978, in 1977; and 1941, 1945, 1948, 1949, 1958, 1960, 1961, 1964, 1967, 1970, 1971, 1972, and 1973 yearbooks were a gift of Trenton Free Public Library in 2024.

A few may have been donated by their original owners (based on inscriptions in the books), but specific donation details are unknown, including: Anna T. Burr's 1920 yearbook; John S. Neary's 1923, 1924, and 1926 yearbooks; Micheal A. Traver's 1929, 1930, 1931, and 1932 yearbooks; Vivian Rolandelli's 1930 yearbook; Conrad Johnson's 1933 and 1936 yearbooks; Kenneth Weber's 1938 and 1940 yearbooks; Marilyn Grinwis's 1945 yearbook; and Jessie R. Turk's 1951, 1952, and 1969 yearbooks. Additional yearbooks have bookplates from former Trenton State College President Roscoe West.

Accruals: No additional accruals of new yearbooks are anticipated unless publication begins again.

Processing information: This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services IMLS grant number ST-252518-OMS-22. Processed by Kerin Shellenbarger, Project Archivist, May 2024.

Condition/conservation notes: The earliest years are softbound and a few have missing or detached covers. Several later yearbooks have been rebound in buckram (formerly circulating copies in the library). A few have individual pictures cut out, but there are other complete copies for the same year. Otherwise, overall condition for the collection is good with a few page tears, foxing, and wear from use. Many are heavily annotated in ink, but most inscriptions do not appear to have faded much at this point.

Access restrictions: This collection is open for research.

Physical access restrictions: The items in this collection may be used by patrons who abide by the Archives and Special Collections Use Policy of the R. Barbara Gitenstein Library at TCNJ.

Technical access restrictions: Yearbooks for the years 1911 through 1930 have been digitized and are available for viewing in the library on a provided computer, or on <https://atom.tcnj.edu/index.php/The-Seal-Yearbook-Collection>

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Preferred citation: TCNJ007 *The Seal* Yearbooks Collection, The College of New Jersey, R. Barbara Gitenstein Library: Archives and Special Collections.

Related collections: The digital facsimile of *The Seal* for 1911 was created from the TCNJ006 Mildred Duncan Warnecke Collection.

Separated material: None.

Published descriptions: <https://atom.tcnj.edu/index.php/The-Seal-Yearbook-Collection>
Library catalog:
https://tcnj.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01COLLNJ_INST/921vpg/alma994118623405191

Location of originals: Room 410, Archives and Special Collections, Gitenstein Library, TCNJ. Additional copies of yearbooks are made public on the third floor of the Library.

Publication note: Yearbooks from 1929, 1930, 1940, 1941, 1944, 1950, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1970, 1971, and 1980 are scanned (and behind paywall) on ancestry.com collection: "U.S., School Yearbooks, 1900-2016."

Biographical or Organizational History:

The College of New Jersey's academic tradition reaches back to 1855 when it was established by the state legislature as the New Jersey State Normal School. It was the first state-established teacher training school in the state and the ninth in the nation. Governor Rodman Price promoted the idea of a training institute for New Jersey's teachers and mobilized support among influential state leaders. Located on Clinton Avenue in Trenton from 1855 until the early 1930s, the Normal School flourished in the latter 1800s, expanding both its academic offerings and physical facilities.

The Model School was founded within the Normal School shortly after opening to serve as a teacher training laboratory for primary, secondary, grammar, and high school students. Additional affiliated teacher training and specialty schools operated outside of Trenton such as The Farnum Preparatory School of New Jersey (1856-1912) and Rural School Observation Centers at Hart's Corner, Harbourton, and Plainsboro (1917-1930). A variety of partnerships were established with schools around the state for teacher training. The Model School closed in 1917 and was replaced by the Training School, which served grades 1-6 and was tuition-free. Once the Normal School planned to move to the Hillwood Lakes campus, the Training School closed. In 1931, the Normal School entered into an agreement with Ewing Township to use the Lanning School for teacher training. This arrangement lasted until the late 1950s.

In 1925, the first four-year baccalaureate degree program was established. This change marked the beginning of TCNJ's transition from a normal school to a teachers' college and was accompanied by a change in physical surroundings. In 1928, a 210-acre tract of land in Ewing Township, then known as Hillwood Lakes, was purchased as a new site for the College. Graduate study was instituted at the College in 1947, and accreditation from various national associations was forthcoming in the 1950s. The enactment of the Higher Education Act of 1966 paved the way for then Trenton State College to become a multipurpose institution by expanding its degree programs into a variety of fields other than education. By 1972, 70% of entering students selected non-teaching majors..

The College of New Jersey emphasizes the undergraduate experience. A strong liberal arts core forms the foundation for a wealth of degree programs offered through TCNJ's seven schools — Arts and Communication; Business; Humanities & Social Sciences; Education; Science; Nursing, Health, and Exercise Science; and Engineering.

In addition, the college experienced five name changes over its history:

- 1855 New Jersey State Normal School
- 1908 New Jersey State Normal School at Trenton
- 1929 New Jersey State Teachers College and State Normal School at Trenton
- 1937 New Jersey State Teachers College at Trenton
- 1958 Trenton State College
- 1996 The College of New Jersey

The Class of 1911 formed a yearbook club in January 1911, and their inaugural issue of *The Seal* was published in time to hand out to students at the June 1911 Commencement ceremony. The foreword stated the mission “This, the year of nineteen hundred and eleven, marks the debut of *The Seal*. Its originators hope for its perpetuation through the loyalty of their successors. May it prove, indeed, a seal by the memories which it preserves, binding not only the members of this class, but of each succeeding one into fonder relationships.”

The Seal continued annually, growing in content and size until the 2010s when the popularity of the yearbook declined due in part to the rise in social media, the cost of the book (nearly \$100), and the increased student population. 2017 was its last year of publication. An article published in *The Signal* on February 7, 2018, announced: “...due to low demand and lack of incoming leadership, the College’s Yearbook Club, *The Seal*, is no longer an active organization on campus.”

Information about graduating seniors since 2017 might be found in graduation programs in the TCNJ005 Commencement Collection, or *The Signal* newspaper.

Several of the yearbooks formerly belonged to, and might have been heavily inscribed to, the following:

John S. Neary (1863-1935) was appointed to the New Jersey State Normal School in 1898 as “steward,” later business manager, where he worked for over 32 years retiring in 1930. He also founded the Camera Club (also known as the Normal Photographic Arts Club) for students in 1919. Some of his photographs appear in *The Signal*.

Anna T. Burr (1900-2007) graduated from New Jersey State Normal School in Trenton in 1920, and went on to receive bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Rutgers University. She was a teacher and principal at Bordentown Public Schools for over 40 years.

Levora “Lee” Rodda Easterbrook (1903-1995) graduated from New Jersey State Normal School in Trenton in 1923. She taught grammar school in her hometown of Butler for four years until she married Neil Easterbrook, principal, and later superintendent of Butler Schools in 1927.

Michael A. Travers (1902-1970) received a law degree from New York University, then obtained Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate of Education degrees from Rutgers University. In 1928, he became the first Dean of Men at New Jersey State Normal School in Trenton. He also taught Business Education (as well as served as chairman of that department) for 40 years, retiring in 1968. In addition, he served as Hopewell Township Municipal Judge and taught courses at Rutgers and Temple Universities.

Vivian M. Rolandelli (1911-2003) graduated from New Jersey State Teachers College and State Normal School at Trenton in 1930, and was a teacher for 47 years at Elementary School No. 1 in West New York, New Jersey.

Conrad J. Johnson (1912-2009) entered New Jersey State Teachers College and State Normal School at Trenton in 1931 as a music major, but changed to industrial arts, graduating in 1936. His first teaching position was in Toms River where he taught until the early 1940s. In 1942, he joined the faculty at his alma mater where he was an instructor in the Industrial Arts Department for 40 years at Trenton State College until his retirement in 1982.

Victor Galassi (1917-2004) attended New Jersey State Teachers College at Trenton from 1935-1938 where he was the Varsity Sports Manager and participated in other school activities. He attended Rutgers in 1939, then entered the military. After WWII, he joined the New Jersey State Police where he retired with the rank of major.

Kenneth H. Weber (1919-2009) graduated from New Jersey State Teachers College at Trenton in 1941. His first teaching position was in Phillipsburg. He later served in the Army Air Force during WWII. He taught Industrial Arts at Bernards High School in Bernardsville for many years.

Jessie R. Turk (1920-2009) graduated from Montclair State Teachers College in 1942, then obtained a master's degree from Oberlin College and doctorate from Columbia. She was a Professor of Geography at Trenton State from 1947 to 1982. An oral history interview with her in 1991 is available to view at <https://www.njvid.net/show.php?pid=njcore:17492>

Scope and Content notes:

Content warning: Some of the yearbooks from 1911 through the 1930s contain racist illustrations of figures in blackface and minstrel characters, as well as inaccurate, derogatory, and/or offensive depictions of Asian and Indigenous people.

The first issue of *The Seal* was focused on the history and activities of the Class of 1911 and included sections on "Class Prophecies," "Statistics" of each student, a calendar of the year's past events, poems, ditties and songs, vignettes of events in each department and hall (dorm) life, listings of the literary societies as well as social clubs (such as "The Red Mice" and "The Clammy Six"), a group portrait of the class and some of the societies and clubs, and advertising from Trenton businesses. The seniors were listed in a directory and did not have individual portraits. The next yearbook, 1912, had a similar format, but also included a list of faculty members, as well as photographs of the campus buildings. Starting in 1915, there were individual portraits of graduating seniors (1913 had individual portraits as well, but not 1914). The format remained fairly consistent afterward, however a few issues from the 1920s also have the Juniors, or class of February of the next year listed in the book with the previous May graduates. The Yearbook Club had several name variations, including: Year-Book Club, Year Book Club, or just "Yearbook" or "Seal."

The collection is complete from 1911 until *The Seal* ceased publication in 2017. No issue was printed in 1944 due to World War II restrictions.

In addition, there are a few folders of ephemera, correspondence, photographs, obituaries, and other clippings taken from books formerly belonging to Vivian Rolandelli, Kenneth Weber, and Jessie Turk.

Organization and arrangement:

The yearbooks are arranged in chronological order, with the earliest ones housed in document boxes due to more fragile softcover bindings. The later years with hardback covers are shelved. Folders of ephemera removed from some of the books are in Boxes 2 and 4.

Subject headings:

Personal Names:

Burr, Anna T., 1900-2007
Easterbrook, Levora Rodda, 1903-1995
Galassi, Victor, 1917-2004
Johnson, Conrad, 1912-2009
Neary, John S., 1863-1935
Rolandelli, Vivian M., 1911-2003
Travers, Michael A., 1902-1970
Turk, Jessie Rose, 1920-2009
Weber, Kenneth H., 1919-2009

Corporate Names:

New Jersey State Normal School (Trenton, N.J.)
State Teachers College and State Normal School at Trenton (N.J.)
Trenton State College
College of New Jersey (Ewing, N.J.)
Seal

Genres:

School yearbooks

Locations/places:

Trenton (N.J.)
Ewing (N.J.)

Other Subjects:

College students
State universities and colleges
Teachers colleges

Container list:

Box 1	Folder 1	<i>The Seal</i>	1911
Box 1	Folder 2	<i>The Seal</i>	1911
Box 1	Folder 3	<i>The Seal</i>	1912
Box 1	Folder 4	<i>The Seal</i>	1912
Box 1	Folder 5	<i>The Seal</i>	1913
Box 1	Folder 6	<i>The Seal</i>	1914
Box 1	Folder 7	<i>The Seal</i>	1915
Box 1	Folder 8	<i>The Seal</i>	1916
Box 1	Folder 9	<i>The Seal</i>	1917

Box 2	Folder 1	<i>The Seal</i>	1918
Box 2	Folder 2	<i>The Seal</i>	1919
Box 2	Folder 3	<i>The Seal</i>	1919
Box 2	Folder 4	<i>The Seal</i>	1919
Box 2	Folder 5	<i>The Seal</i>	1919
Box 2	Folder 6	Items removed from 1919 yearbook	1918-1919
Box 2	Folder 7	<i>The Seal</i>	1920
Box 2	Folder 8	<i>The Seal</i> (Anna T. Burr's)	1920
Box 2	Folder 9	<i>The Seal</i>	1920
Box 3	Folder 1	<i>The Seal</i>	1921
Box 3	Folder 2	<i>The Seal</i>	1922
Box 3	Folder 3	<i>The Seal</i>	1922
Box 3	Folder 4	<i>The Seal</i> (Levora Rodda's)	1923
Box 3	Folder 5	<i>The Seal</i> (John S. Neary's)	1923
Box 3	Folder 6	<i>The Seal</i> (John S. Neary's)	1924
Box 3	Folder 7	<i>The Seal</i>	1925
Box 3	Folder 8	<i>The Seal</i> (John S. Neary's)	1926
Box 4	Folder 1	<i>The Seal</i>	1927
Box 4	Folder 2	<i>The Seal</i>	1928
Box 4	Folder 3	<i>The Seal</i> (Michael A. Travers')	1929
Box 4	Folder 4	<i>The Seal</i> (Michael A. Travers')	1930
Box 4	Folder 5	<i>The Seal</i> (Vivian Rolandelli's)	1930
Box 4	Folder 6	Items removed from Vivian Rolandelli's yearbook	1928-1980
Box 4	Folder 7	Items removed from Kenneth Weber's yearbooks 1938 & 1940	1937-1939
Box 4	Folder 8	Items removed from Jessie R. Turk's yearbooks 1951, 1952, 1969	1952-2008
Box 4	Folder 9	Items removed from yearbooks	1966-1970
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (Michael A. Travers')	1931
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (Michael A. Travers')	1932
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (Conrad J. Johnson's)	1933
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i>	1933

Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i>	1934
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i>	1935
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i>	1936
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (Conrad J. Johnson's)	1936
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i>	1937
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i>	1938
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (Kenneth Weber's)	1938
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (Victor Galassi's)	1938
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (2 copies)	1939
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i>	1940
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (Kenneth Weber's)	1940
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (3 copies)	1941
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (2 copies)	1942
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i>	1943
		[<i>The Seal</i> from 1944 was not printed due to WWII]	
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (4 copies)	1945
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (3 copies)	1946
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i>	1947
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (3 copies)	1948
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (2 copies)	1949
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (3 copies)	1950
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i>	1951
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (Jessie Turk's)	1951
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i>	1952
Shelf 1		<i>The Seal</i> (Jessie Turk's)	1952
Shelf 2		<i>The Seal</i> (2 copies)	1953
Shelf 2		<i>The Seal</i> (2 copies)	1954
Shelf 2		<i>The Seal</i> (2 copies)	1955
Shelf 2		<i>The Seal</i> (2 copies)	1956
Shelf 2		<i>The Seal</i>	1957
Shelf 2		<i>The Seal</i> (2 copies)	1958
Shelf 2		<i>The Seal</i> (2 copies)	1959

Shelf 2		<i>The Seal (3 copies)</i>	1960
Shelf 2		<i>The Seal (2 copies)</i>	1961
Shelf 2		<i>The Seal (3 copies)</i>	1962
Shelf 2		<i>The Seal (3 copies)</i>	1963
Shelf 2		<i>The Seal (4 copies)</i>	1964
Shelf 2		<i>The Seal (3 copies)</i>	1965
Shelf 2		<i>The Seal (3 copies)</i>	1966
Shelf 3		<i>The Seal (3 copies)</i>	1967
Shelf 3		<i>The Seal (2 copies)</i>	1968
Shelf 3		<i>The Seal (2 copies)</i>	1969
Shelf 3		<i>The Seal Supplement</i>	1969
Shelf 3		<i>The Seal (4 copies)</i>	1970
Shelf 3		<i>The Seal (3 copies)</i>	1971
Shelf 3		<i>The Seal (3 copies)</i>	1972
Shelf 3		<i>The Seal (2 copies)</i>	1973
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Shelf 4		<i>The Seal (2 copies)</i>	2015
Shelf 4		<i>The Seal (2 copies)</i>	2016
Shelf 4		<i>The Seal (2 copies)</i>	2017