

# **Lou Gordon collection**

**AFC 2010/031**

**Guides to the Collections in the Archive of Folk Culture**



**American Folklife Center, Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C.  
August 2016**

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/folklife.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2016655265>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/eadafc.af016006>

Prepared by Marcia K. Segal

Finding aid encoded by Marcia K. Segal, August 2016

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Lou Gordon collection

**Inclusive Dates:** 1953-2006

**Bulk Dates:** 1953-1960

**Call No.:** AFC 2010/031

**Creator:** Gordon, Lou, 1915-2006

**Extent:** 1 box plus 1 oversized folder

**Extent:** manuscripts: 31 folders

**Language:** In English.

**Location:** Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/2016655265>

**Summary:** Manuscript materials, including programs, newspaper clippings, handbills, programs, small posters, and black-and-white photographs, documenting Swapping Song Fair, a folk music production company and concert series founded in New York City in 1955 by Lou Gordon and Paddy Clancy, which produced a Musical Tribute to Woody Guthrie in 1956, and Folk Song '59. The collection documents musical and other events in the folk music revival in New York City during the 1950s.

## Acquisition

Anne Gordon; 2010.

## Processing History

The collection was processed by Marcia K. Segal.

## Copyright Status

Duplication of collection materials may be governed by copyright and other restrictions.

## Access and Restrictions

Collection is open for research. To request materials, please contact the Folklife Reading Room at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/folklife.contact>

## Preferred Citation

Lou Gordon collection (AFC 2010/031), Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Notes

Louis H. Gordon was a union organizer, harmonica player, and folk music producer. He and Patrick (Paddy) Clancy formed Swapping Song Fair in 1955, a folk music production company that staged concerts in New York City Town Hall and Carnegie Hall and other venues. He served as a sergeant with the Combat Engineers in the 7th Army in Europe during World War II. He was a trustee of the Woody Guthrie Children's Trust Fund; was born in 1915 in Brooklyn, New York; married to Anne Gordon; and died March 25, 2006 at his home in Millbrook, New York.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

### People

Gordon, Lou, 1915-2006  
Guthrie, Woody, 1912-1967.  
Pickow, George

### Organizations

Swapping Song Fair.

### Subjects

Concerts--1950-1960.  
Concerts--New York (State)--New York.  
Folk music--United States--History and criticism.  
Folk musicians--New York (State)--New York--Social life and customs.  
Musicians--1950-1960.  
Popular music--United States--1951-1960--History and criticism.

### Places

New York (N.Y.)--Social life and customs.

### Titles

*Swapping Song Fair collection*

### Form/Genre

Clippings.  
Manuscripts.  
Photographs.

## Scope and Content

Manuscript materials, including programs, newspaper clippings, handbills, programs, small posters, and black-and-white photographs, documenting Swapping Song Fair, a folk music production company and concert series founded in New York City in 1955 by Lou Gordon and Paddy Clancy, which produced "A Musical Tribute to Woody Guthrie" in 1956, and Folk Song '59. The collection documents musical and other events in the folk music revival in New York City during the 1950s.

## Description of Series

Container

Series

Series I: Manuscripts

Subseries A: Background information

Subseries B: Swapping Song Fair

Subseries C: Woody Guthrie

The March 17, 1966, tribute was presented by Swapping Song Fair.

Subseries D: Folk Song '59

Subseries E: Oversized materials

Series II: Photographs

# Container List

Container	Contents
<b>Series I: Manuscripts</b>	
<b>Subseries A: Background information</b>	
BOX-FOLDER 1/1	"A brief history of Swapping Song Fair" 2 pages An overview, written by Anne Gordon.
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	Lou Gordon's obituary, March 29, 2006 1 page A photocopied obituary from the <i>Times Herald-Record</i> .
<b>Subseries B: Swapping Song Fair</b>	
BOX-FOLDER 1/3	"The wise have not spoken" (program) circa 1953
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Letter from Cynthia Gooding Ozbekkan to Lou Gordon (photocopy), April 26, 1954 Ozbekkan expresses disappointment that Guy Carawan will performing at a Swapping Song Fair concert.
BOX-FOLDER 1/5	Swapping Song Fair: Folk Songs of Israel, circa mid-1950s Handbill for the concert, featuring Theodore Bikel and Cynthia Gooding. 2 copies.
BOX-FOLDER 1/6	Cancelled cheques, 1954-1955 Cheques written to various people and organizations from the account of Swapping Song Fair, and signed by Lou Gordon. Drawn on two banks: the Corn Exchange Bank Trust Company, the First National City Bank of New York, and (later) the National City Bank of New York. Recipients include Jean Ritchie, George Pickow, Oscar Brand, Frank Warner, Trio Productions, Jack Elliott (Ramblin' Jack Elliott), Brownie McGhee, Guy Carawan, Jo Mapes, and others. The cheques have been endorsed by the recipients (or possibly their representatives).
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	Artists and dates, 1956 A two-page list of artists and (presumably) the dates scheduled to perform at Swapping Song Fair.
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	Swapping Song Fair: concert program, November 2, 1956 The program also has a copy of the mailed concert announcement. 2 copies of the program and the announcement (total of four items).
BOX-FOLDER 1/10	Swapping Song Fair: handbills, 1956-1957; undated Handbills for various Swapping Song Fair concerts.
BOX-FOLDER 1/11	Calendar of events (newspaper clippings), circa 1954-1955 Newspaper clippings of event calendar listings that included Swapping Song Fair concerts; most of the items are very small, (about 1 in. x 1/2 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/12	Publicity and reviews Small articles in various newspapers announcing upcoming Swapping Song Fair concerts or reviewed events that had taken place.
BOX-FOLDER 1/13	Swapping Song Fair: flyer for May events The flyer notes the events have moved from Circle in the Square back to Cherry Lane Theatre.

## Series I: Manuscripts

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 1/14	Drawing of a woman, circa April 13, 1957 Pencil drawing by an unidentified artist, on the back of an announcement of a Swapping Song Fair concert featuring Martha Schlamme, held on April 13, 1957.
<b>Subseries C: Woody Guthrie</b>	
	The March 17, 1966, tribute was presented by Swapping Song Fair.
BOX-FOLDER 1/15	A Musical Tribute to Woody Guthrie: Bound for Glory - handbills, 1956 Three copies of the handbill, plus a note from Anne Gordon regarding the concert location.
BOX-FOLDER 1/16	A Musical Tribute to Woody Guthrie: Bound for Glory - ticket, March 17, 1956 An orchestra-seat ticket for the event.
BOX-FOLDER 1/17	A Musical Tribute to Woody Guthrie: Bound for Glory - program and script, March 17, 1956 An original program and a photocopy of the script.
BOX-FOLDER 1/18	Memo from Harold Leventhal, April 8, 1966 Unsigned memo to Toshi and Pete Seeger, and Lou Gordon, regarding the Conservation Service Award awarded to Woody Guthrie and presented to his family. Typed on the letterhead of the Guthrie Children's Trust Fund, the memo is accompanied by several sheets of the trust fund's letterhead.
BOX-FOLDER 1/19	"The Saga of Woody Guthrie", May 1, 1966 Section 2 of the Sunday News (New York), with a cover story about Guthrie.
BOX-FOLDER 1/20	<i>Woody Guthrie Newsletter</i> (special issue), June 1966 The Conservation Award given to Guthrie is the focus of the cover story.
BOX-FOLDER 1/21	Woody Guthrie memorial concert: script, circa January 1968 A script for the January 18 rehearsal, before the January 20 concert, with a cover letter to all participants from Millard Lampell.
BOX-FOLDER 1/22	<i>Bravo</i> magazine (vol. VII, no. 5CH), 1968 The feature article in the Carnegie Hall magazine is "A Musical Tribute to Woody Guthrie."
BOX-FOLDER 1/23	Drawings of Woody Guthrie Two copies of undated drawings by an unidentified artist.
<b>Subseries D: Folk Song '59</b>	
BOX-FOLDER 1/25	Folk Song '59: invoice, March 31, 1959 Folk Song '59: Carnegie Hall program, April 3, 1959 Two copies.
BOX-FOLDER 1/26	Folk Song '59: tickets, April 3, 1959 Four tickets for the second-tier box
BOX-FOLDER 1/27	Folk Song '59: signed receipts, April 3, 1959 Three receipts for payment for their performance at the concert: Muddy Waters (McKinley Morganfield), Mike Seeger, and Memphis Slim.
BOX-FOLDER 1/28	Telegram from Logan English to Alan Lomax and Lou Gordon, April 3, 1959 Logan English sends congratulations on the evening of the Folk Song '59 concert.
BOX-FOLDER 1/29	Folk Song '59: announcement of the commercial recording, April 4, 1959 A clipping from Cash Box, announcing an upcoming commercial release by United Artists of the concert.

### Subseries E: Oversized materials

## Series I: Manuscripts

### Container

### Contents

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- FOLDER 1/31** A Musical Tribute to Woody Guthrie: Bound for Glory, March 17, 1956
- FOLDER 1/31** Swapping Song Fair: poster, May 12, 1956  
16 3/4 in. x 10 3/4 in. or smaller
- FOLDER 1/31** Folksong '59 [sic], April 3, 1959  
13 1/2 in. x 9 in. or smaller

## Series II: Photographs

- BOX-FOLDER 1/30** AFC 2010/031: PH01, March 17, 1956  
Woody Guthrie takes a bow. "Bound for Glory" tribute concert to honor Woody Guthrie, held at the Pythian Temple, New York.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/30** AFC 2010/031: PH02, March 17, 1956  
5 in. x 7 in.  
Woody Guthrie standing and possibly speaking; Nora Guthrie seated at far left. "Bound for Glory" tribute concert to honor Woody Guthrie, held at the Pythian Temple, New York.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/30** AFC 2010/031: PH03, 1954  
6 1/2 in. x 9 1/2 in.  
Left to right: Tom Clancy, Lou Gordon, Pat Clancy, Robin Roberts, and Phil Raiguel. Photographed by George Pickow. In performance at Cherry Lane Theatre, New York. PH03 and PH04 are the same image, with more or less the same details (due to how the images were printed).
- BOX-FOLDER 1/30** AFC 2010/031: PH04, 1954  
6 1/2 in. x 9 1/2 in. or smaller  
See description for PH03.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/30** AFC 2010/031: PH05, 1954 or 1955  
7 1/2 in. x 8 1/2 in.  
Seated, left to right: Tom Clancy, Jean Ritchie, and Oscar Brand. Standing: Pat Clancy. In performance during a Swapping Song Fair concert. Photographed by George Pickow. Cherry Lane Theatre, New York.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/30** AFC 2010/031: PH06, 1954  
7 1/2 in. x 10 in.  
Left to right: unidentified bagpiper and Robin Roberts. In performance during a Swapping Song Fair concert, Cherry Lane Theatre, New York.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/30** AFC 2010/031: PH07, 1954 or 1955  
7 1/2 in. x 8 1/2 in.  
Oscar Brand and Jean Ritchie. In performance during a Swapping Song Fair concert. Photographed by George Pickow. Cherry Lane Theatre, New York.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/30** AFC 2010/031: PH08, 1954 or 1955  
7 1/2 in. x 8 1/2 in.  
Left to right: Lou Gordon, Oscar Brand, and Jean Ritchie. In performance during a Swapping Song Fair concert. Photographed by George Pickow. Cherry Lane Theatre, New York.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/30** AFC 2010/031: PH09, March 17, 1956  
7 1/2 in. x 8 1/2 in.  
Left to right: Pat Clancy, Oscar Brand, Jean Ritchie, and Tom Clancy. In performance during a Swapping Song Fair concert. Photographed by George Pickow. Cherry Lane Theatre, New York.
- BOX-FOLDER 1/30** AFC 2010/031: PH10, March 17, 1956  
5 in. x 5 in.

## Series II: Photographs

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Lee Hays and Earl Robinson. At the "Bound for Glory" tribute concert to honor Woody Guthrie, held at the Pythian Temple, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH11, March 17, 1956 5 in. x 8 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Left to right: Lee Hays, Earl Robinson, Pete Seeger, and Robin Roberts. At the "Bound for Glory" tribute concert to honor Woody Guthrie, held at the Pythian Temple, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH12, March 17, 1956 5 in. x 7 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Foreground: Pete Seeger. Background, left to right: Earl Robinson, Robin Roberts (obscured), and Jimmy Gavin. At the "Bound for Glory" tribute concert to honor Woody Guthrie, held at the Pythian Temple, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH13, March 17, 1956 5 in. x 7 1/2 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Left to right: Ed McCurdy, the Kossoy Sisters (partially obscured), Pete Seeger, Robin Roberts, and Erik Darling (?). At the "Bound for Glory" tribute concert to honor Woody Guthrie, held at the Pythian Temple, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH14, March 17, 1956 5 in. x 5 1/2 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Left to right: Ed McCurdy, the Kossoy Sisters (partially obscured), Pete Seeger (obscured), Robin Roberts, Rev. Gary Davis, Earl Robinson, and Erik Darling (?). At the "Bound for Glory" tribute concert to honor Woody Guthrie, held at the Pythian Temple, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH15, March 17, 1956 5 in. x 7 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Rev. Gary Davis. At the "Bound for Glory" tribute concert to honor Woody Guthrie, held at the Pythian Temple, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH16, March 17, 1956 5 in. x 7 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Left to right: Rev. Gary Davis, Earl Robinson, and Erik Darling (?). At the "Bound for Glory" tribute concert to honor Woody Guthrie, held at the Pythian Temple, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH17, March 17, 1956 5 in. x 7 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Foreground: Ed McCurdy. Lee Hays may be in the background. At the "Bound for Glory" tribute concert to honor Woody Guthrie, held at the Pythian Temple, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH18, March 17, 1956 5 in. x 7 1/2 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Left to right: Nora Guthrie, Toshi Seeger, Arlo Guthrie, Woody Guthrie, and Marjorie Guthrie (?). At the "Bound for Glory" tribute concert to honor Woody Guthrie, held at the Pythian Temple, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH19, March 17, 1956 5 in. x 7 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Seated: Pete Seeger. Standing: the Kossoy Sisters. At the "Bound for Glory" tribute concert to honor Woody Guthrie, held at the Pythian Temple, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH20, April 3, 1959 4 in. x 6 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Folk Song '59, held at Carnegie Hall, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH21, April 3, 1959 4 in. x 6 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Folk Song '59, held at Carnegie Hall, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH22, April 3, 1959 4 in. x 6 in.



## Series II: Photographs

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Folk Song '59, held at Carnegie Hall, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH23, April 3, 1959 4 in. x 6 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Folk Song '59, held at Carnegie Hall, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH24, April 3, 1959 4 in. x 6 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Folk Song '59, held at Carnegie Hall, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH25, April 3, 1959 4 in. x 6 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Folk Song '59, held at Carnegie Hall, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH26, April 3, 1959 4 in. x 6 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Folk Song '59, held at Carnegie Hall, New York. AFC 2010/031: PH27, circa 1950s 8 in. x 10 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Publicity photo of Robin Roberts. AFC 2010/031: PH28, circa 1950s 8 in. x 10 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Publicity photo of Jean Ritchie. AFC 2010/031: PH29, 1960 8 in. x 10 in.
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Cisco Houston, in performance. AFC 2010/031: PH30, 1954 8 in. x 10 in. (the sheet); 3 in. x 3 in. (each image) Swapping Song Fair. Images include Oscar Brand, Frank Warner, Pat Clancy, Phil Raguel, and Robin Roberts. Photographed by George Pickow. Black-and-white contact sheet with 11 frames; possibly shot with 120mm film.