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Leslie F. Ayres Architectural Drawings 1926-1945 DADA 052

Title: Leslie F. Ayres Architectural Drawings

Creator: Leslie F. Ayres

Inclusive Dates: 1926-1945

Extent: 1.3 cubic feet

Containers: 1 OVA box, 1 OVB box, framed painting

Language of Materials: Materials entirely in English.

Preferred Citation:

Leslie F. Ayres Architectural Drawings, Drawings and Documents Archive, Archives and Special Collections, Ball State University Libraries

Biographical Note:

Leslie F. Ayres (1906-1952) was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, to Frank and Bertha Wolf Ayres. His father was a machinist and die maker. Leslie and his younger brother, Robert, went to high school at Arsenal Technical High School. It is there he learned to draw and desired to become an architect.

His career began when he met Edward Pierre at his relatively new firm, Pierre & Wright, in Indianapolis. Pierre, who was a young architect at the time and would become Ayres' mentor and friend, quickly realized his talent for rendering and gave him a job before he graduated from high school. Ayres worked for Pierre & Wright until he was awarded the prestigious Princeton Prize in Architecture in 1926. The award allowed for a year of free tuition at Princeton University, and Ayres jumped at the opportunity. While there, however, his performance was somewhat lackluster. Professors lauded on his seemingly natural ability to draw but complained about his lack of focus on assignments. Despite his difficulties at Princeton, he earned the Certificate of Proficiency in 1927 and returned to Indianapolis to work as an architect and renderer.

Ayres continued to receive rendering commissions from his former employers, Pierre & Wright,

as well as from other prominent firms such as Rubush & Hunter, A. M. Strauss, and Robert Frost Daggett. His beautiful and atmospheric renderings, which were often made in watercolor and colored pencil, lent an air of sophistication to any project and were used to sell the client on the architect's design. He was so successful that in 1948 the magazine *National Architect* described him as "just about the only professional renderer in Indiana."

During this time he also built his architectural practice by designing residences, apartments, commercial buildings, and chapels in his distinctive Art Moderne and Art Deco styles. Buildings such as the Federal Economic Recovery Act Building (1934) at the Indiana State Fairgrounds and the Wilkinson House (1936) in Muncie, Indiana, exemplify his modern and glamorous contributions to Indiana architecture. An active leader in the Indianapolis Home Show from 1940-1947, Ayres designed many of the model homes during this time. He focused on sophisticated small homes that did not trade style for square footage.

Ayres married Edna C. Silcox in 1937 and the couple had no children. Leslie Ayres died in 1952 from a heart attack in their home. He is buried in Washington Park East Cemetery in Indianapolis.

Sources:

Zeigler, Connie. *Commercial Article 05: Leslie Ayres*. Commercial Artisan, Indianapolis, Indiana, 2012.

Gerhart, Andrea. "Leslie F. Ayres: An Accomplished Architect and Architectural Renderer." MSHP thesis. Ball State University, 2001.

Scope and Contents:

This collection consists of drawings, sketches, presentation drawings, photographs, and reproductions of drawings made by Leslie F. Ayres during 1926 to 1945. There are a number of undated drawings, but those were likely created within the same time period. The drawings are arranged chronologically.

The earliest drawings and sketches depict his student work at Princeton University, possibly his work at the firm Pierre & Wright, and scenes around Indianapolis that caught his interest. The Indianapolis scenes include a wide range of subjects that include power plants, high schools, monuments, clubs, civic structures, and religious buildings. During a visit to the Chicago World's Fair in 1933 he sketched scenes from the Belgian Village.

His professional drawings from the 1930s and 1940s depict residences, apartment buildings, and churches that it is yet unknown whether they were ever built or where they stand. One project represented by seven black-and-white photographs in the collection that was realized is the Wilkinson House in Muncie, Indiana. This Art Moderne masterpiece has been widely celebrated as one of the best examples of this style of residential architecture in Indiana. The photos of the exterior and interior show the front entrance, living room, dining room, bar, and staircase just after it was built in 1936.

Also included in the collection is one painting. It is an imaginative scene of a bug that doesn't

pertain to architecture but it does speak to his creative nature and skillful rendering.

Related materials can be found in the Pierre & Wright Architectural Records and Fran Schroeder Architectural Records collections at the Drawings and Documents Archive.

Conditions Governing Access:

This collection is open for research.

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Custodial History:

The Leslie F. Ayres Architectural Drawings were received by Drawings and Documents Archive as a donation from Stephen and Sharon Zimmerman on 2014/06/02.

Accruals:

No additions are expected.

Processing Information:

Collection processing completed
Finding aid created 2014/6/4 by Carol Street

Arrangement:

The Leslie F. Ayres Architectural Drawings are arranged chronologically.

Collection Inventory:

<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 01	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	French style residence with gated entry		
<i>Location</i>	Unknown location,		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; 1926		
<i>Records</i>	>> Presentation drawing: pen and ink on paper, 13 x 18 1/3 inches		
<i>Notes</i>	Possibly Pierre & Wright commission		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 02	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Main gate to campus, Princeton University		
<i>Location</i>	Princeton, Mercer Co., NJ		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; 1927		
<i>Records</i>	>> Sketch: pencil on paper, 8.5 x 5.75 inches		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 03	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Alexander Hall entrance, Princeton University		
<i>Location</i>	Princeton, Mercer Co., NJ		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; 1927		

Records >> Sketch: pencil on paper, 8.5 x 5.75 inches

Catalog no. 52- 04 *Storage code(s)* OVA 37
Project title Timber frame commercial building, Princeton University
Location Princeton, Mercer Co., NJ
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; 1927
Records >> Sketch: pencil on paper, 10.5 x 7.5 inches

Catalog no. 52- 05 *Storage code(s)* OVA 37
Project title Polar Ice & Fuel Company building
Location 2000 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, Indianapolis,
Marion Co., IN
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; 1927
Records >> Sketch: pencil on paper, 7 x 10.25 inches
Notes Possibly 2000 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Drive

<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 06	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Polar Ice & Fuel Company building		
<i>Location</i>	2000 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Drive, Indianapolis, Marion Co., IN		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; 1927		
<i>Records</i>	>> Sketch: pencil on paper, 7 x 10.25 inches		
<i>Notes</i>	Possibly 2000 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Drive		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 07	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Power plant sketch		
<i>Location</i>	West Street, Indianapolis, Marion Co., IN		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; 1928		
<i>Records</i>	>> Sketch: pencil on board, 10.5 x 7.5 inches		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 08	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Arsenal Technical High School sketch, view from Bell Street		
<i>Location</i>	Bell Street, Indianapolis, Marion Co., IN		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; 1932		
<i>Records</i>	>> Sketch: pencil on paper, 12 x 9 inches		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 09	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument and Monument Circle sketch		
<i>Location</i>	Monument Circle, Indianapolis, Marion Co., IN		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; 1933		
<i>Records</i>	>> Sketch: pencil on paper, 10 x 7.5 in.		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 10	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Tomlinson Hall sketch		
<i>Location</i>	Unknown location,		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; 1933		
<i>Records</i>	>> Sketch: pencil on paper, 10 x 7.5 inches		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 11	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Indianapolis Athletic Club sketch, view from park		
<i>Location</i>	350 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, Marion Co., IN		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; 1933		
<i>Records</i>	>> Sketch: pencil on paper, 11 x 8.5 in.		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 12	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Jewish Synagogue sketch		
<i>Location</i>	Unknown location,		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; 1933		
<i>Records</i>	>> Sketch: pencil on paper 11 x 8.5 inches		

Catalog no. 52- 13 *Storage code(s)* OVA 37
Project title Benjamin Harrison monument sketch
Location University Park, Indianapolis, Marion Co., IN
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; 1933
Records >> Sketch: pencil on paper 11 x 8.5 inches

Catalog no. 52- 14 *Storage code(s)* OVB 32
Project title Belgian Village, Chicago World's Fair sketch
Location Chicago, IL
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; 1933
Records >> Reproduction on paper, two copies, 9.25 x 7 inches

Catalog no. 52- 15 *Storage code(s)* OVA 37
Project title Wilkinson House interior and exterior photographs. Depicts front entrance, living room, dining room, staircase, bar, powder room
Location 3100 W. University Avenue, Muncie, Delaware Co., IN
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; 1936
Records >> B/W photographs mounted on board, 13 x 16 inches

Catalog no. 52- 16 *Storage code(s)* OVB 32
Project title Apartment building for George A. Ball
Location Unknown location,
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; 1937
Records >> Presentation drawing: pencil, color pencil on board, 16 x 17 inches

Catalog no. 52- 17 *Storage code(s)* OVB 32
Project title Elks Lodge rendering, version 1
Location Unknown location,
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; 1937
Records >> Presentation drawing: pencil, color pencil on board, 14.5 x 19 inches

Catalog no. 52- 18 *Storage code(s)* OVB 32
Project title Elks Lodge rendering, version 2
Location Unknown location,
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; 1937
Records >> Presentation drawing: pencil, color pencil on board, 14.5 x 18 inches

Catalog no. 52- 19 *Storage code(s)* OVB 32
Project title Apartment building, 3 story, rendering
Location Unknown location,
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; 1938
Records >> Presentation drawing: pencil, color pencil on board, 15.5 x 17.5 inches

<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 20	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Columbia Club sketch		
<i>Location</i>	Monument Circle, Indianapolis, Marion Co., IN		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; undated, 1930s		
<i>Records</i>	>> Sketch: pencil on paper, 10 x 7.5 inches		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 21	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	En-Ar-Co and White Rose service stations renderings, 8 versions		
<i>Location</i>			
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; undated, 1930s		
<i>Records</i>	>> Reproductions: 4 sheets,		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 22	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Playhouse for Cornelius Alig		
<i>Location</i>	Unknown location,		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres, Architect; 1940		
<i>Records</i>	>> Presentation board: pencil, color pencil on board, 13 x 11 in.		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 23	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVB 32
<i>Project title</i>	Chapel of the Apostles, St. Joseph Memorial Park drawing		
<i>Location</i>			
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres, Architect; 1943		
<i>Records</i>	>> Presentation board: pencil, color pencil on board, 20 x 12 in.		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 24	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVB 32
<i>Project title</i>	Chapel of the Welcoming Christ, St. Joseph Memorial Park		
<i>Location</i>			
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres, Architect; 1943		
<i>Records</i>	>> Presentation board: pencil, color pencil on board, 20 x 12 in.		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 25	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVB 32
<i>Project title</i>	Cloister of the Traveling Shadow, St. Joseph Memorial Park		
<i>Location</i>			
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres, Architect; 1943		
<i>Records</i>	>> Presentation board: pencil, color pencil on board, 20 x 12 in.		
<i>Notes</i>	Contains poem		

Catalog no. 52- 26 *Storage code(s)* OVB 32
Project title Chapel under the Crossed Arches, St. Joseph Memorial Park
drawing
Location
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres, Architect; 1944
Records >> Presentation board: pencil, color pencil on board, 20 x
12 in.

Catalog no. 52- 27 *Storage code(s)* OVB 32
Project title Shrine for the Unreturned
Location
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; Ayres, Kingsbury, and Ward, Architects;
1945
Records >> Presentation board: pencil, color pencil on board, 20 x
12 in.

Catalog no. 52- 28 *Storage code(s)* OVB 32
Project title Clayton Presbyterian Church, not realized
Location
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; 1945
Records >> Presentation board: pencil, color pencil on board, 14 x
20 in.

Catalog no. 52- 29 *Storage code(s)* OVA 37
Project title Kitchen scenes
Location Unknown location,
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; undated, likely 1930s
Records >> Presentation drawings: 2 boards; pencil, color pencil on
board; 9 x 12 inches

Catalog no. 52- 30 *Storage code(s)* OVA 37
Project title DePew Memorial Fountain, University Park
Location Indianapolis, Marion Co., IN
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; undated
Records >> Painting: watercolor on paper, 9 x 12 inches

Catalog no. 52- 31 *Storage code(s)* OVA 37
Project title Small house similar to his designs for the Honeymoon House
at the Indianapolis Home Show in 1940; views of front and
back
Location Unknown location,
Authorship, year Leslie F. Ayres; undated
Records >> Presentation drawings: 2 boards, pencil, watercolor on
board, 11 x 14 inches

<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 32	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Entrance to unidentified office building		
<i>Location</i>	Unknown location,		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; undated		
<i>Records</i>	>> Sketch: pencil on board, 13.5 x 9.5 inches		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 33	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Brick residence, unidentified		
<i>Location</i>	Unknown location,		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; undated		
<i>Records</i>	>> Presentation drawing: pencil on board, 7 x 16 inches		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 34	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVA 37
<i>Project title</i>	Church with bell tower, unidentified		
<i>Location</i>	Unknown location,		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; undated		
<i>Records</i>	>> Sketch: pencil on board, 14 x 12 inches		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 35	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVB 32
<i>Project title</i>	Unidentified brick residence in morning light		
<i>Location</i>	Unknown location,		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; undated		
<i>Records</i>	>> Painting: watercolor, pencil on board; 14 x 20 inches		
<i>Notes</i>	LR corner of board is missing, 2014		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 36	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	OVB 32
<i>Project title</i>	Landscaped entrance for housing development, with fence and trees		
<i>Location</i>	Unknown location,		
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; undated		
<i>Records</i>	>> Presentation drawing: watercolor on board, 13.5 x 19.5		
<i>Catalog no.</i>	52- 37	<i>Storage code(s)</i>	ON WALL
<i>Project title</i>	The Bug		
<i>Location</i>			
<i>Authorship, year</i>	Leslie F. Ayres; undated		
<i>Records</i>	>> Painting: oil, framed under glass, 8.5 x 16 inches		
<i>Notes</i>			

Controlled Access Headings:

Architecture, American
Architecture--Indiana--Indianapolis
Architecture, commercial
Drawings, architectural (visual works)
Houses--Indiana—1930s
Clippings, newspaper
Park (recreation area)

Watercolor painting--20th century
Watercolor painting
Art deco (Architecture)
Artists' preparatory studies
Architectural rendering
Architectural records
Indianapolis Home Show

