

New Bedford Whaling Museum Archives

Johnny Cake Hill

New Bedford, MA 02740

**FINDING AID FOR THE
ZEITZ FAMILY PAPERS
(1889-1981)**

Accession # B 83-48

Mss 145

Prepared

By

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2015-2016

CONTENTS:

Restrictions.....iii

Introduction.....iv

Biographical Notes.....v

Collection Description.....vi

Scope and Content

Series Description

Organization

Box and Folder List.....1-29

Appendix.....30

Oversize Separations List

Added Entries

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INTRODUCTION:

The Zeitz Family Papers came to the New Bedford Whaling Museum Library from the Waterfront Area Historic League, (WHALE) after they had obtained jurisdiction over the former State Theatre on Purchase Street in New Bedford, MA in the 1980's.

After the library accessioned the collection the papers were surveyed and loosely arranged. They appear to have been papers and items left at the theatre and not in the direct possession of family members. The final arrangement is based upon the arrangement created in the initial survey.

This is a diverse collection of personal papers and photographs, and legal and business papers relating to the numerous properties and theatres owned by the Zeitz family. Although there is little in the way of personal correspondence, there are numerous handwritten notes.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

Kopel (1860-1904) and **Fanny (Genesky) Zeitz (1860-1930)** were married in 1880. In 1883 they immigrated from Russia to the United States. They appear to have lived for a time in Texas and New York City before arriving in New Bedford. The family business is listed in 1900 as the New Bedford Bottling Co. located at 32 Morton Court in New Bedford, MA.

Their children were:

Phillip (1881-1910) He was born in Russia and listed as a machinist in New Bedford in 1903. In 1908 he married **Etta Wischmersky**.

Barney (1882, 1883 or 1887 -1946) He claimed to have been born in “the middle of the Atlantic” but has been listed as being born in Russia as well as New York City. He owned and operated the Barney Zeitz Hardware Store (also Zeitz & Grimshaw Hardware) at 90 Union St. in New Bedford. Barney Zeitz was also occupied in pawn broking, money lending and other enterprises but was most well known for the salvaging of a ship off Martha’s Vineyard. By 1930 he is listed as a proprietor of theatres. He never married.

Myers (Charles ?) 1886-1926) He may have been born in Fall River. He was listed in the census as a commercial traveler in 1911. He enlisted in the medical detachment at Raritan Arsenal during WWI as Charles Coleman.

Jacob Frank (1888-1953) He was either born in Texas or New York City. He was listed as a chauffeur at the family owned New Bedford Bottling Co. He was associated with his brothers in the family business. He was married to Ann Zeitz.

Harry (1889-1971) He is listed as being born in Massachusetts (New Bedford?). He was listed as a pawnbroker in 1915 at 94 Union St. New Bedford. He married **Cecile I. Bornstein (1898-1978)**. They had a son **Robert Merrill (1929-1973)**. They lived at 37 Taber Street, New Bedford in 1932. After Barney’s death in 1926 he appears to have become the dominant figure in the family enterprises.

Isaac Morton (1890, 1895-1973,1979?) He is listed as being born in Massachusetts (New Bedford?). He is listed as a salesman in 1911. He was a major figure in the family businesses.

Phillip (Fisher?) (1895-1959)

Etta (Anna) Zeitz Helford (1898-?) She married **George Helford**, an attorney in New Bedford. They had a daughter, **Ruby Helford Aronsky. (1924?-2012)**

Elaine Zeitz Anderson (1923-?) Married Lawrence M. Anderson. They had a son Frederick (1945-?)

Carl (1921-1973) Married June Jaffe. He served in the Army Air Corps - Bombardiers Class 44-13, 1944

The Zeitz family owned and operated the following businesses and theatres:

Barney Zeitz Hardware, Zeitz and Grimshaw, Zeitz Realty Corp., Ho-Zi Inc., ABC Vending Corp., Herschel Amusement Co. Inc., Haverhill Operating Co., New Bedford Amusement Co., Zeitz Theatre of Rhode Island (Newport), Zeitz Theatres of Fall River, Inc., The Paramount Theatre in Haverhill, and the Academy Theatre, Fall River. In addition they owned the Civic Theatre in Portland, Maine. In New Bedford they owned the State Theatre, later the Zeiterion, the Olympia Theatre, the Empire Theatre, and the Capitol Theatre.

The Zeitz Realty Corp. (ZRC) held the following properties in New Bedford at various times.

2 Seventh St.

116-124 Elm St. (Empire Theatre)

262 Union St. (Tallman bldg.)

256 Union St. (bldg)

250 Union St. (store)

244 Union St. (bldg.)

254 Union St. (Taber Bldg.)

Corner of Union and 6th St. (Emerson Bldg.)

674 Purchase St. (State Theatre)

932 Purchase St.

881-883 Purchase St. (Olympia Theatre)

1430-1440 Acushnet Ave. (Capitol Theatre)

297 Acushnet Ave. (land?)

113-125 Middle St. (bldg.)

In Fairhaven, MA they owned and operated the Tabitha Inn.

Members of the Zeitz Family lived in various houses in New Bedford and Fairhaven. (This list is not complete).

32 Morton Court

225 Acushnet Ave.

37 Taber St.

109 Green St., Fairhaven

23 Huttleston Ave. Fairhaven

45 Carroll St. N.B.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:

Scope and Content:

Zeitz Family Papers (1889-1981)

Accession # B83-48

Mss 145

Quantity:

10 linear feet (not including oversize folders)

20 legal size document boxes

4 oversize document boxes

8 oversize flat folders

photographs

artifacts (separated)

Series Description:

Series I. Personal Papers

Miscellaneous correspondence and memorabilia arranged by individuals.

Series II. Family Papers

Sub-series of invoices, correspondence, memberships, charitable giving, desk diaries, calendars, and family photographs.

Series III. Legal Papers and Documents

A. Trusts and incorporation documents.

B. Zeiterion Realty Corp. documents and correspondence

C. Rental properties documents and correspondence

Series IV. Financial Records

A. Correspondence and Documents,

1. ZRC, 2. Ho-Zi, Inc., 3. New Bedford Amusement Co., 4. Herschel Amusement Co., and 5. Zeitz Theatres of Rhode Island

B. Ledger Books

1. ZRC, 2. N.B. Amusement Co., 3. Zeitz Theatres of R. I., 4. Zeitz Bros. Trust and 5. Ho-Zi, Inc.

C. Checking and Savings Account Books

D. Stock Certificates

1. Tabitha Inn, 2. Herschel Amusement Co. 3. Ho-Zi, Inc., 4. Zeitz Theatres of Rhode Island, 5. New Bedford Amusement Co., 6. State Amusement Co.

E. Insurance Papers

Series V. Business Entities

- A. Barney Zeitz Hardware
- B. Academy Theatre, (Fall River)
- C. Capitol Theatre (New Bedford)
- D. Civic Theatre (Portland, Maine)
- E. Empire Theatre (New Bedford)
- F. New Bedford Theatre (New Bedford)
- G. Olympia Theatre (New Bedford)
- H. Paramount Theatre (Haverhill, MA)
- I. Paramount Theatre (Newport, RI),
- J. State Theatre (New Bedford)

Series VI. Published Materials

Miscellaneous brochures, catalogs and newspapers.

Series VII. Ephemera

A. Items related to the theatres

B. Items unrelated to the Zeitz Theatres

Series VIII. Artifacts (removed to collections)

Appendix

Added Entries

List of separated items