



William J. Donath, Jr. Papers (K0251)

Collection Number: K0251

Collection Title: William J. Donath, Jr. Papers

Dates: no date

Creator: Donath, William J., Jr., 1917-1998

Abstract: The collection consists of William John Donath, Jr.'s self-published autobiographical stories regarding his activities in Underwater Demolition Team No. 7 during World War II. The papers also include news articles about the Navy's demolition teams.

Collection Size: 0.08 cubic foot
(5 folders)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at kansascity@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

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Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *William J. Donath, Jr. Papers* (K0251); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Kansas City].

Donor Information: The papers were donated to the University of Missouri by William J. Donath on May 13, 1989 (Accession No. KA0508). An addition was made on April 4, 1991 by William J. Donath (Accession No. KA0626). An addition was made on July 29, 1991 by William J. Donath (Accession No. KA0641).

Processed by: Processed by State Historical Society of Missouri staff in March 2016. Finding aid format and index terms updated by Mimi Loran, February 2018.

Historical Note:

William “Bill” John Donath, Jr. was born December 3, 1917, in Sedalia, Missouri. Donath served during World War II with the Navy’s Volunteer Underwater Demolition Team (UDT) No. 7. The men on these teams were often referred to as a Frogman. During World War II, the UDTs completed dozens of secret missions in which they cleared underwater passages for first-wave assault troops in the Pacific. Their main activities included finding beach locations that seemed suitable for landing, clearing channels through the coral, eliminating obstacles such as boat mines, and clearing beaches to insure a smooth landing for both troops and trucks.

Following the war, Donath returned to Missouri, and settled in the Kansas City area. Donath worked for the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) union before retiring in 1983. Donath was a decorated veteran and a member of UDT-Seal Association and a charter member of the UDT-Seal Museum Association. Donath was a life member of the V.F.W. Post 2591 of Sedalia, Missouri, and the IAMAW. William Donath passed away Wednesday, February 18, 1998.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into five folders.

Scope and Content Note:

The papers consist of William John Donath, Jr.’s self-published autobiographical stories regarding his activities in the Underwater Demolition Team No. 7 during World War II. The narrative histories are undated. The papers also include undated photocopied news articles about the Navy’s demolition teams.

Container List:

- f. 1 “Memories of U. D. T. 7,” no date
- f. 2 “Memories of U. D. T. 7: Recollections of a WWII Frogman,” no date
- f. 3 “Narrative History of Underwater Demolition Team No. 7,” no date
- f. 4 “They Hit the Beach in Swim Trunks,” by Harold Bradley Say, no date
- f. 5 “DT’s for Japs on D-Day Minus!” by Dan H. Morris, no date

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