



Milgram Food Stores, Inc. Collection (K0325)

Collection Number: K0325

Collection Title: Milgram Food Stores, Inc. Collection

Dates: 1912-1996

Creator: Milgram Food Stores, Inc.

Abstract: The collection contains papers and photographs related to the Milgram family and Milgram Food Stores, Inc. The personal papers primarily focus on the personal interests of Nat, the founder of Milgram Food Stores, and Lester, his son. The materials consist of correspondence, newspaper clippings, and photographs. The materials related to the Milgram Food Stores contains correspondence, newsletters, reports, and information regarding the company. The bulk of the business materials pertains to photographs of individual Milgram stores and Milgram sponsored events.

Collection Size: 4.5 cubic feet
(264 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.

Restrictions on Use: The Donor has given and assigned to the University all rights of copyright, which the Donor has in the Materials and in such of the Donor's works as may be found among any collections of Materials received by the University from others.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Milgram Food Stores, Inc. Collection* (K0325); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-KC].

Donor Information: The papers were donated to the University of Missouri by William M. Wien on July 8, 1996 (Accession No. KA0907).

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the Milgram Food Stores, Inc. Collection can be found in the following collections:

Alan Jay Chapman Papers (K0859)

Processed by: Processed by Mimi Loran, March 2017

Historical Note:

Nat Milgram moved to Kansas City, Missouri, with his family from New Jersey in the early 1900s. Nat Milgram began his professional career by buying a paper delivery route for the Kansas City Star. In 1913, Nat had saved enough money to open the first Milgram Food Store, at 18th and Minnesota in Kansas City, Kansas. Over the next ten years, the company expanded to thirty-seven stores in the greater Kansas City area, and was run as a family business. Nat managed the business as a whole, and his three brothers and five brothers-in-law managed the several stores around Kansas City.

In 1928, Milgram Food Stores was purchased by the Kroger Company. In 1932, Nat Milgram restarted his grocery company by creating Milgram Food Stores, Inc. Milgram Food Stores' motto was "Hi Neighbor," signifying the desire to be part of whatever community in which a store was located. Nat Milgram served as president of this new corporation until his death in 1958. Milgram Food Stores continued to be run as a family business, with Nat's son Lester, and sons-in-law William Klein and Stuart Wien, holding senior leadership positions within the company. Milgram was one of the truly iconic business names of Kansas City, and the family's civic contributions were hard to match.

After the death of Nat Milgram, Lester Milgram became president of the company. Lester was chairman of the company at the time of his death in 1976. William Klein and Stuart Wien succeeded him in the role of chairman. While under the management of the Milgram family, the grocery chain was successful, and actively involved in community affairs in Kansas City.

In 1984, Wetterau, Inc. acquired Milgram Food Stores. Soon, Wetterau was acquired by SuperValu, and gradually all the previous Milgram stores closed.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into five series with sixteen subseries:

Personal Papers

 Nat Milgram

Lester Milgram

Business Papers

 History

 Correspondence

 Ephemera

 Newsletters

 Newspaper Clippings

 Events and Marketing

 Reports

Personal Photographs

- Family Photographs
 - Nat Milgram
 - Lester Milgram
 - Miscellaneous
- Business Photographs
 - Stores
 - Sponsored Events
 - National and City Affairs
- Oversize

Scope and Content Note:

Personal Papers

This series contains material pertaining to the Milgram family, and focuses on Nat Milgram and Lester Milgram specifically. The Nat Milgram subseries consists of correspondence, newspaper clippings, papers related to his work with the American War Dads organization, and material pertaining to his attendance at President Truman's Inauguration. The Lester Milgram subseries contains papers related to his work with the Ban Johnson League, the Kansas City jazz community, and Governor Dalton's Inauguration. There are also correspondence and newspaper clippings within this subseries, along with information about Lester receiving a Unico Achievement Award.

Business Papers

This series contains material specific to Milgram Food Stores, primarily after its incorporation in 1932. The History subseries contains information related to the formation of the company, the real estate holdings of Milgram Food Stores, the expansion plan of the company, and information about the individuals who ran the company. The Newsletters subseries contains the company newsletter for Milgram Food Stores, Inc., and discusses important events for individuals within the company and for individual stores. Within the Newspaper Clippings subseries, there are articles related to events held by the grocery store, and about how the business itself was doing. The Events and Marketing subseries contains marketing material for Milgram events, and information related to the special events that the company held. Finally, the Reports subseries contains yearly reports about the company during the 1970s.

Personal Photographs

In this series there are items pertaining to the Milgram family, with heavy emphasis on Nat and Lester Milgram. The Family Photographs subseries contains photographs of Milgram family gatherings. There is also a Nat Milgram subseries, which contains photographs of Nat, and a collection of photographs of Nat Milgram as a colonel with the American War Dads. Additionally, there is a Lester Milgram subseries, which contains several headshots of Lester and photographs of Lester's work in the local Kansas City jazz community.

Business Photographs

This series makes up the bulk of the collection. The Stores subseries contains photographs of original Milgram grocery stores, but primarily the photographs date after the stores incorporation in 1932. Generally, the photographs of each store consist of interior and exterior shots; however,

there are also views of grand openings and groundbreakings held at certain stores. This subseries also contains some unidentified Milgram stores and some non-Milgram stores. If known, the address and original store number have been provided. The folders in this series have been arranged numerically if store number is known, and all other items are arranged alphabetically.

Sponsored Events

This subseries contains photographs for events that were held at Milgram stores, or events that were held in which the Milgram Company participated. The events included in this subseries are American Royal, Milgram Bandwagon, and Milgram Cooking School. There are also photographs of the various sports leagues, and community philanthropy events in which Milgram Food Stores sponsored and participated. The National and City Affairs subseries contains photographs of important events in the United States and Kansas City that Milgram Food Stores was involved. Of particular interest in this subseries are the photographs after the 1951 Missouri River Flood and of special events with President Truman, who was a longtime friend of the Milgram family.

Oversize

This series contains items related to Milgram Food Stores, Inc. There are newspaper articles, supermarket publications, newsletters, grocery bags, and panoramic photographs.

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| f. 6-11 | Lester Milgram, 1951-1985 |
| f. 12-28 | Business Papers |
| f. 12 | History, 1926-1984 |
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| f. 17 | Ephemera, 1953-1983 |
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| f. 24-27 | Events and Marketing, 1950-1984 |
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| f. 29-50 | Personal Photographs |
| f. 29-31 | Family Photographs, 1926-1976 |
| f. 33-40 | Nat Milgram, 1912-1965 |
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| f. 50-258 | Business Photographs |
| f. 50-169 | Stores, 1918-1984 |
| f. 35-64 | Original Company, 1918-1950 |
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| f. 170-237 | Sponsored Events, 1935-1983 |
| f. 204-207 | American Royal, 1935-1964 |
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f. 212-213	Community Philanthropy, 1972
f. 214-216	Cooking School, 1950-1956
f. 217-237	Sports, 1926-1983
f. 238-255	National and City Affairs, 1964-1969
f. 248-249	Christmas Day Fire, 1954
f. 250-256	Flood of 1951-1965
f. 257-258	Miscellaneous, 1935-1973
f. 259-264	Oversize
f. 259	Newspapers, 1942-1982
f. 260	Supermarket Publications, 1939-1972
f. 261	Newsletters, 1945-1982
f. 262	Grocery Bags, no date
f. 263	Photographs, 1929-1965
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Index Term	Folder	Image
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American Royal Dairy Cattle Show and Rodeo	204-207	Yes
Anderson, John, 1917-2014	240	Yes
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Ellington, Duke, 1899-1974	44-46	Yes
Herman, Woody, 1913-1987	47	Yes
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