



Smithsonian

National Museum of Natural History

Guide to the Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection, 1937-1961

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2018 June

Human Studies Film Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Human Studies Film Archives
Title:	Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection
Date:	1937-1961
Identifier:	HSFA.2018.02
Extent:	17 Reels (16mm, black and white/color, silent. camera original reversal/print, 18,180 feet)
Language:	No linguistic content; Not applicable .
Summary:	Little is known about the filmmaker Joseph Ross He travelled extensively and also had an intense interest in gardens and gardening. The films reflect these interests. Although most document his travels, several were shot around his home of gardens being planted and mature gardens.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

These films were donated to the National Anthropological Film Collection by Jim Shreve in 2018.

Processing Information

Each film was examined for condition and content. When appropriate repairs were made to the film. The films were prepared for long-term storage and placed in archival cans.

The photographs were removed from original frames.

Processed by Wendy Shay, June 2018

Preferred Citation

Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection, National Anthropological Film Collection (formerly the Human Studies Film Archives), National Anthropological Archives

Restrictions

Collection is open for research use although only reference copies may be used. For more information contact the staff at HSFA@si.edu .

Conditions Governing Use

Contact thte repository for terms of use.

Biographical / Historical

Little is known about the filmmaker Joseph Ross. He was the great uncle of the donor's wife and he owned a business in Albany, New York. He travelled extensively and also had an intense interest in gardens and gardening. The films reflect these interests. Although most document his travels, several were shot around his home of gardens being planted and finished gardens.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of footage presumably shot by Joseph Ross during his travels and around his home. Hawaii, Japan, New Zealand, Tahiti, Mexico, and Guatemala are featured in the travel films. The travel films include tourist footage as well as limited documentation of local peoples and traditional cultural activities.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in two series:(1) Motion Picture Films, 1937-1961; (2) Photographs, 1947

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Amateur films
- Dance
- Gardens
- Ships
- Tourism
- Travel

Types of Materials:

- Home movies
- Photographs

Places:

- Asia
- Central America
- Grand Canyon (Ariz.)
- Guatemala
- Hawaii
- Japan
- Mexico
- New York
- New Zealand
- North America
- Oceania
- South America
- Tahiti (French Polynesia : Island)
- United States

Container Listing

Series 1: Motion Pictures, 1937-1961

Item 2018.02.001 OF	Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: Hawaii, 1954 1 Motion picture film (16mm, color, silent, camera original reversal, 896 feet) Notes: Travel footage of Hawaii that includes shipboard activities, arrival, and "traditional" dance performance probably intended for a tourist audience. The reel ends with scenes of San Francisco.
Item 2018.02.002 OF	Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: Tahiti, 1950 1 Motion picture film (16mm, color, silent, camera original reversal, 1132 feet) Notes: Travel footage shot in Tahiti. Although the donor stated that Joseph Ross had met and talked to a number of Tahitians, the footage is typical tourist footage. There are numerous shots of landscapes and individual Tahitians. The limited documentation of activities includes people working with plants and coconuts, dancing, and use of an outrigger boat.
Item 2018.02.003 OF	Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: South Sea Outtakes, 1950 1 Motion picture film (16mm, color, silent, print and camera original reversal, 50 feet) Notes: Travel footage of indigenous women staring at the camera. No documentation of activities or communities.
Item 2018.02.004 OF and 2018.02.004 RF	Joseph Ross Film Collection: New Zealand, 1937-1938 2 Motion picture films (16mm, color and black and white, silent, camera original reversal/ 16mm color and black and white, silent, print, 1200 feet) Notes: Travel footage that includes landscape scenes and portraits of local peoples. Two signs confirm New Zealand locations - Hotel Buller, Buller New Zealand and Kumara train station. However, there is footage of kangaroos and koala bears which indicate some of the footage may have been shot in Australia. Reference copy exists although it may be too damaged to view with available equipment.
Item 2018.02.005 OF	Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: New Zealand and Grand Canyon Outtakes, 1937-1940 1 Motion picture film (16mm, color and black and white, silent, camera original reversal, 475 feet) Notes: Travel footage that includes scenes from and of the ship, landscapes, Australian sheep dog herding sheep, and portraits of Maori individuals. Also includes footage of the Grand Canyon and members of the filmmaker's family.
Item 2018.02.006 OF	Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: Guatemala, 1937-1940

	<p>1 Motion picture film (16mm, color and black and white, silent, camera original reversal and print, 1200 feet)</p> <p>Notes: Travel footage that includes traditional activities including textile work, marketplace activities, washing clothes, and field work. Also includes portraits of local peoples. The end of the film may have been shot in Mexico.</p>
Item 2018.02.007 OF	<p>Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: South America, 1939</p> <p>1 Motion picture film (16mm, color and black and white, silent, camera original reversal, 1100 feet)</p> <p>Notes: Travel footage of landscapes, ships, the Panama Canal, street scenes, indigenous peoples, farming, and Ross family members.</p>
Item 2018.02.008 OF	<p>Joseph Ross Collection: Mexico and Guatemala Outtakes, 1940</p> <p>1 Motion picture film (16mm, color and black and white, silent, camera original reversal, 500 feet)</p> <p>Notes: Travel footage outtakes spliced together in no particular order. Not obvious which scenes are Guatemala and which are Mexico. Footage includes landscapes, portraits of indigenous peoples, fishing from a dugout canoe, street scene, and market.</p>
Item 2018.02.009 OF	<p>Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: Mexico, 1940</p> <p>1 Motion picture film (16mm, color, silent, camera original reversal, 1600 feet)</p> <p>Notes: Travel footage that includes some documentation of local life. Activities depicted that feature unidentified indigenous peoples include farming, dugout boats, grinding grain, children, houses, markets, and village streets. There are also landscapes, tourist attractions, and scenes of the filmmaker's family.</p>
Item 2018.02.010 OF	<p>Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: Sara Puerta Vallarta</p> <p>1 Motion picture film (16mm, color, silent, print, 300 feet)</p> <p>Notes: Travel footage of boarding a plane, landscapes of mountains, beaches, and the ocean, scenes of a resort and a market.</p>
Item 2018.02.011-001 OF	<p>Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: Japan 1, 1937</p> <p>1 Motion picture film (16mm, color, silent, print, 1250 feet)</p> <p>Notes: Title for both reels of Japan (Japan 1 and Japan 2) based on labels on the original cans.</p> <p>Travel footage documenting arrival in Japan with ships in the distance as well as ship board activities. The bulk of the footage is typical tourist filming with sights including a large statue of Buddah, parks, landscapes, shinto temples, women in kimonos and a wedding. A sign indicates they were at the Fujiya Hotel, Miyanoshita and visited the Hakone Hot Springs. There are also people filmed in front of the Kyoto Christian Science Society building.</p>
Item 2018.02.011-002 OF	<p>Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: Japan 2, 1937</p> <p>1 Motion picture film (16mm, color, silent, print, 1026 feet)</p> <p>Notes: Travel footage that is a continuation of Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: Japan 1. The film includes more footage of people.</p>

There are shots of trains and a train station as well as boats. The reel ends with footage of the Powell and Mason Streets streetcar in San Francisco.

Item 2018.02.012
OF

Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: Family and Home
1 Motion picture film (16mm, color, silent, print, 300 feet)

Notes: Home movie footage that includes shots of family members at the beach and swimming, in the yard, gardens, and gardening. There is a shot of an airport and a Mohawk Airlines plane.

Item 2018.02.013
OF

Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: Picnic and Building Demolition, 1961
1 Motion picture film (16mm color, silent, camera original reversal, 800 feet)

Notes: Home movie footage that includes garden scenes and footage of a picnic with a baseball game. There is extensive documentation of the demolition of the Eastern Distribution Company building in Albany, New York.

Item 2018.02.014
OF

Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: Home 1, 1936-1945
1 Motion picture film (16mm color and black and white, silent, camera original reversal, 1800 feet)

Notes: Home movie footage documenting activities at home including gardens, playing in the yard, a horse race, boating, swimming, football game, and wedding guests leaving a church. Concludes with a commencement exercise at an unknown university.

Item 2018.02.015
OF

Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: Home 2, 1945-1950
1 Motion picture film (16mm color, silent, camera original reversal, 1600 feet)

Notes: Home movie footage of gardens with and without people. Ends with film of New Orleans including a parade with floats.

Item 2018.02.016
OF

Joseph Ross Travel Film Collection: Making New Garden, 1958
1 Motion picture film (16mm color, silent, print, 1400 feet.)

Notes: Home movie footage that documents the process of creating a new garden. There also is footage of an international group of young people as well as a graduation ceremony.

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Series 2: Photographs, 1947

1 Flat box

Box 1

Scope and Contents: Thirteen black and white photographs shot in Tahiti and other regions of the South Seas.

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