



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Finlay Straus Scrapbook

NMAH.AC.0663

Kiley Orchard

2008

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Finlay Straus Scrapbook
Date:	ca. 1929-1933.
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0663
Creator:	Wertheimer, Frederick P. Vorchheimer, Bert Vorchheimer, Carol Finlay Straus Company.
Extent:	1 Cubic foot (1 box)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Scrapbook documenting Frederick P. Wertheimer's advertising and marketing work for the Finlay Straus Company, a jewelry and optical dealer. The scrapbook contains advertising, mostly in the form of circulars and newspaper advertisements, but also catalogs and mailings.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Collection donated by Bert and Carol Vorchheimer.

Processing Information

Processed by Kiley Orchard (intern), 2008; supervised by Vanessa Broussard Simmons, archivist.

Preferred Citation

Finlay Straus Scrapbook, 1929-1933, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research but is stored off-site and special arrangements must be made to work with it. Contact the Archives Center for information at archivescenter@si.edu or 202-633-3270.

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Biographical / Historical

Finlay began as a mail order house for fine jewelry in 1887. In 1924, Abraham Hirshberg took over the debt-ridden business and expanded with Finlay-Straus stores throughout the metropolitan New York area. In 1968, Finlay was purchased by Seligman & Latz, a publicly traded company listed on the New York Stock Exchange. Seligman & Latz operated Finlay until 1985 when it became privately owned. Finlay remained privately held until April 1995, when its parent, company Finlay Enterprises, Incorporated held its initial public stock offering.

With the acquisition of Carlyle & Company Jewelers in May 2005, Finlay returned to operating freestanding luxury stores. Carlyle consisted of 35 stores located primarily in southeastern United States under the Carlyle, J. E. Caldwell, and Park Promenade names. In November 2006 Congress Jewelers (a group of five stores located in Southwest Florida) was added, By August 2009, there were 182 Finlay locations: 67 Bailey Banks & Biddle, 34 Carlyle & Company four Congress specialty jewelry stores, and 77 licensed departments with The Bon Ton. On September 24, 2009, Finlay Enterprises announced completion of a bankruptcy auction for its business and assets to Gordon Brothers Retail Partners, LLC. Gordon Brothers was appointed to act as the Company's agent to conduct "store closings" or similar sales of merchandise located at all of the Company's retail store locations and the Company's two distribution centers.

Scope and Contents

The scrapbook contains advertisements dating from circa 1929-1933 from the Finlay Straus Company. Although the advertisements focus on jewelry, many other items are advertised as well. Especially prominent are the Christmas advertisements for Finlay Straus stores in which buyers receive a free baby doll if they spend twenty dollars or more. Catalogs, circulars, mailings, and other advertisements are also included among these materials.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged in one series.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Jewelry
Opticians
advertising

Types of Materials:

Advertisements -- 20th century
Scrapbooks -- 20th century

Container Listing

Series 1: Scrapbook, circa 1929-1933

Box 1, Folder 1	pages 1-15, circa 1929-1933
Box 1, Folder 2	pages 16-34, circa 1929-1933
Box 1, Folder 3	pages 35-44, 47, 49-51, circa 1929-1933
Box 1, Folder 4	pages 52-63, circa 1929-1933
Box 2, Folder 1	pages 45, 46, 48, circa 1929-1933

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