



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the John G. Vasquez papers

NMAH.AC.0942

Alison Oswald

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Arrangement.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Biographical / Historical.....	1
Names and Subjects	3
Container Listing	4
Series 1: Inventions and Ideas, 1942 - 2005.....	4
Series 2: Notebooks, 1960s-1970s, undated.....	9
Series 3: Patents, 1945 - 1956.....	10
Series 4: : News clippings, 1948, 1981.....	11
Series 5: Photographs, 1948, undated.....	12
Series 6: Prototypes, 1945, 1947.....	13

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	John G. Vasquez papers
Date:	1942 - 2005
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0942
Creator:	Vasquez, John G. (Creator)
Extent:	1 Cubic foot (5 boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Papers document independent inventor John G. Vasquez. The papers include drawings, sketches, correspondence, notebooks, photographs, and prototypes for two of Vasquez's inventions.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated by Lillia Vasquez, widow of John G. Vasquez, 2007.

Processing Information

Processed by Alison Oswald, archivist, and Adrienne Cain (intern), 2007.

Preferred Citation

John Vasquez Papers, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

The collection is open for research use.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Biographical / Historical

John George Vasquez was born in Meriden, Connecticut, on February 22, 1916 to Italian immigrants, John and Sebastiana (Larosa) Vasquez of Canicattini Bagni, Sicily. In the late 1920s, John apprenticed as a barber, which became a favorite lifelong hobby. He was later recognized as a "Master Barber." Vasquez graduated from Hartford Public High School and attended the University of Connecticut.

In 1941, Vasquez married Lillia B. Schultz (b. 1920) of Wilmington, Vermont. They raised five children of their own: John E. Vasquez, Benedict R. Vasquez, Lewis P. Vasquez, Constance I. Sullivan, and Joseph D. Vasquez. Additionally, Vasquez and his wife were foster parents to at least fifty children in the State

of Connecticut. The Vasquezes lived in Hartford until 1959 when they moved to Rocky Hill, Connecticut. Vasquez had a successful career designing and tool making at Pratt & Whitney Tool and Die Company of West Hartford. While working at Pratt & Whitney, John filed his first patent for a combined ash tray, and he began recording his thoughts, dreams, ideas and inventions in pocket-size notebooks. Vasquez holds three United States patents: Combined Ash Tray and Holder for Smokers' Articles, 1945 (#D142,753); a Multiple Compartment Handbag, 1947 (#2,429,856); and Magnetic Retainer, 1950 (#2,521,885). Vasquez completed his career as a blueprint supervisor at Pratt & Whitney with over 30 years of service. John G. Vasquez died on January 6, 2006.

Scope and Contents

The papers document the work of independent inventor John G. Vasquez and include drawings, sketches, correspondence, notebooks, photographs, and a prototype of Vasquez's invention, the Magnetic Retainer.

Series 1, Inventions and Ideas, 1942-2005, is divided into two subseries: Subseries 1, Chronological, 1942-2005 and Subseries 2, Miscellaneous, 1948-2003. The majority of the inventions and ideas consist of one file folder per invention/idea and contain sketches and/or notes. Many of the inventions/ideas are signed and dated by Vasquez. The random ideas folder contains a letterhead for "John G. Vasquez, inventor, designer of practical ideas for improved living." Subseries 2, Miscellaneous, 1948-2003, is comprised of numbered lists of ideas. In some instances, the lists contain small sketches.

Series 2, Notebooks, 1960s-1970s, undated, consists of fourteen 3" x 5" spiral bound notebooks maintained by Vasquez to record his thoughts, dreams, ideas and inventions. The notebooks contain statistics, facts, newspaper clippings, motivational phrases, and other data such as how much energy an appliance uses or the qualities of a "good shop man."

Series 3, Patents, 1945-1956, is divided into two subseries: Subseries 1, United States Patents, 1945, 1947, and Subseries 2, Poor Man's Patents, 1955, 1956. The patents are arranged chronologically by patent number and there is one file folder of poor man's patents. A "poor man's patent" is when an inventor writes a description of his/her invention and mails it to themselves or someone else by regular or certified mail to protect one's invention. Unfortunately, this method does not protect an invention.

Series 4, News clippings, 1948, 1981, contain three newspaper articles from the Hartford Daily Courant about Vasquez.

Series 5, Photographs, 1948, undated, contains three black-and-white photographs; two document Vasquez, the other features his Multiple Compartment Handbag (United States Patent #2,429,856) of 1945.

Series 6, Artifacts, 1945 and 1947, contains two prototypes: a Magnetic Retainer (United States Patent #2,521,885) 1947, and a Combined Ash Tray and Holder for Smokers' Articles, 1945 (United States Design Patent #D142, 753).

Arrangement

Collection organized into six series.

Series 1: Inventions and Ideas, 1942-2005

Subseries 1, Chronological, 1942-2005

Subseries 2, Miscellaneous, 1948-2003

Series 2: Notebooks, 1960s-1970s, undated

Series 3: Patents, 1945-1956

Subseries 1, United States Patents, 1945, 1947

Subseries 2, Poor Man's Patents, 1955, 1956

Series 4: News clippings, 1948, 1981

Series 5: Photographs, 1948, undated

Series 6: Prototypes, 1945 and 1947

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Inventions
- Inventors

Types of Materials:

- Notebooks
- Patents -- 20th century
- Photographs -- 20th century
- Sketches

Container Listing

Series 1: Inventions and Ideas, 1942 - 2005

Subseries 1: Chronological, 1942 - 2005

Box 1, Folder 1	Index of inventions and ideas, [undated]
Box 1, Folder 2	Close line cleaner, 1942
Box 1, Folder 3	Air brakes for aircraft carrier landings, 1943
Box 1, Folder 4	Cigars equipped with mouth piece, 1943
Box 1, Folder 5	Lawn mower sharpening rig, 1943
Box 1, Folder 6	Revolving tie rack and step thread, 1943
Box 1, Folder 7	Scissor sharpening clamp-flat, 1943
Box 1, Folder 8	Telescope indicator hand, 1943
Box 1, Folder 9	Random Idea: Not Named, 1943 January 15
Box 1, Folder 10	Penance prayer enumerator, logs last confession dates, 1943 January 2
Box 1, Folder 11	Dovetail measuring vernier, 1943 January 6
Box 1, Folder 12	Double end lathe, 1943 January 20
Box 1, Folder 13	Combination slide edge and moveable protractor, 1943 February 2
Box 1, Folder 14	Combination slide edge and moveable protractor, 1943 March 4
Box 1, Folder 15	Stay in file handle locking system, 1943 February 10
Box 1, Folder 16	Mill two flutes simultaneously, 1943 February 14
Box 1, Folder 17	Adjustable V and block gage, 1943 February 16
Box 1, Folder 18	Alphabetical playing card games, like rummy = spell word game, poker = vowels are high cards, 1943
Box 1, Folder 19	Vert shaper with rotating spin, 1943 February 19
Box 1, Folder 20	Turn buckles with handle extension wrench, 1943 March 1

Box 1, Folder 21	Thread chasers feeding radially, 1943 March 4
Box 1, Folder 22	Typewriter-continuous line or dotted line, 1943 March 4
Box 1, Folder 23	Smoker's pipe with cooling handle, 1943 March 15
Box 1, Folder 24	Transparent shoe box, 1943 March 27
Box 1, Folder 25	Two and three grinding wheels-simultaneous, 1943 March 27
Box 1, Folder 26	Scale end shock absorber, 1943 March 27
Box 1, Folder 27	Crouton made from stale bread and cam for each width of tooth on back side and conveyor system in lapping,, 1943 March 29
Box 1, Folder 28	Combination clothes pants hangers and bed back rest on back side of sheet, 1944
Box 1, Folder 29	Tent ash tray, log cabin ash tray, 1944
Box 1, Folder 30	Compass/protractor pivot pin, 1944 February 1
Box 1, Folder 31	Two-in-one band saw for log cutting, 1944 March 12
Box 1, Folder 32	Hydraulic jacks folding type, 1944 March 20
Box 1, Folder 33	Combination gear and pulley driver, 1944 March 24
Box 1, Folder 34	Bullet shell with rifling grooves through round bore, 1944 April 14
Box 1, Folder 35	Electricity, 1944 April 25
Box 1, Folder 36	Rivers multi-power electric generator dams, 1944 April 26
Box 1, Folder 37	Check net pipe tap, 1944 April 27
Box 1, Folder 38	Grinding wheel true wheel radius dresser, 1944 April 29
Box 1, Folder 39	Pipe plugs, pipe tobacco wrapped in cigar wrapper, 1944 November 17
Box 1, Folder 40	Oil, grease seals, 1944 November 28
Box 1, Folder 41	Turning tool holder, 1944 December 12
Box 1, Folder 42	Grinding taper holes in stationary parts, 1944 December 12
Box 1, Folder 43	The truly safe safety pins, 1945 July 24

Box 1, Folder 44	Amendment: US Patent Office (for cabinet magnets), 1947 February 26
Box 1, Folder 45	Random magnet idea, 1947 May 15
Box 1, Folder 46	Liquid tight and lock screws (studs), 1948 May 20
Box 1, Folder 47	Tobacco tippy stand, 1948 May 24
Box 1, Folder 48	Bolt with cemented rubber and thin metal washer (anchor) studs, 1948 November 9
Box 1, Folder 49	Mailing service-kiddie grams/kiddie mail, 1954
Box 1, Folder 50	Hypot-scale, 1954 February 4
Box 1, Folder 51	Air conditioner, 1954 March 8
Box 1, Folder 52	Sander with replaceable sanding cloth mesh, 1954 May 4
Box 1, Folder 53	Magna letter/magna word game, 1954 May 4
Box 1, Folder 54	Magna ball game, 1954 May 5
Box 1, Folder 55	Non-clog file, 1954 May 11
Box 1, Folder 56	Perforated metal file/cutter, 1954 May 11
Box 1, Folder 57	Magnetic hinge door closure, 1955 January 28
Box 1, Folder 58	Pill pulverizer, 1955 February 18
Box 1, Folder 59	In sequence blade, 1960 June 22
Box 1, Folder 60	Suggestions for shavers, 1960 June 22
Box 1, Folder 61	Solar energy calculations, 1981 February 9
Box 1, Folder 62	"Air-Gen Scoop", 1981 March 4
Box 1, Folder 63	Organizing toolbox decals for drawers, 1992 June 3
Box 1, Folder 64	Flex-Hammer-use coil spring for handle, 1996 July 22
Box 1, Folder 65	Comments on weather, 1997
Box 1, Folder 66	"The Lifter-Upper Cone", 1998 October 22
Box 1, Folder 67	Make your own "instant" pension, 1999 April 11

Box 1, Folder 68	Deck library stand, 2001
Box 1, Folder 69	Lightweight arthritic helper tools, 2003
Box 1, Folder 70	Multi-tool, 2004 August 3
Box 1, Folder 71	Idea: the hidden saw tool handle, 2004 September 19
Box 1, Folder 72	Potato holder when peeling a potato (attach to countertops or sinks), 2004 November
Box 1, Folder 73	6" x12" mirror to rearview; steam cookers for home; sock stretcher; Velcro replacement, 2004 - 2005
Box 1, Folder 74	The single golf club with moveable weight on the shaft, 2005 October 5
Box 1, Folder 75	3 and 4 sided picture frames, 2005 October 23
Box 1, Folder 76	Idea: "Angular Carpenter's Square", undated
Box 1, Folder 77	Idea: combination=screwdriver, file, scissors, undated
Box 1, Folder 78	Idea: combination hacksaw and file, undated
Box 1, Folder 79	Idea: combination-A ball point pen and a nail file, undated
Box 1, Folder 80	Idea "Flex-Hammer", undated
Box 1, Folder 81	Idea: "Meteor" Spring Hammer, undated
Box 1, Folder 82	Idea: Rubber coated woodscrew, nails, undated
Box 1, Folder 83	Random ideas, undated

Subseries 2: Miscellaneous, 1948 - 2003

Box 4, Drawer 2	Miscellaneous, 1948
Box 1, Drawer 84	Miscellaneous ideas, 1996
Box 1, Drawer 85	Miscellaneous ideas, 1997
Box 1, Drawer 86	Miscellaneous ideas, 1998
Box 1, Drawer 87	Miscellaneous ideas, 1999
Box 1, Drawer 88	Miscellaneous ideas, 2000

Box 1, Drawer 89 Miscellaneous ideas, 2001

Box 1, Drawer 90 Miscellaneous ideas, 2002

Box 1, Drawer 91 Miscellaneous ideas, 2003

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 2: Notebooks, 1960s-1970s, undated

Box 2, Folder 1-3

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 3: Patents, 1945 - 1956

Box 4, Folder 1

Subseries 1: United States Patents, 1945, 1947

Box 4, Drawer 1; Box 1, Folder 92	Multiple Compartment Handbag, United States Patent #2,429,856, 1945
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Box 1, Drawer 93	Magnetic Retainer, United States Patent #2,521,885, 1947
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Subseries 2: Poor Man's Patents, 1955, 1956

Box 4, Folder 3

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 4: : News clippings, 1948, 1981

Box 1, Folder 94

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 5: Photographs, 1948, undated

Box 1, Folder 95

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 6: Prototypes, 1945, 1947

Box 5	Combined Ash Tray and Holder for Smokers' Articles, 1945
Box 3	Magnetic Retainer prototype, 1947

[Return to Table of Contents](#)