



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Challinor Family Home Movie Collection

NMAH.AC.1233

Jeremy Love

2014

Archives Center, National Museum of American History
P.O. Box 37012
Suite 1100, MRC 601
Washington, D.C. 20013-7012
archivescenter@si.edu
<http://americanhistory.si.edu/archives>

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Arrangement.....	3
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	3
Names and Subjects	3
Container Listing	5
Series 1: Motion Picture Film, 1956-1965.....	5

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Challinor Family Home Movies
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1233
Date:	1956-1965
Extent:	1 Cubic foot (7 films; Reels AC1233-OF0001 and AC1233-OF0002 are composite reels created by the Archives Center, National Museum of American History, the former comprising "Children Summer, Fall, and Winter, 1956-1957" and "Challinor Family Home Movie, 1957" and the latter comprising "Guilford, 57-58" and "Challinor Family Home Movie, 1959"; 16mm)
Creator:	Challinor, Joan R. Challinor, David, 1920-2008
Language:	English
Summary:	David Challinor served the Smithsonian Institution in an official capacity for 30 years, eventually becoming the assistant secretary to Sidney Dillon Ripley. Joan R. Challinor became an historian and advocate of library sciences and education. In 1956, however, they were busy with their young family. David only returned to university for graduate school in 1957, in his late 30s. They both went on to have successful careers and active family lives. This collection includes 7 home movie films that document thte Challinor family.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated by Joan Challinor in 2011.

Related Materials

Materials at Other Organizations

The Schlesinger Library of the Radcliff Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University holds the "Papers of Joan R. Challinor, 1848, 1975-2008", which includes her correspondence, meeting and conference materials, articles, speeches, reports, photographs, and audiotapes (Accession #MC 678; T-446).

The Smithsonian Institution Archives holds numerous archival collections, including photographs, papers, files, records, and oral histories related to David Challinor.

Processing Information

When applicable, titles were derived from informal titles written on the original film cans. When an original title did not exist, the Archives Center used the default title [Challinor Family Home Movie] with the appropriate date modifier attached.

Processed by Jeremy Love, intern, June, 2014; supervised by Wendy Shay, audiovisual archivist.

Preferred Citation

Challinor Family Home Movie Collection, 1956-1965, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research on site by appointment. Reference copies do not exist. Use of these materials requires special arrangement with Archives Center staff.

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Biographical / Historical

David Challinor and Joan Ridder Challinor were married in 1952 and lived in Houston, Texas where David worked as a cotton broker, farmer, and then a mortgage banker. They had four children: Julia, Mary, Sarah, and David, and six grandchildren. In the late 1950s, they settled in Connecticut, where David pursued graduate studies in forest ecology at Yale University and during which time the couple made home movies.

From 1960-1964, David Challinor served as the deputy director of Yale's Peabody Museum of Natural History under Sidney Dillon Ripley, and in 1965 became the acting director after Ripley became the Smithsonian's secretary. When in 1966 Challinor received his doctorate from Yale University, Ripley recruited him to serve as the Special Assistant for Tropical Biology of the Smithsonian's Office of the Secretary. From 1967-1971 he served as the deputy director and, subsequently, the director of the Office of International Activities. He then served as Assistant Secretary for Science and Research for sixteen years before becoming the Science Advisor to the Secretary prior to his retirement in 1996 when he was named Scientist Emeritus for the National Zoological Park. He died in 2008, leaving a professional legacy of conservationism.

During Challinor's tenure as Assistant Secretary for Science and Research at the Smithsonian, Joan R. Challinor pursued graduate studies in history at American University, receiving her doctorate in 1982. Her work involved serving on numerous committees and organizations, many of which were library and education related, including the Schlesinger Library Advisory Committee and the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. Through the 1980s and 1990s, she lectured at American University, was a research associate at the National Museum of American History, wrote numerous essays, edited two books, and even produced a documentary film about Thomas Paine. She was also the director of Knight Ridder, Inc., a print media company, from 1989 until 2001. She continues to live and work in the Washington, D.C. area.

Scope and Contents

The collection comprises seven silent 16mm color home movies depicting David and Joan Challinor, their four children, and other family or friends. Subject matter includes the family's home in Connecticut as well as family vacations throughout the northeastern United States and Bermuda, Switzerland, and Iceland.

Arrangement

Collection organized into one series.

Series 1, Motion Picture Film, 1956-1965

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Amateur films
- Biologists
- Camping -- 20th century
- Christmas
- Conservationists
- Family vacations
- Fourth of July celebrations
- Hiking
- Historians
- Holidays
- Naturalists
- Skis and skiing
- Swimming

Types of Materials:

- 16mm motion picture film

Geographic Names:

- Bermuda Islands
- Guilford (Conn.)
- Guilford (Me.)
- Half Dome (Calif.)
- Iceland
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- Mount Snow Ski Resort
- Murten (Switzerland)
- Norfolk (Conn.)
- Noroton Heights (Darien, Conn.)
- Sierra Nevada (Calif. and Nev.)

Switzerland
Vermont
White Mountain National Forest (N.H. and Me.)
Yosemite National Park (Calif.)
Yosemite Valley (Calif.)

Container Listing

Series 1: Motion Picture Film, 1956-1965

7 motion picture films

Includes 16mm motion picture film.

Reel AC1233-
OF0001

Children Summer, Fall, and Winter, 1956-1956-57/Challinor Family Home Movie, 1957, 1956-1957

1 Film reel (silent camera original kodachrome color reversal; 16mm, 805 ft.)

Composite reel created by the Archives Center of two original reels of Challinor family home movies, "Children Summer, Fall, and Winter, 1956-1956-57" and [Challinor Family Home Movie, 1957] assembled in chronological order. Information written on can for original reel 5: "Sheffield Summer, 1957, trip to Maine, Sept. 1957, Fall at Guilford".

Most of the footage features children engaged in outdoor activities with other family or friends. In particular, the children are playing in a kiddie pool, but footage includes visits to a beach and playing baseball. Included is a trip to Maine with footage of commercial fishing boats, especially with nets full of fish. Footage also includes the holiday season. David and Joan Challinor are pictured throughout.

Reel AC1233-
OF0002

Guilford, 57-58/Challinor Family Home Movie, 1959, 1957-1958

1 Film reel (silent camera original kodachrome color reversal; 16mm, 803 ft.)

Composite reel created by the Archives Center of two original reels of Challinor family home movies, "Guilford, 57-58" and [Challinor Family Home Movie, 1959] assembled in chronological order. Information written on can for original reel 6: "1959, children in Guilford and Jesswig Dr. skiing at Stowe, Bousquet, and Mt. Snow, skating at Davis Pond".

Most of the footage features children engaged in various outdoor activities, especially during the holiday season with snow on the ground but also apparently during the springtime, picnicking, biking, and helping with laundry. David and Joan Challinor are pictured throughout, with other family or friends. Included are skiing trips to Vermont and Massachusetts and ice skating at Davis Pond in Guilford, Maine. Footage also includes The Toll House Inn.

Reel AC1233-
OF0003

Noroton in 1950s or 60s, circa 1950-1960

1 Film reel (silent color reversal, print; 16mm, 340 ft.)

Most of the footage features children engaged in outdoor activities, including what might have been a back yard play with children dressed in costumes. David and Joan Challinor are pictured throughout, with other family or friends.

Reel AC1233-
OF0004

Challinor Family Home Movie, 1960-63, 1960-1963

1 Film reel (silent camera original kodachrome color reversal; 16mm, 449 ft.)

Information written on can for original reel 2: "1960 - 4th of July, August in Bermuda, Sept. 1961 - Mt. Washington with Ernst Pralinger, May 1962 -

Noroton, camping in Norfolk, Feb. 1963 - skiing at Mt. Snow with Welch's, Dec. 1963 - skiing with McElhinny's".

Footage includes children and other family or friends engaging in Independence Day celebrations, dressed in costumes and attending a parade in Darien, Connecticut. Included is camping in Norfolk, Connecticut, and skiing in Mt. Snow, Vermont. Footage also includes a family vacation to Bermuda and a visit to Mt. Washington and the Pinkham Notch Camp Centre of Tramping and Skiing in the White Mountain National Forest. David and Joan Challinor are pictured throughout.

Reel AC1233-
OF0005

Switzerland - 1962, 1962

1 Film reel (silent camera original kodachrome color reversal; 16mm, 503 ft.)

Footage features David and Joan Challinor and their children sightseeing in Switzerland. Includes scenery, possibly an art museum, and a clock tower in Murten, Switzerland.

Reel AC1233-
OF0006

Sierra Trip Summer, 1964, 1964

1 Film reel (silent camera original kodachrome color reversal; 16mm, 303 ft.)

Most of the footage features David and Joan Challinor and their children hiking and camping in the Sierra Nevada mountain range, including a mule baggage train and camp activities like playing cards. Included is footage of Half Dome in Yosemite National Park. The trip may have been with family or friends or for a youth group of some kind, given that multiple family groups pictured.

Reel AC1233-0007

Iceland - 1965, 1965

1 Film reel (silent camera original kodachrome color reversal; 16mm, 896 ft.)

Most of the footage features David and Joan Challinor and their children sightseeing in Iceland, including historic sites, Icelandic horses, sunsets, waterfalls, geysers, rapids, farms, sailing, and flying. The family also camps, picnics, goes on a hayride, horseback riding, and swimming. Included is footage of the airstrip when the family arrives on Icelandic Airlines.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)