



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the William M. Rau Steamship Collection

NMAH.AC.1306

NMAH Staff

Archives Center, National Museum of American History

P.O. Box 37012

Suite 1100, MRC 601

Washington, D.C. 20013-7012

archivescenter@si.edu

<https://americanhistory.si.edu/archives>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	William M. Rau Steamship Collection
Date:	1900 - 2007
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1306
Creator:	Rau, William M., 1929-2007 (Collector)
Source:	Ellis, Katherine (Donor)
Extent:	100 Cubic feet
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Collection donated by Katherine Ellis, daughter of William Rau, through his estate, 2013.

Provenance

William M. Rau amassed this collection of memorabilia and ephemera throughout his adult life.

Processing Information

Collection unprocessed.

Preferred Citation

William M. Rau Steamship Collection, 1900-2007, 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.

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

Rau was a Navy veteran and later an officer of the court for New York State and New York City until he retired in 1989. From 1989-2006, he served as the editor of the maritime historical publication of the Steamship Historical Society of America.

Scope and Contents

Approximately 100 cubic feet of photographs, slides, postcards, scrapbooks, brochures, artwork, drawings, and other ephemera documenting engine-powered vessels of the international maritime industry.

Brochures: The brochures are from international passenger lines and cruise lines. They detail both individual ships and shipping lines; they also detail features and services offered by the ship and crew.

Photographs: The photographs, which are captioned, depict ships of all kinds and sizes and in various locales. Some are of specific elements and equipment in the ships, including design elements.

Scrapbooks: Contain photographs, postcards, menus, brochures and flyers, advertisements and clippings. The majority cover passenger and cargo lines, while others are on regions or specific topics.

Postcard: include both commercially printed images and photographic postcards sent to Rau by friends.

Drawings and oversized materials, include blueprints of ships, dock and harbor facilities; artwork; posters; maps and charts; maritime calendars, large photographs, and miscellany.

Arrangement

The collection is divided into five series.

Series 1: Scrapbooks

Series 2: Brochures

Series 3: Photographs and slides

Series 4: Postcards

Series 5: Drawings and oversized materials.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Boats and boating
- Cruise ships
- Ferries
- Ocean liners
- Passenger ships
- Postcards -- 20th century
- Shipping
- Ships
- Steamboats
- Tourism
- Travel

Types of Materials:

- Advertisements
- Blueprints
- Brochures
- Calendars

Drawings
Menus -- 20th century
Photographs -- 20th century
Scrapbooks -- 20th century
Slides (photographs) -- 20th century

Names:

Ellis, Katherine