



Smithsonian
National Museum of the American Indian

Herbert U. Silleck photographs

Emily Moazami

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Museum of the American Indian
Title:	Herbert U. Silleck photographs
Date:	circa 1924-1944
Identifier:	NMAI.AC.223
Creator:	Silleck, Herbert Underhill (Photographer)
Extent:	260 Photographs
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection contains 260 photographs depicting many American Indian communities including Diné (Navajo); Hopi; Isleta Pueblo; Pikuni (Piegan) [Blackfeet Nation, Browning, Montana]; Taos Pueblo; and Lacandon Maya, as well as others. Photographs were shot by amateur photographer Herbert Underhill Silleck circa 1924-1944 during his travels with his wife Agnes Smartt Silleck.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Gift of Agnes Smartt Silleck, 1962.

Separated Materials

Agnes Smartt Silleck also donated a sash, hair tie, and a painting to the museum, which can now be found under object numbers 23/2012 - 23/2014.

Processing Information

Emily Moazami, Supervisory Archivist, 2020.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Herbert U. Silleck photographs, image #, NMAI.AC.223; National Museum of the American Indian Archives Center, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

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Biographical / Historical

Relatively little is known about Herbert Underhill Silleck. He was born in New York in April 24, 1881 and worked for the Brooklyn Trust Company for about 47 years. He married Agnes Smartt on June 1, 1905 and they had one daughter Doris G. Silbeck (born 1918). He died in New York on March 14, 1961. Based on Herbert's photographic record, it appears that he was an amateur photographer who traveled throughout the western United States.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains 260 photographs (196 film negatives and 64 photos in an album) shot by amateur photographer Herbert Underhill Silleck during his travels with his wife Agnes Smartt Silleck circa 1924-1944.

The photographs depict many American Indian communities in western United States including Diné (Navajo), Hopi, Isleta Pueblo, Pikuni (Piegan) [Blackfeet Nation, Browning, Montana], Taos Pueblo, and Lacandon Maya. The images include scenes of candid portraits; powwows in Flagstaff, Arizona and Montana; Pueblos; tourist goods for sale; Aztec Ruins National Monument, New Mexico, among other scenes.

Arrangement

The photographs are intellectually arranged by subject matter and physically arranged in boxes by image #.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Diné (Navajo)
- Hopi Pueblo
- Isleta Pueblo
- Lacandon Maya
- Photographs
- Pikuni (Piegan) [Blackfeet Nation, Browning, Montana]
- Powwows
- Taos Pueblo

Cultures:

- Diné (Navajo)
- Hopi Pueblo
- Isleta Pueblo
- Lacandon Maya
- Pikuni (Piegan) [Blackfeet Nation, Browning, Montana]
- Taos Pueblo

Container Listing

Series 1: Flagstaff Powwow, circa 1936-1941

84 Negatives (photographic)

Box 429-432 (film negatives)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Photographer: Silleck, Herbert Underhill

Scope and N47552-N47561, N47862-N47563, N47855, N47859-N47862, N47880-N47943

Contents: This series contains 81 negatives depicting Diné (Navajo), Hopi, and other communities in New Mexico and Arizona in 1936 and 1941. The bulk of the photographs depict an annual powwow in Flagstaff, Arizona in 1941 including photos of a various powwow competitions and games; parades; carnival rides such as a ferris wheel and merry-go-round; and food stands. Photographs were shot by amateur photographer Herbert Underhill Silleck during his travels with his wife Agnes Smartt Silleck.

Culture: Diné (Navajo)

Hopi Pueblo

Topic: Powwows

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Series 2: Diné (Navajo) and Hopi, circa 1929-1936

33 Negatives (photographic)

Box 429-432 (film negatives)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Photographer: Silleck, Herbert Underhill

Scope and Contents: N47402, N47423-N47425, N47539, N47542, N47545, N47546, N47551, N47592, N47599,

N47676, N47752, N47753, N47770, N47792-N47799, N47800-N47812

This series contains 36 photographs depicting Diné (Navajo) and Hopi Indians circa 1929-1936. The scenes include candid portraits; dancers at the Grand Canyon in Arizona; crafts on display outdoors at the Hopi Fair at the Museum of Northern Arizona at Flagstaff and at train station; landscape of Painted Desert, Arizona; and portraits shot in Wickenburg, Arizona. The photographs were shot by amateur photographer Herbert Underhill Silleck during his travels with his wife Agnes Smartt Silleck.

Culture: Diné (Navajo)
Hopi Pueblo

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Series 3: Taos Pueblo, circa 1936-1944

36 Negatives (photographic)

Box 429-432 (film negatives)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Photographer: Silleck, Herbert Underhill

Scope and N47813-N47848

Contents: This series contains 36 photographs depicting the Taos Pueblo community in New Mexico circa 1936-1944. The bulk of the photographs depict views of Taos Pueblo including adobe buildings, churches, and landscapes such as waterways. Other photographs depict candid portraits and photographs of dancers. Photographs were shot by amateur photographer Herbert Underhill Silleck during his travels with his wife Agnes Smartt Silleck.

Culture: Taos Pueblo

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Series 4: Isleta Pueblo, circa 1936-1938

11 Negatives (photographic)

Box 429-432 (film negatives)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Photographer: Silleck, Herbert Underhill

Scope and N47781-N47791

Contents: This series contains 11 photographs depicting the Isleta Pueblo community in New Mexico circa 1936-1938. Photographs include scenes of the Isleta Pueblo and church; candid portraits; roads; a roadside pottery stand. Photographs were shot by amateur photographer Herbert Underhill Silleck during his travels with his wife Agnes Smartt Silleck.

Culture: Isleta Pueblo

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Series 5: Pikuni (Piegan) , circa 1924-1941

16 Negatives (photographic)

Box 429-432 (film negatives)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Photographer: Silleck, Herbert Underhill

Scope and N47434-N47449

Contents: This series contains 16 photographs depicting the Pikuni (Piegan) [Blackfeet Nation, Browning, Montana] community circa 1924-1941. Scenes include candid outdoor portraits; tipis and tents; indoor powwow; and traveling on horse. Photographs were shot by amateur photographer Herbert Underhill Silleck during his travels with his wife Agnes Smartt Silleck.

Culture: Pikuni (Piegan) [Blackfeet Nation, Browning, Montana]

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Series 6: Lacandon Maya, circa 1940

4 Negatives (photographic)

Box 429-432 (film negatives)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Photographer: Silleck, Herbert Underhill

Scope and N47944-N47947

Contents: This series contains 4 photographs depicting Lacandon Maya in Chiapas State, Mexico circa 1940. The scenes include a man cooking and candid portraits. The photographs were shot by amateur photographer Herbert Underhill Silleck during his travels with his wife Agnes Smartt Silleck.

Culture: Lacandon Maya

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Series 7: Aztec Ruins National Monument, 1941

12 Negatives (photographic)

Box 429-432 (film negatives)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Photographer: Silleck, Herbert Underhill

Scope and Contents: This series contains 12 photographs depicting the Aztec Ruins National Monument in New Mexico in 1941. The scenes include photographs of the village structural remains; interior of a kiva; roadside signs; and the visitors' center. The photographs were shot by amateur photographer Herbert Underhill Silleck during his travels with his wife Agnes Smartt Silleck.

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Series 8: Photo Album- Taos Pueblo and Isleta Pueblo, circa 1936-1938

Box 1

Photographer: Silleck, Herbert Underhill

Scope and P26384-P26447

Contents:

This album contains 64 photographs, the bulk of which are prints made from the negatives in this collection. The prints in the album include depictions of Taos Pueblo, Isleta Pueblo, and unidentified pueblos circa 1936-1938. The photos include scenes of the candid portraits of individuals and groups; pueblos; the interior and exterior of mission churches; a young group of Taos Pueblo dancers; landscape views; and roadside pottery stand, among other scenes.

The photographs were shot by amateur photographer Herbert Underhill Silleck during his travels with his wife Agnes Smartt Silleck. The photographs were compiled into a photograph album by the Sillecks and labeled #48.

Culture:

Taos Pueblo
Isleta Pueblo

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