Descriptive Summary

Title: Buffum Family Papers

Dates: 1913-1991

Collection Number: 2006_01

Creator/Collector: Buffum Buffums' (department store)

Extent: 1 document box and 2 flat oversize boxes

Repository: Sherman Library and Gardens

Corona del Mar, California 92625

Abstract: The collection consists of materials related to the business interests and activities of various members of the Buffum family and the Buffums' Department Store.

Language of Material: English

Access

Collection is open for research.

Preferred Citation

Buffum Family Papers. Sherman Library and Gardens

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated to the Sherman Library by Richard Buffum, 2001.

Biography/Administrative History

Brothers Charles Abel Buffum and Edwin Emery Buffum came to Long Beach, California, in 1904 and co-founded The Mercantile Company, which they renamed Buffums' Department Store in 1912. C.A. Buffum also served as mayor of Long Beach from 1921-1924, and he died in 1936; his brother, E.E. Buffum, died twenty years later. It was under the leadership of C.A. Buffum's son, Harry Buffum, that the company expanded into Santa Ana with an additional store in 1950, later growing to become a chain of sixteen department stores throughout Southern California. David Jones Ltd., an Australian retailer, acquired Buffums' in 1974, and due to financial difficulties Buffums' closed its doors in 1991.

Scope and Content of Collection

The collection consists of correspondence, reports, ephemera, photographs and clippings related to the business interests and activities of various members of the Buffum family and the Buffums' Department Store. A majority of the materials in the collection relate to Harry Buffum, the son of Charles Abel Buffum, who served as president of the company for thirty years. Of note in the collection are a large number of photographs and 35 mm slides depicting various window displays, models, and stores. There is also a sizeable leather-bound scrapbook filled with clippings which span the years 1935-1960.

Indexing Terms

Department stores - California, Southern - History - Sources

Buffum, Charles Abel

Buffum

Buffums' (department store) - History - Sources

Long Beach (Calif.) - History - 20th century

Buffum Family Papers Finding Aid

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Box:Folder 1:3  Reports - Annual reports 1964-1965
Box:Folder 1:4  Reports - Buffums’ spring 1954 fashion campaign 1953
Box:Folder 1:5  Reports - 50th anniversary audit report 1954
Box:Folder 1:6  Reports - Rotary Club of Long Beach, Calif. 1955
Box:Folder 1:7  Anniversary card for Harry Buffum n.d.
Box:Folder 1:9  Christmas greetings from Harry Buffum 1957-1965
Box:Folder 1:10  City of Hope. The Torch of Hope Award - Harry Buffum 1961
Box:Folder 1:11  Photograph of Harry Buffum n.d.
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Box:Folder 1:13  Photographs - Buffums’ - Window displays - 1940s 1940s
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