Finding Aid to the Photographs from Peoples Temple records, 1959-1982 (bulk 1972-1978), MSP 3800

Finding aid prepared by Denice Stephenson.
California Historical Society
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San Francisco, CA, 94105-4014
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2007
Title: Photographs from Peoples Temple records

Date (inclusive): 1959-1982

Date (bulk): 1972-1978

Collection Identifier: MSP 3800

Creator: Peoples Temple.

Extent: 7 boxes, 25 albums (10.5 linear feet)

Contributing Institution: California Historical Society

678 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA, 94105-4014
(415) 357-1848
reference@calhist.org

URL: http://www.californiahistoricalsociety.org/

Location of Materials: Collection is stored onsite.

Language of Materials: Collection materials are in English.

Abstract: Consists of photographic prints of various sizes pertaining to Peoples Temple, including individual and group portraits, publicity photographs, and snapshots. Includes images of church services, recreational outings, and Peoples Temple members working at various pursuits, including farming, cooking, and woodworking. Includes interior and exterior shots of Peoples Temple churches in the United States, images of Peoples Temple members in Jonestown and Georgetown, Guyana, and approximately 6500 identification photographs of 3800 Peoples Temple members and others who attended church services in California. Also includes negatives and two slides. Unidentified Peoples Temple members took the bulk of the photographs before the deaths in Jonestown, Guyana, in November 1978.

Restrictions on Access

All researchers must sign the Access Agreement form, confirming that they have read and understood the restrictions outlined in the document Restricted Materials in the Peoples Temple Records, MS 3800. This document, and the Access Agreement form, are available at the reference desk or can be sent electronically.

Collection is open for research, with the following exceptions:

Photographs from members' legal papers (Box 4, folder 44b) are restricted. Restrictions on these photographs may be reevaluated if a researcher can show proof that the person is deceased or has provided proof of permission by the party named to CHS. The researcher must locate the individual and present CHS with proof of permission, either by email or letter.

Photographs from advice correspondence (Box 4, folder 45) and photographs from medical records (Box 4, folder 46) are permanently sealed and closed.

Restrictions on Reproduction and Use

Passport photographs, membership photographs, and other individual portraits of former members who are still living require the written permission of that person to be reproduced or published. The researcher must locate the individual and present CHS with proof of permission, either by email or letter.

Permission for the use of negatives and slides must be obtained from the Director of Library and Archives.

Publication Rights

All requests to reproduce, publish, quote from or otherwise use collection materials must be submitted in writing to the Director of Library and Archives, North Baker Research Library, California Historical Society, 678 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94105. Consent is given on behalf of the California Historical Society as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission from the copyright owner. Such permission must be obtained from the copyright owner. Restrictions also apply to digital representations of the original materials. Use of digital files is restricted to research and educational purposes.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Photographs from Peoples Temple records, MSP 3800, California Historical Society.

Related Collections

Related collections include Peoples Temple records, MS 3800; Photographs of Peoples Temple in the United States and Guyana, PC 010; Photographs from Margaret T. Singer materials on Peoples Temple, MSP 4123; Photographs from Ross E. Case collection on Peoples Temple, MSP 4062; Photographs from Moore Family papers, MSP 3802; Photographs from John R. Hall research materials on Peoples Temple, 3803; and Photographs from Peoples Temple miscellany collection, MSP.
Acquisition Information
Photographs from Peoples Temple records were transferred from Peoples Temple records, MS 3800. The Peoples Temple records were given to the California Historical Society by orders of the California Superior Court and of the Guyana High Court, facilitated by Robert H. Fabian, in June 1983.
Additions were made by Stephan Jones in 2003; these photographs were received from Charles Garry, attorney for Peoples Temple from 1977 to 1978.

System of Arrangement
The collection has been divided into five series: Series 1: General photographs; Series 2: Membership photographs; Series 3: Passport photographs; Series 4: Photographs of Peoples Temple facilities and property; and Series 5: Photographs from correspondence and legal files.

Processing Information

Organizational History
Peoples Temple began as a church founded by Jim and Marceline Jones and a small group of parishioners in Indianapolis in 1955. As pastor, Jim Jones preached to a racially-integrated congregation during Pentecostal-based services that included healings and sermons on integration and class conflicts. Peoples Temple conducted food drives; opened a "free restaurant" that served thousands of meals to the city's poor in the early 1960s; operated nursing homes; and hosted weekly television and radio programs featuring their integrated choir. The church became well known in the Indianapolis press for the members' integration activities and for their assertions of their pastor's gifts as a healer. The church became affiliated with the Disciples of Christ denomination in 1960.
In the summer of 1965, the Jones family and approximately one hundred Peoples Temple members relocated to Redwood Valley, a rural community eight miles north of Ukiah in Mendocino County. Peoples Temple conducted church services and meetings in rented and borrowed spaces until 1969 when they finished building their own church with a swimming pool, an animal shelter, gardens, and a community kitchen. By this time, the church's membership had grown to three hundred.
In 1970, Jim Jones began to preach in cities throughout California. Recruiting drives in African American communities in San Francisco and Los Angeles increased Peoples Temple membership to over twenty-five hundred by 1973. Some members lived in communal housing and worked full time for Peoples Temple. Others contributed significant portions of their income and property to the church. The church's operations included real estate management; home care facilities for seniors and youths; publishing and bookkeeping services; mail order services; and maintenance of a fleet of buses to transport members to services throughout the state and across the country. Tens of thousands of people, including politicians and members of other congregations, attended Peoples Temple services between 1970 and 1977.
The leadership of Peoples Temple voted to establish an agricultural and rural development mission in Guyana, South America in the fall of 1973. Over the next two years, members traveled to Guyana to scout a location for the mission; establish a residence in Georgetown, the capital of Guyana; clear the land; and begin construction at the site. The building plans for the community which became known as Jonestown included farm buildings, a large communal kitchen, medical facilities, schools, dormitory-style housing, small cabins, a day care center and a large open-air pavilion that became the community's central meeting place.
By 1976, Peoples Temple had moved its headquarters from Redwood Valley to San Francisco and had become involved in citywide electoral politics. They published their own newspaper, Peoples Forum; staged rallies and events for local and national political figures; and were vocal in their support of causes such as freedom of the press, affirmative action, and gay rights. In the fall of 1976, recently elected Mayor George Moscone appointed Jim Jones to the San Francisco Housing Authority. Jones served as its chairman until he left for Guyana the following year.
In 1977, former members and relatives organized a group called the Concerned Relatives to protest Jones's treatment of church members. Child custody issues and living conditions in Jonestown were at the center of the conflict between Peoples Temple and the Concerned Relatives. Both sides filed lawsuits, sought public support through the media, and appealed to government officials for protection. Media coverage of Peoples Temple practices and political activities led the government to investigate the church's financial and social welfare programs. Peoples Temple began to close many of their businesses, sell their properties, and relocate hundreds of their members to Guyana.
In response to issues raised by the media and former members, California Congressman Leo Ryan scheduled a trip to Jonestown in November 1978. By this time, more than a thousand Peoples Temple members were living in Guyana. His staff, members of Concerned Relatives, Embassy officials, and journalists accompanied Ryan on an overnight visit to Jonestown. As the congressional party left for the airstrip at Port Kaituma, sixteen disaffected Jonestown residents
accompanied Ryan. As the group boarded two small airplanes at the airstrip, Peoples Temple members drove up on tractors and began shooting. They killed Ryan, three journalists, and a Peoples Temple member. That same day, November 18, 1978, more than nine hundred people died, most by cyanide poisoning, in Jonestown; four other members died in Georgetown.

More than eighty Peoples Temple members survived the deaths in Guyana: people who lived through the airstrip shootings; Jonestown residents who left the community before and during the poisonings; and members who were in Georgetown and on boats. Hundreds of Peoples Temple members had remained in the U.S., many of them in California.

After the deaths, Peoples Temple members in San Francisco provided the government with records to assist in identifying the dead. All Peoples Temple assets were frozen and placed under court supervision and the process of dissolving Peoples Temple began. The court oversaw the burial of hundreds of unclaimed and unidentified bodies from Jonestown. The court also set up a system to handle what would ultimately total $1.8 billion in claims filed against the Peoples Temple estate. Claims were filed by the governments of Guyana and the United States; people injured at the airstrip; relatives of the deceased; and people who had turned over property to Peoples Temple. In 1979 and 1980, Congress held hearings on the death of Congressman Ryan and on cult phenomenon in the U.S.

By 1983, the court recovered and disbursed over $13 million, including interest, in assets recovered from cash found in the U.S. and Guyana, from international accounts found in Panama, Caracas, Grenada and other countries, and from the sale of Peoples Temple properties and assets. In June 1983, the court approved the transfer of the records of Peoples Temple to the California Historical Society.

Scope and Contents
Consists of photographic prints of various sizes pertaining to Peoples Temple, including individual and group portraits, publicity photographs, and snapshots. Includes images of church services, recreational outings, and Peoples Temple members working at various pursuits, including farming, cooking, and woodworking. Includes interior and exterior shots of Peoples Temple churches in the United States, images of Peoples Temple members in Jonestown and Georgetown, Guyana, and approximately 6500 identification photographs of 3800 Peoples Temple members and others who attended church services in California. Also includes negatives and two slides. Unidentified Peoples Temple members took the bulk of the photographs before the deaths in Jonestown, Guyana, in November 1978.

Peoples Temple members who worked in photography or were amateur photographers included Eugene Chaikin, T. Clancy, Don Jackson, Elmer Mertle, Ken Norton, J. Randolph, Chris Rozynko, and E. Smith.

Many of the photographs are undated. Dates in the container list and in captions have been supplied based on information from Stephan Jones and other former Peoples Temple members who assisted in the identification of photographs.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Jones, Jim, 1931-1978--Portraits.
Peoples Temple--Pictorial works.
Identification photographs.
Jonestown (Guyana)--Pictorial works.
Negatives.
Photograph albums.
Photographic prints.
Portrait photographs.
Series 1: General photographs circa 1959-1978

Physical Description: 1200.0 photographic prints

Scope and Contents

Consists of approximately 1200 photographic prints of various sizes, including group portraits, publicity photographs and snapshots. Includes images of church services, recreational outings, and Peoples Temple members working at various pursuits, including farming, cooking, and woodworking. Stephan Jones wrote many of the captions on the back of the photographs in 1999-2003. Among the locations pictured in the series are California cities, including Redwood Valley, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, and locations in Guyana, including Jonestown and Georgetown. Also includes several scenic shots and laminated membership cards with identification photographs. Photographs of Jim Jones in Box 2, folders 17-22, include images from the Peoples Temple media files and images used in promotional offerings in direct mail solicitations. Box 3, folders 31-32, contain images of Peoples Temple members preparing shipments of supplies for transport to Guyana and at United States and Guyana airports. Box 3, folders 33-39, include images of Jim Jones, early settlers of Jonestown, Guyanese laborers, and portraits of Jonestown residents.

Box 1, Folders 1-4
Box 1, Folder 5
Box 1, Folder 6
Box 1, Folders 7-8
Box 1, Folders 9-14
Album 22
Box 1, Folder 15
Box 2, Folder 16
Box 2, Folders 17-18
Box 2, Folder 19
Box 2, Folder 20
Box 2, Folder 21
Box 2, Folder 22
Box 2, Folder 23
Box 3, Folder 31
Box 3, Folder 32
Box 3, Folders 33-39
Box 3, Folder 41

Church services 1972-1976
Choir, band, and dance groups circa 1970-1975
Benefit concerts circa 1976
Cross country travel circa 1970-1976
Members 1970-1976

Membership cards, church services, members 1972-1976
Marceline Jones 1972-1977
Jim Jones 1972-1976

Jim Jones with children circa 1972-1976
Jim Jones with seniors circa 1959-1976
Jim Jones with public officials circa 1975-1977
Jim Jones with animals 1970-1973
Patti Chastain drawings, members’ artwork undated
Preparation of shipments to agricultural mission 1974-1976
Members traveling to Jonestown, Guyana 1976-1977
Members in Jonestown, Guyana 1974-1978

Georgetown, Guyana, street scenes circa 1975

Series 2: Membership photographs circa 1974-1977

Physical Description: 3400.0 photographic prints

Existence and Location of Copies

Digital reproductions of photographs of Peoples Temple members who died in Jonestown may be viewed at http://jonestown.sdsu.edu/.

Scope and Contents

Consists of approximately 3400 small, color identification photographs of Peoples Temple members and others who attended church services. These instantly developed photographs were used to create Peoples Temple membership cards such as those found in Album 22. The bulk of the photographs were taken after services at churches in Los Angeles and San Francisco.

System of Arrangement
Arranged alphabetically.

Restrictions on Reproduction and Use
Passport photographs, membership photographs, and other individual portraits of former members who are still living require the written permission of that person to be reproduced or published. The researcher must locate the individual and present CHS with proof of permission, either by email or letter.
Series 2: Membership photographs circa 1974-1977

Album 1  Adams-Byrd circa 1974-1977
Album 2  Cagle-Flanagan circa 1974-1977
Album 3  Fletcher-Ivy circa 1974-1977
Album 4  Jackson-Lyons circa 1974-1977
Album 5  Mack-Pursley circa 1974-1977
Album 6  Quan-Swinney circa 1974-1977
Album 7  Tabb-Zachary circa 1974-1977

Series 3: Passport photographs circa 1974-1977

Physical Description: 11100.0 items
System of Arrangement
Albums 8-21 and Boxes 5-7 are arranged alphabetically. Albums 23-25 are arranged numerically by original binder and negative number.
Existence and Location of Copies
Digital reproductions of photographs of Peoples Temple members who died in Jonestown may be viewed at http://jonestown.sdsu.edu/.
Scope and Contents
Consists of approximately 3100 black and white identification photographs of Peoples Temple members and others who attended church services to be used for passport applications for travel from the United States to Guyana. The bulk of the photographs were taken after services at churches in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Many of the images are contact prints developed and printed by Peoples Temple members. Also includes approximately 3000 duplicate images and three albums of approximately 5000 negatives.
Restrictions on Reproduction and Use
Passport photographs, membership photographs, and other individual portraits of former members who are still living require the written permission of that person to be reproduced or published. The researcher must locate the individual and present CHS with proof of permission, either by email or letter.

Album 8  Abrams-Boutte, L. circa 1974-1977
Album 9  Boutte, M.-Carter, M. circa 1974-1977
Album 10  Carter, M.-Davis, B. circa 1974-1977
Album 11  Davis, C.-Ewing circa 1974-1977
Album 12  Fain-Gray circa 1974-1977
Album 13  Greaves-Ivy circa 1974-1977
Album 14  Jackson-Jones, Reba circa 1974-1977
Album 15  Jones, Rome-Lyons circa 1974-1978
Album 16  Macklin-Monroe, L. circa 1974-1977
Album 17  Monroe, M.-Pikes circa 1974-1977
Album 18  Pinkey-Ryles circa 1974-1977
Album 19  Saddler-Smith, W. circa 1974-1977
Album 20  Smith, Y.-Tyler circa 1974-1977
Album 21  Umblas-Young circa 1974-1977
Albums 23-25  Passport negatives circa 1974-1977
Boxes 5-7  Duplicate and unidentified passport images circa 1974-1977


Physical Description: 60.0 photographic prints
Scope and Contents
Consists of approximately 60 photographic prints of Peoples Temple churches and related buildings in California. Also includes images of landscapes, vehicles involved in accidents, members' personal real estate properties, and boats in Guyana.
System of Arrangement
Arranged by location or type of property.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box/Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 2, Folders 24-26</td>
<td>Redwood Valley, California 1970-1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2, Folder 27</td>
<td>Mendocino County, California undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2, Folder 28</td>
<td>San Francisco, California 1973-1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2, Folder 29</td>
<td>Los Angeles, California circa 1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2, Folder 30</td>
<td>Machinery and trucks 1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 40</td>
<td>Boats 1974-1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 28</td>
<td>Real estate and motor vehicles circa 1970-1976</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Series 5: Photographs from correspondence and legal files circa 1972-1982, undated**

**Physical Description:** 40.0 photographic prints

**Scope and Contents:**
Consists of approximately 40 photographic prints separated from correspondence and legal files in the Peoples Temple records, MS 3800, including photographs of correspondents seeking advice from Peoples Temple attorneys and photographs of Peoples Temple members used as evidence in *Peoples Temple of the Disciples of Christ vs. The Attorney General of California*.

**Restrictions on Access:**
Photographs from members' legal papers (Box 4, folder 44b) are restricted. Restrictions on these photographs may be reevaluated if a researcher can show proof that the person is deceased or has provided proof of permission by the party named to CHS. The researcher must locate the individual and present CHS with proof of permission, either by email or letter.

Photographs from advice correspondence (Box 4, folder 45) and photographs from medical records (Box 4, folder 46) are permanently sealed and closed.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 44a</td>
<td>Photographs from <em>Peoples Temple of the Disciples of Christ v. Attorney General of California</em> 1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 4, Folder 44b</td>
<td>Photographs from members' legal papers undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 4, Folder 45</td>
<td>Photographs from advice correspondence 1972, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 4, Folder 46</td>
<td>Photographs from medical records 1982</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>