A guide to the Al Key photographs, 1951-1959

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A Guide to the Al Key photographs

P78-336a

San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, National Park Service

2013, National Park Service

Title: Al Key photographs
Date: 1951-1959
Identifier/Call Number: P78-336a (SAFR 23376)
Creator: Key, Al
Physical Description: 12 items.
Repository: San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, Historic Documents Department
Building E, Fort Mason
San Francisco, CA 94123
Abstract: The Al Key photographs, 1951-1959, (SAFR 23376, P78-336a) are comprised of images photographed by Al Key in San Francisco, California, showing the San Francisco Maritime Museum and Aquatic Park area. The collection has been processed to the Item level and is open for use.
Physical Location: San Francisco Maritime NHP, Historic Documents Department
Language(s): In English.
Access
This collection is open for use unless otherwise noted.
Publication and Use Rights
Some material may be copyrighted or restricted. It is the researcher's obligation to determine and satisfy copyright or other case restrictions when publishing or otherwise distributing materials found in the collections.
Processing Note
Note that in some cases multiple Items appear on one film strip; this has been noted at the Item level in the physical description field when applicable.
The descriptions in this collection guide were compiled using the best available sources of information. Such sources include the creator's annotations or descriptions, collection accession files, primary and secondary source material and subject matter experts. While every effort was made to provide accurate information, in the event that you find any errors in this guide please contact the reference staff in order for us to evaluate and make corrections to this guide.
Please cite the title and collection number in any correspondence with our staff.
Preferred Citation
[Item description], [Location within collection organization identified by Collection Number/Series Number/File Unit Number/Item Number], P78-336a (SAFR 23376), Al Key photographs, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park
Acquisition Information
SAFR-00001
GOGA-00789
SAFR-00001, GOGA-00789. This collection was a gift from Al Key. It was formally accessioned on June 1, 1973. The SFMM accession form notes that the gift was originally received on October 26, 1970; however, there is no such entry recorded in the SFMM accession ledger.
SAFR-00001 is a blanket accession that was transferred from the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) to the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park in September 1988. GGNRA had previously acquired the collection from the San Francisco Maritime Museum when it became a unit of the National Park Service in 1977.
GOGA-00789 was transferred from the J. Porter Shaw Library to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) in February 1985.
Historical or Biographical Note
No biographical information could be found on Al Key.
The San Francisco Maritime Museum Association was established in 1950 and was one of the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park's predecessor organizations. It subsequent names were the San Francisco Maritime State Historic Park (established in 1956), the National Maritime Museum (established in 1977 as part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area) and the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (established in 1988) which is the name it is still known by today.

In 1941 the San Francisco Museum of Science and Industry opened through the efforts of Mrs. Alma de Bretteville Spreckels. It was comprised mainly of an impressive collection of ship models and artifacts, which were exhibited at Aquatic Park and various other locations in the Bay Area during World War II.

Karl Kortum, a maritime history enthusiast and able bodied seaman freshly returned from a voyage on the bark KAIULANI (1948), contacted Mrs. Spreckels to discuss his vision of a maritime museum for San Francisco. He believed that historic ships, on exhibit and available to the public, would create a more interesting and economically viable museum than ship models. The San Francisco Maritime Museum Association (SFMA) was formed in 1950 and San Francisco Maritime Museum’s opening day was on May 27, 1951.

In 1954, the San Francisco Maritime Museum Association undertook the purchase and restoration of the historic sailing vessel BALCLUTHA (built 1886; ship, 3m). A year later, after extensive restoration primarily through volunteer efforts, BALCLUTHA opened to the public at Pier 43.

The San Francisco Maritime State Historic Park was established in 1956 and existed under this name until 1977 when it became the National Maritime Museum, part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. In 1988 the National Maritime Museum (sometimes referred to as the Maritime Unit) became a separate National Park called the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, the name it is still known by today.

The San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (SFMNHP) provides services for millions of visitors annually and acts as a custodian for historic vessels, small watercraft, museum artifacts, archives and a maritime library. The SFMNHP is responsible for maintaining 35 acres of urban parkland which include the Aquatic Park Bathhouse (a National Historic Landmark which serves as a museum exhibit facility), the Hyde Street Pier (where the historic vessels are moored), and the Haslett Warehouse. Five of the historic vessels moored on Hyde Street Pier are designated National Historic Landmarks: the ALMA (built 1891; scow schooner), BALCLUTHA, EUREKA (built 1890; paddle ferry), HERCULES (built 1907; tugboat), and C.A. THAYER (built 1895; schooner, 3m). The park also operates a library and archives in a Historic Landmark building at the Fort Mason Center, which houses a variety of documents, vessel plans, photographs, motion picture film, books, periodicals and oral histories.

[Agency History written by SAFR staff (primarily Lisbit Bailey). Slightly revised by Amy Croft, October 2011 and June 2013.]

**Collection Scope and Content**

The Al Key photographs, 1951-1959, (SAFR 23376, P78-336a) are comprised of images photographed by Al Key in San Francisco, California, showing the San Francisco Maritime Museum and Aquatic Park area. The collection has been processed to the Item level and is open for use.

Contains photographs taken by Al Key in the Aquatic Park area of San Francisco, California, 1951-1959. There are 12 black-and-white negatives on 6 sheets of safety film. Two photographs document activities held on the San Francisco Maritime Museum’s opening day, May 27, 1951, showing crowds of people as well as the Virginia & Truckee Railroad steam locomotive No. 21 (named after J. W. Bowker) and the Western Pacific Railroad passenger car No. 402. Seven photographs taken on Beach Street show the San Francisco Maritime Museum bathhouse and the Virginia & Truckee Railroad steam locomotive No. 21. In addition, there are three photographs of Aquatic Park Cove, one of which includes FORT SUTTER (built 1912; paddle riverboat) laid up.

**Collection Arrangement**

No arrangement due to the small size of the collection.

**Related Materials**

Related photograph collection: The SFMNHP Classified photograph collection contains additional photographs of the San Francisco Maritime Museum's opening day (see Items A12.24411.01-.15), Aquatic Park, and FORT SUTTER (built 1912; paddle riverboat).


Researchers should note that there are other books and collections with materials related to the San Francisco Maritime Museum and Aquatic Park in the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park. They can search the Park's web catalog.
Subjects and Indexing Terms
Maritime museums
Steam locomotives
Paddle steamers
San Francisco Maritime Museum
Fort Sutter (built 1912; paddle riverboat)
San Francisco (Calif.)
Aquatic Park (San Francisco, Calif.)
Black-and-white negatives

Shared collection box
Item No. 01. Man aboard the Virginia & Truckee Railroad steam locomotive No. 21 on Beach Street, San Francisco, California, 1951-1953
Creator/Collector: Key, Al
Extent: 1 photograph.
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white safety negative, 1.75 x 1.75 in. Items 01-03 are on the same 1.875 x 5.375 in. negative strip.

Shared collection box
Item No. 02. Virginia & Truckee Railroad steam locomotive No. 21 on Beach Street outside the San Francisco Maritime Museum, San Francisco, California, 1951-1953
Creator/Collector: Key, Al
Extent: 1 photograph.
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white safety negative, 1.75 x 1.75 in. Items 01-03 are on the same 1.875 x 5.375 in. negative strip.

Shared collection box
Item No. 03. San Francisco Maritime Museum as seen from Beach Street, San Francisco, California, 1951-1953
Creator/Collector: Key, Al
Extent: 1 photograph.
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white safety negative, 1.75 x 1.75 in. Items 01-03 are on the same 1.875 x 5.375 in. negative strip.

Shared collection box
Item No. 04. Aquatic Park as seen from the San Francisco Maritime Museum, looking toward Black Point, San Francisco, California, 1951-1953
Creator/Collector: Key, Al
Extent: 1 photograph.
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white safety negative, 1.75 x 1.75 in. Items 04-06 are on the same 1.875 x 5.5 in. negative strip.

Shared collection box
Item No. 05. Virginia & Truckee Railroad steam locomotive No. 21, front view, on Beach Street outside the San Francisco Maritime Museum, San Francisco, California, 1951-1953
Creator/Collector: Key, Al
Extent: 1 photograph.
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white safety negative, 1.75 x 1.75 in. Items 04-06 are on the same 1.875 x 5.5 in. negative strip.
| Shared collection box | Item No. 06. **Virginia & Truckee Railroad steam locomotive No. 21, side view, on Beach Street outside the San Francisco Maritime Museum, San Francisco, California, 1951-1953**  
Creator/Collector: Key, Al  
Extent: 1 photograph.  
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white safety negative, 1.75 x 1.75 in. Items 04-06 are on the same 1.875 x 5.5 in. negative strip. |
| Shared collection box | Item No. 07. **Crowd of spectators gathered for the opening day of the San Francisco Maritime Museum, San Francisco, California, 1951 May 27**  
Creator/Collector: Key, Al  
Extent: 1 photograph.  
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white safety negative, 1.75 x 1.75 in. Items 07-08 are on the same 1.875 x 3.625 in. negative strip.  
Scope and Content Note  
The crowd is gathered outside the entrance to the museum on Beach Street. Virginia & Truckee Railroad steam locomotive No. 21 and Western Pacific Railroad passenger car No. 402 are in the street. The Ghirardelli Company factory is in the background. |
| Shared collection box | Item No. 08. **Western Pacific Railroad passenger car No. 402 on Beach Street for opening day of the San Francisco Maritime Museum, San Francisco, California, 1951 May 27**  
Creator/Collector: Key, Al  
Extent: 1 photograph.  
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white safety negative, 1.75 x 1.75 in. Items 07-08 are on the same 1.875 x 3.625 in. negative strip.  
Scope and Content Note  
Some people are going aboard the train. Other people are walking down the street. The Ghirardelli Company factory is in the background. |
| Shared collection box | Item No. 09. **San Francisco Maritime Museum as seen from Beach Street, San Francisco, California, 1951-1953**  
Creator/Collector: Key, Al  
Extent: 1 photograph.  
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white safety negative, 1.75 x 1.75 in. |
| Shared collection box | Item No. 10. **San Francisco Maritime Museum and Virginia & Truckee Railroad steam locomotive No. 21 on Beach Street, San Francisco, California, 1951-1953**  
Creator/Collector: Key, Al  
Extent: 1 photograph.  
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white safety negative, 1.75 x 1.75 in. Items 10-11 are on the same 1.875 x 3.625 in. negative strip. |
| Shared collection box | Item No. 11. **Aquatic Park as seen looking southeast toward the San Francisco Maritime Museum and Ghirardelli Company factory, San Francisco, California, 1951-1953**  
Creator/Collector: Key, Al  
Extent: 1 photograph.  
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white safety negative, 1.75 x 1.75 in. Items 10-11 are on the same 1.875 x 3.625 in. negative strip. |
Item No. 12. **Fort Sutter (built 1912; paddle riverboat) laid up in Aquatic Park, San Francisco, California, port bow view, 1953-1959**

Creator/Collector: Key, Al  
Extent: 1 photograph.  
Physical Description: 1 black-and-white safety negative, 2.75 x 4.5 in.  
Scope and Content Note  
A sign attached to the vessel reads “Showboat San Francisco.” The remainder of the text on the sign is illegible. The San Francisco Maritime Museum and Ghirardelli Company factory are partially in view in the background.