



Fairfield Museum and History Center Library
370 Beach Road
Fairfield, CT 06824

Manuscript Finding Aid

Title: The Fairfield Store Records
Collection #: Ms B71
Dates: 1921-1995
Size of Collection: 12 boxes
Accession Number: L96.22 (L96 Jul 50)
Donor: Stanley Manasevit
Restrictions: None
Processed by: Barbara Austen
Date: July 1996

Biographical/ historical note:

The Fairfield Department Store started as a small retail establishment on the Post Road, in the heart of Fairfield. It was founded in 1921 by brothers Samuel and Isadore Manasevit. The original store primarily carried men's wear and work-related apparel to meet the needs of the population, the majority of whom worked in factories. In the late 1920s, the owners added stores in East Haven, Stratford, Westport and South Norwalk and also operated a wholesale business in Bridgeport.

Isadore's son, Frank, and Samuel's son, Stanley, officially entered the business in 1947, just after the store's expansion in 1947. In the mid-fifties, they assumed control from their fathers. In 1956, the cousins expanded the store, making it the first two-story building in Fairfield. Success in Fairfield led to the eventually closing of the branch stores; Stanley and Frank concentrated on the main store.

In 1966, the owners changed the name of the store to simply "The Fairfield Store." Two

years later, the store expanded into the former Woolworth's building and the owners renovated the exterior, for which they received a Chamber of Commerce citation. By 1979 the store included the old Center Drug building on the corner of Reef and Post Roads. As the population changed to include more white collar workers who commuted into New York City, Stanley and Frank reflected their customer's needs in the style of clothing available. The store carried shoes, cosmetics, clothing for the entire family, lingerie, shoes, and giftware.

Stanley's son, Bruce, entered the business in 1983 while Frank's daughter, Deren, joined in 1988. Competition from discount stores forced the Fairfield Store to close July 1996.

Through its 75 years of operation, the store was known for its personal service and the longevity of its sales staff; many stayed for 20-30 years, helping generations of the same families.

Scope and content note:

The collection primarily consists of advertising and promotional materials created and collected by the management of the Fairfield Store. Promotional materials are organized chronologically in Series A and include a scrapbook with memorabilia from the official reopening of the store in 1956, photographs, press releases, prize entries and winners' lists, speech texts, expense records, and correspondence. One of the store's most successful promotions was "Freddie the Frog" whose images and memorabilia are found in this series and among the photographs. A number of the promotions were designed by Mary Felix Associates, such as the "Tree Promotion" of 1974, part of a community project in Fairfield. Also in this series are a sample of direct mail promotions sent to regular customers. Additional direct mail promotions are interfiled with newspaper advertisements after 1991.

Series B encompasses newspaper and magazine articles ranging in date from 1958-1983, about the store and its founders, Stanley and Frank Manasevit. The topics covered include historical sketches, reminiscences, community projects and promotions, awards, and renovations. The original articles were photocopied onto acid-free paper and then retained.

Series C consists of newspaper advertisements, including the oldest extant ad from 1932. Between 1958-1995 (only 1981 is missing), copies of advertisements were saved in three-ring binders in chronological order. The pages have been removed from the binders but remain in their original order. Interfiled among the advertisements after 1991 are direct mail promotional materials, most with notations about the date and the number mailed. At the end of the series is a folder with a transparency of the store front that was copied to make it look like a sketch, and original watercolors. Both images were used in advertisements.

Assorted marketing materials are organized in Series D. These encompass clothing and

shoe labels, sample logos and signatures, advertising statistics, geographic distribution statistics of the store's charge card holders, a sample of a customer invoice, mailing labels and postcards, an advertising blotter, and marketing research information. Assorted administrative items in Series E include an employee newsletter, a blueprint of a fixture plan for the store, blank invoices and a letter with the letterhead of Manasevit Brothers, newspaper advertisements from the South Norwalk Department Store. and awards presented to the store by the United Way, the Advertising Club of Fairfield County, the Fairfield Chamber of Commerce, and the Boy Scouts. The majority of the awards were framed. These were removed from their frames for easier storage, and the frames retained. Several publications produced or used by the Fairfield Economic Development Commission, on which Stanley Manasevit served for several years, are found at the end of this series.

Photographs, both professional and amateur, documenting the store's interior and exterior changes, special events, and holiday displays from 1942-1993, are arranged in chronological order in Series F. Many of these photographs were used in advertising and promotions and will be found in reprinted form in Series A, B and C. Of interest is a photograph album that Stanley Manasevit reportedly carried with him to show potential suppliers the quality of the store. Photographs of a purely historical interest document the facade and some of the staff at Hartman Hardware on the Post Road, and images taken by Stanley when Larry's Diner was moved from the Post Road to its present site.

Samples of boxes, bags, printing plates, and a costume for Freddie the Frog were also received with the collection and are now part of the museum, accession number 1996.31.1-16.

Series A.	Promotions, 1956-1993.	Box 1
Series B.	Newspaper and magazine articles, 1958-1983.	Box 2
Series C.	Newspaper advertisements, 1932, 1956-1995.	Box 2-9
Series D.	Marketing materials, 1956-1993	Box 9
Series E.	Administrative records, ca. 1955-1995	Box 10
Series F.	Photographs, 1921, 1948-1993.	Box 11-12

THE FAIRFIELD STORE (FAIRFIELD, CONN.)
Records, 1921-1995

Box 1

Series A. Promotions, 1956-1993

- Folder 1. Scrapbook of official reopening, November 1956
- Folder 2. Fashion Show, April 1971
- Folder 3. Freddie the Frog, March 1972
- Folder 4. Spring 1972
- Folder 5. Recipe contest, August 1982
- Folder 6. Freddie's contest, February 1973
- Folder 7-12. Tree promotion, Spring 1974
- Folder 13. Hanes \$500 Winner, June 1975
- Folder 14. Freddie's historical contest, Spring 1976
- Folder 15. Fashion show, September 1976
- Folder 16. Open House, 1977
- Folder 17. "Earle" Day, March 1990
- Folder 18. Charity Day 1992/93
- Folder 19. Direct mail promotions, n.d.

Box 2

Series B. Newspaper and magazine articles, 1958-1983

- Folder 1-6. Articles, 1958-1983 (copies and originals)

Series C. Newspaper advertisements, 1932, 1956-1995

- Folder 1-2. 1932, 1956-1959, 1978, 1993 (copies and originals)
- Folder 3. 1958
- Folder 4. 1959
- Folder 5. 1960

Box 3

- Folder 6. 1961
- Folder 7. 1962
- Folder 8. 1963
- Folder 9. 1964
- Folder 10. 1965

THE FAIRFIELD STORE (FAIRFIELD, CONN.)
Records, 1921-1995Box 4

Series C. (cont.)

Folder 11.	1966
Folder 12.	1967
Folder 13.	1968
Folder 14.	1969

Box 5

Folder 15.	1970
Folder 16.	1971
Folder 17.	1972
Folder 18.	1973
Folder 19.	1974
Folder 20.	1975
Folder 21.	1976

Box 6

Folder 22.	1977
Folder 23.	1978
Folder 24.	1979
Folder 25.	1980
Folder 26.	1982

Box 7

Folder 27.	1983
Folder 28.	1984
Folder 29.	1985
Folder 30.	1986
Folder 31.	1987
Folder 32.	1988

Box 8

Folder 33.	1989
Folder 34.	1990
Folder 35.	1991
Folder 36.	1992

THE FAIRFIELD STORE (FAIRFIELD, CONN.)
Records, 1921-1995

Box 8 (cont.)

Series C. (cont.)

- Folder 37. 1993
- Folder 38. 1994

Box 9

- Folder 39. 1995
- Folder 40. Original artwork for advertisements, 1970, ca. 1993

Series D. Marketing Materials, 1956-1993

- Folder 1. Clothing labels (samples and orders), 1966, 1983-1984, 1993
- Folder 2. "Signatures," ca. 1993
- Folder 3. Marketing articles, ca. 1956, 1974, 1976
- Folder 5. Advertising statistics, 1974-1975
- Folder 6. Geographic distribution of charge card customers, 1974-75
- Folder 7. Customer invoice, 1958
- Folder 8. Mailing labels and postcards, ca. 1990
- Folder 9. Advertising blotter, n.d.

Series E. Administrative Records, ca. 1955-1995

- Folder 1. Manasevit Brothers letterhead, ca. 1955
- Folder 2. Advertisements from South Norwalk Department Store, n.d.
- Folder 3. Fixture layout, 1967
- Folder 4. Awards, 1959-1995
- Folder 5-6. Advertising awards, 1962, 1967

Box 10

- Folder 7-8. Community service awards, 1971-1986
- Folder 9. Employee newsletter, 1995
- Folder 10-11. Publications of Fairfield Economic Development Commission, 1969-1990

THE FAIRFIELD STORE (FAIRFIELD, CONN.)
Records, 1921-1995

Box 11-12

Series F. Photographs, 1921, 1948-1993

- Folder 1-22. Store interior and exterior, 1921, 1948-1987
- Folder 23. Videotape of Conn. Public Television program, March 1988
- Folder 24-40. Store interior and exterior, 1988-1993
- Folder 41. Photograph album, ca. 1990
- Folder 42. Hartman Hardware, ca. 1950
- Folder 43. Larry's Diner being moved from Post Road, 1986
- Folder 44. Train wreck on Post Road (?), n.d.
- Folder 45. Copies of photographs in Fairfield Historical Society collections

THE FAIRFIELD STORE (FAIRFIELD, CONN.)
Records, 1921-1995

Subject headings:

Advertising--Conn.--Fairfield--clothing and dress
Clothing trade--Conn.--Fairfield
Photographs
Retail trade--Conn.--Fairfield
Stores, retail--Conn.—Fairfield

Economic Development Commission (Fairfield, Conn.)
The Fairfield Department Store
Manasevit, Frank
Manasevit, Stanley
Mary Felix Associates (Norwalk, Conn.)