

Inventory of the

Lahti Family
Sycamore, Illinois

Collection

In the

Regional History Center

RC 189

INTRODUCTION

Rachael Lahti Donnelly donated the Lahti Family Collection to the Regional History Center in several on-going installments beginning in 1987.

Linear feet of shelf space: 9
Number of containers: 21 + 1 volume; 6 digital files (2.04 MB)
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 189

SCOPE AND CONTENT

There are ten series that divide the Lahti Family Collection. Series I contains both paper and electronic documents pertaining to genealogical history, some family ephemera, as well as local historical information such as photographs and news articles about Northern Illinois University and DeKalb.

Ric Lahti's manuscripts make up Series II; it is divided into three sub-series. Sub-series A contains personal records and ephemera, while sub-series B contains financial material unrelated to family businesses. Account ledgers from Hitchcock Plumbing and the Lahti Clothing Store make up subseries C.

Series III contains both paper and electronic documents consisting of materials from Alice Margaret Hitchcock Lahti including scrapbooks and memory books from her school days at McMurry School.

Material from Jennye Lahti Fry make up Series IV. Included in this series are photo albums created by Jennye Lahti. An index to each photo album is provided in the folders containing the albums. Also included in this series are photographs and documents pertaining to Jennye's husband, specifically his working career at California Packing Company which was later purchased by Del Monte Corporation.

Rachael Lahti Donnelly materials make up Series V, followed by Series VI, Organizations which contains material concerning groups in which the Lahti Family participated: Order of the Eastern Star, Shriners, and Job's Daughters, an organization associated with Masonry.

Correspondence comprises Series VII. Series VIII contains information about the golfing careers of Ric and Alice Lahti. Much of the material relates to Ric Lahti's time at the Kishwaukee Country Club, but documents from other clubs and tournaments in which he participated are also included. Alice Lahti's golfing career is highlighted. Series IX contains more detailed information about the Lahti businesses. Sub-series A holds information about the

Lahti Clothing Store of Sycamore. Included in this series is the history of the clothing store, information on the owners of the store before and after Ric Lahti, business and financial records, employee information, and promotional materials. Sub-series B focuses on other Lahti records, and includes ledgers from Ric's Gourmet restaurant in Belvidere, as well as documents on Ric Lahti's employment elsewhere.

The Lahti family's private life and Finnish ties are located in Series X. Many of the correspondences that are contained in this series are written in Finnish to Jennye Lahti, Ric Lahti's sister. Also in this series is funeral information from Ric's parents, Matti and Sofia Lahti.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Richard "Ric" Mathew Lahti, was born November 26, 1904 in Rock Springs, Wyoming. His parents, Frans Matti and Sofia Uitto Lahti, immigrated from Finland. The family moved to DeKalb, Illinois, where Matti Lahti worked as a wire-drawer at American Wire and Steel. Ric Lahti dropped out of school after eighth grade. His sister, Jennie Lahti, received her diploma from DeKalb Township High School. Jennie Lahti, also spelled Jennye, and called "Jenks," was born April 14, 1904. She married Theodore Fry on May 3, 1941.

Ric Lahti began his golfing career as a caddy at the Kishwaukee Country Club. He learned to play golf with makeshift materials: a club made from a broom handle and a nine-hole course made from soup cans in a cow pasture at the end of Eleventh Street. Lahti joined Kishwaukee Country Club in 1927 at the age of 22. He became president in 1942 and again in 1955. He also filled in as golf professional from 1950 through 1952. Lahti won the club championship three times and the Kishwaukee Invitational four times. Among numerous other awards he won the Lincoln Highway medalist title and both the David Smart trophy and the McAllister trophy (Sycamore) three consecutive years.

Ric Lahti was a successful businessman. He owned Lahti Clothing Store in Sycamore and helped others set up businesses in Hampshire and Genoa. Formerly Miles Clothing Store, Lahti purchased and renamed the store, opening on March 29, 1941, with the motto "First with the Latest." Lahti sold the store in 1966, and, after changing hands again in 1972, it officially closed in 1975. Lahti later opened a gourmet restaurant in Belvidere, worked as a real estate agent, and in the late 1970s, worked as a bank security guard. He was a member of Sycamore Elks, was active in Masonry, and, as a Shriner, became Illustrious Potentate of Tebala Temple in 1971.

Ric Lahti married Alice Margaret Hitchcock on July 28, 1935, in DeKalb. Alice, born on January 20, 1913, was the daughter of Edward Robert and Margaret Blair Hitchcock. Edward Robert Hitchcock owned Hitchcock Plumbing. Alice Lahti became a Licensed Practical Nurse and also had a successful golf career, playing at Kishwaukee Country Club, as well as others.

Ric and Alice Lahti had two children, Rachael Alyce Lahti, born on March 27, 1937, and Richard Edward Lahti, born August 31, 1939, both in DeKalb. Ric Lahti died on May 3, 1990, at

home in Sycamore, Illinois. Alice Lahti died at Oak Crest Retirement Center in DeKalb on February 6, 2007.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine for North America
Clothing trade
Finn Fest
Finnish Americans
Golf
Hitchcock Plumbing
Job's Daughters International (Organization)
Kishwaukee Country Club
Lahti Clothing Store
Lahti Family
Northern Illinois University
Order of the Eastern Star
Plumbing Industry
Stagecoach Players
Sycamore (Ill.)
Wagon Wheel Resort

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
Series I. Family History & Local History		
1	1	Hitchcock/ Lahti Genealogy and History, completed 2012
	2	Family Photographs, 1936, 1966, no date
	3	Photographs and descriptions of DeKalb, 1923-1925, 2011
	4	Barbed Wire Article, 1978
	5	Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1911, no date
	6	Northern Illinois State Teachers College photographs, by Gullickson Studio, no date
	7	Northern Illinois State Teachers College photographs, 1941
	8	NIU-Related Documents, 1933-2006
Series II. Richard "Ric" Lahti		
Sub-Series A. Personal		
Oversize	1 volume	Richard Lahti Golf Scrapbook
Oversize Drawer 28	20	Ric Lahti Hole-in-One Certificate, 1950 and Photograph of Kirchner's Drug Store, circa 1922
1	9	Ephemera, 1921, 1923, no date
	10	Biography, July 1963
	11	Ku Klux Klan Donation Certificate, 1924
	12	Saxophone, 1922
	13	Stage Coach Players, "Her Husband's Wife," 1949
	14	Stage Coach Players Play Photographs, 1949, no date
	15	Playbill/ Stagebill, no date
	16	Grade and Attendance Slips, DeKalb Township High School, 1923-1924
	17	Physical Development Mail-Order Course, 1921
	18	Correspondence from Rachael Lahti Donnelly to Ric Lahti, 1953, 1981, 1984
Sub-Series B. Financial		
	19	Investments, 1921-1923, 1927

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	20 21-22	Selling House, 317 North Fourth Street, 1953 Income Tax Return, 1941-1967
	Sub-Series C. Business	
2-3		Lahti Clothing Store, Charge Accounts, 1943-1966
4	2 volumes 1-9	Hitchcock Plumbing, Ledgers, 1915-1921 Account Ledger, 1948-1965
5	1	Account Ledger, 1965
Series III. Alice Margaret Hitchcock Lahti		
	2	Alice Hitchcock, Kalibre Yearbook, DeKalb Township High School, 1928
	3	GAA (Girls Athletic Association) Camp, 1928-1929
	4	Northern Illinois State Teachers College Sports Programming, 1931
	5	McMurry Training School Photographs, 1920s
6	1 volume	"A Bouquet of Memories" Alice Margaret Hitchcock Memory Book from McMurry Training School, 1926
Series IV. Jennye Lahti Fry		
7	1	Jennye S. Lahti, Kalibre Yearbook, DeKalb Township High School, 1925
	2	Jennye Lahti, High School, 1925-1926
	3-8	Jennye Lahti photo albums, 1913-1927
	9	Jennye Lahti ephemera (3 photos), 1923, no date
	10	The Creamery Cooperator, August 1944
	11	Rural Appraisal Manual, 1967
Oversize Drawer 28	21	Baptismal Certificate, 1907 Confirmation Certificate, 1921 Penmanship Certificate from the DeKalb Public Schools, 1921
8 Guide,	1	California Packing Company (Del Monte) Field Training 1967

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	6
	2	Mortgage and Deed Information, Theodore and Jennie (Lahti) Fry, 1934-1989	

Series V. Rachael Lahti Donnelly

	3	Fashion Show Lineup and Clothes Description, no date
	4	Finn Fest, 1994
	5	"Our Babies," Manual for New Mothers, 1935
	6	Piano Recital, 1946

Photographs:

9	1	Golden Tulip Barbizon Palace, 1994
	2	Del Monte, no date
	3	Grant's Home, no date
	4	Wagon Wheel Envelope, no date

Series VI. Organizations

		Shriners, DeKalb Shrine No. 47:
	5	Executive Date Book, 1969
	6	Executive Date Book, 1970
	7	By-Laws, 1970-1990
	8	Yearbooks, 1975-1977, 1986-1990
	9	Tebala Temple Spring Ceremonial, Rockford, 1957
		Job's Daughters, Bethel No. 66:
	10	Rachael Lahti Donnelly- installation as Honored Queen, December 1953
	11	Bethel No. 66, 1998
	12	Order of the Eastern Star, Normal Chapter No 357, Yearbook, 1935-1997
10	1 volume	Rachael Lahti's Job's Daughters Scrapbook, 1953-1954
	1 volume	Alice Lahti, "This Is Your Life" Scrapbook, 1954

Series VII. Correspondence

9	13	Rachael Alyce (Lahti) (Norman) Donnelly Correspondence, 1959
11-12		Rachael Alyce (Lahti) (Norman) Donnelly Correspondence,

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	7
		(1959-1994)	
13	1-3	Rachael Alyce (Lahti) (Norman) Donnelly Correspondence, (1990-2004)	
	4	Rachael Donnelly, Cards, (1992-2001)	
	5	Frank and Rachael Donnelly Correspondence, (1988-2001)	
	6	Frank and Rachael Donnelly Cards, (1997-2001)	
	7	Frank Donnelly Cards, (1994-2001)	
	8	Alice (Hitchcock) Lahti Correspondence (1930-1934)	
	9	Alice (Hitchcock) Lahti Cards, (1958-2001)	
	10	Ric Lahti Cards, no date	
	11	Ric and Alice (Hitchcock) Lahti Cards, 1951	
14	1	Ric and Alice (Hitchcock) Lahti Correspondence, (1990-1995)	
	2	Margaret Reese Get-Well-Cards, 1951	
Series VIII. Golf			
15	1	Golf Articles, no date	
	2	“Ric Lahti: A Golfer,” by Rachael Lahti Donnelly, 2011 Golf Finnish Connection:	
	3	“Nostalgia and Glee,” by C.R. “Luke” McLagan, 1960	
	4	Arne Huhta, (1935-1997)	
	5	Finn Fest 1994, (1928-1994)	
	6	Kishwaukee Country Club, (1927-1997):	
	7	Sonja Henie, 2011	
	8	A.B. Gouchenour, (1917-2010)	
	9	“Lahti Clicks for Top Scores”, 1956	
	10	Presidents and Champions, 1910-2010	
	11	Photographs, (1937-1996)	
	12	Golf Professional, (1938-1961)	
	13	Hole in One, 1950	
	14	Minding the Store, (1940-1964)	
	15	Sam Snead (1961-2004)	
	16	Kishwaukee Invitational, (1944-1973)	
	17	Lincoln Highway Golf Association, (1923-2011)	
	18	Men’s Lincoln Highway Tournament, (1929-1935)	
	19	Ladies’ Lincoln Highway Tournament, (1956-1973)	
	20	Rock River Golf District Association, 1962-1970s	
	21	Sycamore Golf, (1940-1968)	
	22	McAllister Trophy, (1942-1946)	
15	23	Trophies, (1942-1964)	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	8
	24	Scorecards, (1949-1970), no date	
16	1	Western Senior Golf Association, (1957-1969)	
	2-3	Annual Championship, 1967, 1969	
	4-5	Yearbooks, (1960-1966)	
	6	World Senior Golf Championships, 1963-1964	
	7	Tournament Invitations, 1964-1966	
		Alice Lahti:	
	8	At Kishwaukee Country Club, Newspapers, (1949-1973), no date	
	9	Scorecards, (1962-1974), no date	
	10	Ethel Fisk, (1957-1976)	
	11	Kishwaukee County Club Fun Day, 1961, no date	
	12	Other Clubs, (1957-1964)	
	13	Cassat Cartoon, 2010	
	14	Golf Charities, 1970	
	15	Cards, 1937-1965	
	16	Golf Notes, no date	

Series IX. Business

Sub-Series A. Lahti Clothing Store

	17	Miles Clothing Store, Promotion Guidelines, no date	
	18	Lahti Clothing Grand Opening, 1939-1941	
17	1	Employees, (1941-2009)	
	2	Sales Tax Token, no date	
	3	History, 2009, 2011	
17	4	Business Records, (1941-1972)	
	5	Assessment, 1943	
	6	Financial Records, (1941-1958)	
	7	Collection Agency Correspondence, 1943-1966	
	8	Promotions, (1941-1975), no date	
	9	Bowling, 1942, no date	
	10	Sidewalk Sales, (1959-2011)	
	11	Sycamore Chamber of Commerce, (1958-1969)	
	12	Photographs, 1949-1975	
	1 volume	Complete Inventory, March 1961	
	1 volume	Disbursements & Expenses, 1964-1966	
	1 volume	Distribution of Expenses, 1972	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
18	1	Lahti Clothing Changes Hands, 1972, 2010
	2	Yeager Clothing Store Bankruptcy, 1972
	3	Income Property Ledger, 1952-1964
	Sub-Series B. Other Business	
		Richard Lahti Employment:
	4	Early Employment (1917-1960)
	5	H.J. Hakala Agency, 1976-1978
	6	Later Employment, (1972-1990)
	2 volumes	Ric's Gourmet Restaurant, Belvidere, IL, Ledger, 1972-1974
	7	Lahti Clothing Store Bag
19		Lahti Clothing Store Christmas Box
Series X. Finnish Connection		
20	1	Songbook, 1910
	2	Photographs from Ylistaro and Isokyrö (10 photographs), 1918, no date
	3	Unidentified Finns (23 photographs), no date
		Correspondence to Jennye (Lahti) Fry [in Finnish]:
	4-5	From Emilia (Emmi) Heiska, (1945-1966), no date
	6	From Maija (Liisn) Heisja, 1946-1947
	7	From Martta Kuurne, (1951-1959)
	8	From Rikhard Niemi, 1946-1948
	9	From Liisa (Heiska) Nyrhinen, (1964-1982)
20	10	From Juho (Jossi) E. Reininmaki, 1946-1952
	11	From Maija Reinimaki, 1946-1947
	12	From Ritva Reinimaki, 1948
	13	From Laura Riiviven, (1941-1951), no date
	14	From Alli Ylyöki, 1951, 1957
	15	From Eila Ylyöki, 1946
	16	From Senja Ylyöki, 1946-1951
	17	From Unknown, (1937-1962), no date
		Correspondence to Matti Lahti [in Finnish]:
	18	From Emilia (Emmi) Heiska, 1945
	19	From Senja Ylyöki, 2946
	20	Correspondence to Richard Lahti from Rikhard Niemi, 1946 [in Finnish]

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	10
		Correspondence to Sofia Lahti [in Finnish]:	
	21	From Emilia (Emmi) Heiska, 1945-1946	
	22	From Juho (Jossi) E. Reininmaki, no date	
	23	Mathew and Sofia Lahti Golden Anniversary, 1940	
	24	Early Reading Book, 1941	
	25	Frans Mathew Lahti Funeral, 1944	
	26	Memory Book, 1944	
21	1	Sympathy Cards, 1944	
	2	Sympathy Cards, 1944	
	3	Sofia Uitto Lahti Funeral, 1946	
	4	Memory Book, 1946	
	5-6	Sympathy Cards, 1946	
	7	Finnish Christmas, 1961, no date	
	8	Finnish Cookbooks, no date	