JCA: Leonard N. Simons Papers
15.5 linear feet (2 SB, 17 MB, 5 OS)
1872-1994 (bulk 1949-1986)

Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

Original finding aid by the Leonard N. Simons Jewish Community Archives, revised by Aimee Ergas on December 7, 2015.

Accession Number: UP001518

Creator: Leonard N. Simons


Language: Material entirely in English.

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Related Material: Jewish Community Archives at the Reuther Library, particularly the papers of Max M. Fisher, Philip Slomovitz and Coleman A. Young, the Sinai Hospital Records, and the Wayne State University Archives.

PLEASE NOTE: Material in this collection has been arranged by series ONLY. Folders are not arranged within each series. Subjects may be dispersed throughout several boxes within any given series.
Leonard Norman Rashall Simons was born in Youngstown, Ohio, on July 24, 1904, the son of William Rashall and Minna Williams Rashall (later Simons). He married Harriette Lieberman in 1930, and they had two daughters, Susan Simons and Mary Lou Simons (Zieve). He attended Central High School in Detroit. Simons spent his career as an advertising executive, including serving as vice-president in the Simons Michelson Zieve Advertising Agency in Troy, Michigan, from 1977 to 1995. He was a partner in the investment company Simons-Michelson Company, also in Troy, Michigan, from 1929-1977. Simons served as advertising director for the U.S. Treasury War Bonds during World War II.

Simons led and served on the boards of many organizations, including Temple Beth El in Detroit/Bloomfield Hills; Wayne State University Press; Michigan Cancer Foundation; Detroit Historical Commission; United Negro College Fund, Michigan; Sinai Hospital of Detroit; and the Greater Detroit Interfaith Round Table of Christians and Jews. Simons was an active fundraiser for many causes both secular and religious, ranging from educational to medical to social service. During his lifetime, Simons received many awards, among them the Prime Minister’s Medal from the State of Israel, the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit Butzel Award, and the United Community Foundation Heart of Gold Award. He was decorated as a Chevalier dans l’Ordre Nationale du Merite by the French government. The building housing the Wayne State University Press in Detroit is named in Simons’s honor.

Simons's papers reflect his work in the secular and Jewish communities as well as his professional involvement as an entrepreneur. He maintained an active focus on his family life and his friendships. He was an avid traveler, which is reflected in his vast correspondence and a serious collector of rare books. His collection of rare Michigan history books is now part of the Special Collections in the Wayne State University Library System. Simons died on November 16, 1995.

Scope and Content
Important Subjects and Correspondents:
Adamany, David
Adcraft
Bentwick, Norman
Broomfield, William
Caron, Malcolm, S.J.
Cavanagh, Jerome
Dearborn Independent newspaper
Detroit Jewish history
Feuchtwanger, Lion
Fisher, Max M.
Giscard d’Estaing, Valéry
Glueck, Nelson
Golden, Harry
Gribbs, Roman
Harmon, Avraham
Hart, Philip A.
Henry, David
Jewish National Fund
Jewish Welfare Federation, Detroit
Kresge, Stanley
Levin, Carl
Marcus, Jacob
Marx, Karl
Mendes-France, Pierre
Miriani, Louis
Purple Gang
Roosevelt, Eleanor
Royet, Jacques
Sapiro, Aaron
Silver, Rabbi Abba Hillel
Slomovitz, Philip
Temple Beth El, Detroit and Bloomfield Hills
Young, Coleman A.
Yutang, Lin
Wayne State University
Williams, G. Mennen

An index to subjects and correspondents is at the end of this Finding Aid.

**Series 1. Personal Life, 1910-1993**
Correspondence, clippings, greeting cards, speeches and newsletters. Materials from his presidency of the Franklin Hills Country Club and regarding his book, *Simons Says*, are located here. Travel notes, itineraries and correspondence.

**Series 2. Business and professional activities, 1929-1991**
Professional activities and interactions with organizations of a business nature. Papers contain clippings, correspondence, speeches, appraisals, telegrams and greeting cards, including materials from Adcraft/Simons-Michelson, Wayne University professorship and the Simons-Michelson collection of Judaica.

**Series 3. Community activities in Detroit, 1930-1993**
Papers contain clippings, correspondence, speeches, research materials, notes, newsletters, invitations, certificates, programs, greeting cards, and telegrams. Areas of interest: American Legion Award, Cadillac House, Detroit Historical Commission, Museum, and Society, French medal, Heart of Gold Award, University Chair in Jewish Studies, Wayne State University Press, Leonard N. Simons Building and reading room on Wayne State University campus, Honorary Degrees.

**Series 4. Jewish community activities and causes, 1940s-1993**
Documents regarding Simons's involvement in the Jewish community and his activities on behalf of Jewish causes: clippings, correspondence, articles, notes, speeches, pamphlets, certificates, bookplates. Of special note: the Feuchtwanger correspondence, Goldman Automobile Company, Israeli Bond and Jewish National
Fund, Hebrew University, Man of the Year citation and Butzel Award. Also contains some historical materials of the Jewish community dating back to the 19th century.

**Series 5. Photographs, 1929-1995**
Contains photos of many public and personal events including wedding, birthday and anniversary parties, award presentations, travel, and various community charitable and political events, including Wayne State University, Central High School, Detroit Historical Museum, Jewish Historical Society, March of Dimes and War Bonds.

Scrapbooks, photograph albums, memory books, testimonials from Simons’s career, personal life, service to the Detroit metropolitan community and to Jewish causes. There are also some folders of documents and correspondence.

**Arrangement**
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3. Birthday, 75th; cards, correspondence, clippings, 1979
4. Birthday, 80th, and 85th; cards, correspondence, clippings, 1984, 1989
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