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Guide to the

Robert F. Byrnes collection of Automat memorabilia

1912-1990s (bulk 1940-1960s)

MssCol 448

Compiled by Valerie Wingfield, 1997; rev. 2012

Summary

Creator: Byrnes, Robert F.

Title: Robert F. Byrnes collection of Automat memorabilia, 1912-1990s (bulk 1940-1960s)

Size: 15.06 linear feet (37 boxes, 3 volumes)

Source: Gift of Robert F. Byrnes, 1996 and 1997

Abstract: The collection contains a portion of the records of two companies: Horn & Hardart Baking Co. of Philadelphia, the parent company, and its subsidiary, Horn & Hardart Co. of New York. The bulk of the collection pertains to the Horn & Hardart Company of New York. The collection contains administrative records, legal documents, financial records, printed material, ephemera, and photographs of the Automats in New York City and the surrounding area.

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Creator history

Joseph Horn and Frank Hardart founded the Horn & Hardart Co., in Philadelphia in 1902. Horn and Hardart started their careers in 1888 with a luncheonette in Philadelphia. This soon changed, when Hardart became inspired by the “waiterless” service at some of Europe’s fine restaurants and hotels. While in Europe, Hardart purchased the automat equipment in Berlin, but the ship transporting it sank during a storm in the English Channel. Not discouraged, Horn & Hardart reordered the equipment. When the first Automat opened, the novelty of receiving one’s food from a self-contained glass enclosure after depositing a nickel or two created an immense impression on the public. The Horn & Hardart partners found a winning formula with the Automat.

After their initial success in Philadelphia, the first New York Automat opened at 1557 Broadway in 1912. Frank Hardart, Sr. died in 1918; Joe Horn remained as president of both the New York and Philadelphia companies until his death in 1941. The company would eventually grow to 165 locations - the Automats, cafeterias, and retail food shops. Most of the Horn & Hardart establishments in Philadelphia were cafeteria-style, while most in New York catered to a more hurried clientele, and thus were true automats.

The New York Horn & Hardart Automats rank among the legendary eating establishments of New York City, along with Mary Elizabeth, Chock Full O' Nuts, Nedick's, Longchamps and Schrafft's. The Automats are remembered for their Art Deco buildings and stained glass windows, as well as their famous baked beans. Customers knew that they could be assured of finding food with a uniform taste regardless of which Automat location they visited. It was the policy of Horn & Hardart Co. that its mass-produced food have uniform taste and coloring as well as portion size. It achieved this consistency in New York by constructing a central commissary, where executives would taste dishes daily. The nickels were dispensed to customers by women cashiers, or "nickel throwers." The coins turned the cashiers' hands black as the black dresses that they were required to wear. Others recall more unpleasant aspects: In 1952, a college student employed by Local 302 of the Cafeteria Workers Union to organize Automat workers discovered that Automat employees were paid two to three times less than the cafeteria workers, and African-Americans were not permitted to serve food or put food into the machines, as described by Melvin S. Barasch of Brooklyn in The New York Times "Letters to the Editor", April 15, 1991.

During the 1960's and 1970's, the Horn & Hardart Co. faced increasing competition from fast food chains. Philadelphia's restaurants were the first to go, followed by New York's Automats. The company converted some of the Automats into Arby's and Burger King franchises. Others were demolished to make way for new buildings. During the 1980s, the Horn & Hardart Co. included among its properties the Bojangles chicken restaurants and the Hanover House mail-order firm. The company eventually sold off most of these holdings, emerging as Hanover House, a direct-marketing concern, during the 1990s.

For a deeper inquiry into Horn & Hardart, see Diehl, Loraine B. and Marianne Hardart, *The Automat: The History, Recipes, and Allure of Horn & Hardart's Masterpiece*, New York: Clarkson Potter/Publishers, 2002.

Robert F. Byrnes (1909-2000), the donor of the collection, spent his entire sixty-three-year career with Horn & Hardart. Two decades after Joseph Horn and Frank Hardart opened the first Automat in the United States, in Philadelphia, Byrnes began working for the company as an office boy. He became Controller of the company in 1953, and his ascent in management continued in subsequent years to the positions of Treasurer and Vice President. He retired as Executive Vice President of Horn & Hardart Co., New York, in 1988.

Scope and content note

The collection consists of a selection of records of the Horn & Hardart Co. of New York, and the Horn & Hardart Baking Co. of Philadelphia. Records of the Horn & Hardart Co. of New York dominate the collection. The records of the New York company include a sampling of administrative records such as annual reports, 1932-1994, minutes, 1911-1987, by-laws, certificate of incorporation, contracts, reports, and pension plans and programs. The financial and real estate records contain property accounts, customer accounts, stocks and related material, mainly for the years from 1940s through the 1960s. The Horn & Hardart Baking Co. of Philadelphia records consist of annual reports, 1929-1970s, reports, an address of the President Joseph V. Horn (1912), and agreements and financial documents primarily for the 1950s through the 1960s. Black and white photographs of Automats and scrapbooks of newspaper clippings complete the collection.

Arrangement

The Robert F. Byrnes collection of Automat memorabilia are organized into the following series:

- I. Horn & Hardart Co., New York City
- II. Horn & Hardart Baking Co., Philadelphia
- III. Photographs
- IV. Recipes, ephemera, and printed material

Key terms

Subjects

Food presentation
Food service--New York City
Restaurants -- New York (State) -- New York

Names

Byrnes, Robert F.

Special formats

Ephemera
Photographs

Container list

I. Horn & Hardart Co., New York City

I.A Annual reports and minutes

This subseries contains annual reports, 1932-1994, of the Horn & Hardart Company of New York City. The minutes (1911-1987) contain gaps for the years 1922 through 1959. The remainder of the series is notices of meetings to stockholders, 1960-1990s.

Annual reports

- b.1 1932-1979
- b.2 f.1-4 1980-1990
- b.2 f.5-9 1971-1994, pursuant to Section 13 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

Board of Directors

- b.3 f.1-7 Minutes 1911-1921 (copies), 1960-1987
- b.3 f.8-10 Notice of meetings to stockholders, 1960s-1970s
- b.4 f.1-2 Notice of meetings to stockholders, 1980s-1990s

I.B Legal documents and papers

This subseries contains the by-laws for the years 1961-1968, and a certificate of incorporation. There is a sampling of contracts of Horn & Hardart including a proposal to acquire Trunz Food Inc., in 1969, and proposals and reports regarding Hanover House, a mail order company.

- b.4 f.3 By-laws, 1961-1968
- b.4 f.4 Certificate of incorporation
- b.4 f.5 Contract: Horn & Hardart Co. and the Horn & Hardart Baking Co., 1950
- b.4 f.6 Contract: Brinks Express and Horn & Hardart Co., 1924
- b.4 f.7 Contract: Marico Co. and Horn & Hardart Co., 1972
- b.4 f.8 Contract: Mortgage between Horn & Hardart Co. and manufacturers, 1973
- b.4 f.9 Hanover House (subsidiary): Proposals and reports
- b.4 f.10 Proposal to acquire Trunz Food, Inc., 1969
- b.4 f.11-12 Sale of Trunz Retail Div. to Trunz Food Stores, Inc., 1970-1971
- b.4 f.13 Horn & Hardart Co. vs. Commerce Industry Co.
- b.4 f.14 Subpoena: Con Edison vs. Horn & Hardart Co., 1972
- b.4 f.15 Application for gaming license, 1979

I.C Business correspondence and reports

This subseries contains internal correspondence (1960-1980), regarding financial issues and legal questions. Memos for the year 1976 of Frederick H. Guterman, Chairman and President of H & H, are located in this series, along with his report entitled "A Program to Build the Economy." There is an assortment of legal correspondence (1950-1960s) with outside law firms and other similar establishments on a variety of legal matters pertinent to the company. The remainder of this section includes miscellaneous reports, general correspondence (1930-1995), blueprints, patents, specifications and trademarks.

- b.5 f.1-5 Internal correspondence, 1960-1980
- b.5 f.6-11 Frederick H. Guterman memos, 1976
- b.5 f.12 Report: "A Program to Build the Economy"
- b.6 f.1-3 Assorted legal correspondence, 1950s-1960s
- b.6 f.4 Euronovelties
- b.6 f.5 Draft of a market study and review of commissary operations, 1970

I. Horn & Hardart Co., New York City (cont.)

I.C Business correspondence and reports (cont.)

- b.6 f.6 Report: Merger of New York and Philadelphia companies, 1968
- b.6 f.7 Report: Historical analysis of sales, 1960-1975
- b.6 f.8 Report: The future of New York commissary, 1970
- b.6 f.9 Report: Plan of Action, 1971
- b.6 f.10 Report: Legal fee analysis (10 month study), 1987
- b.7 f.1-5 Pension plans and programs
- b.7 f.6-13 General correspondence, 1930-1995
- b.8 f.1-2 Byrnes notes
 - b.8 f.3 Abbeville Press re automat book, 1985
 - b.8 f.4 Patricia McCann's Good Food Show, 1986
 - b.8 f.5 Draft: Let's have another cup of coffee
 - b.8 f.6 Blueprints
 - b.8 f.7 Patents: coin mechanisms
 - b.8 f.8 Specifications: 455 7th Ave.
 - b.8 f.9 Trademarks, 1970-1980s
- Manager's Rule Book, 1942 (oversized slipcase)

I.D Financial and real estate papers

This subseries contains a representative sample of financial documents and papers generated by the Horn & Hardart Co. of New York City. The series includes property accounts in Manhattan, customer counts (1940-1960s), prices for menu offerings and related materials (1940-1960s), operating statements (1986-1987), Robert Byrnes' sale figures for the automats (1917-1920, 1 volume) and stocks.

- b.9 f.1 Property accounts, improvements to leased properties
- b.9 f.2-39 Property accounts in Manhattan
- b.10 f.1 Property accounts, miscellaneous
- b.10 f.2 Annual flow of working capital, 1950-1965
- b.10 f.3 Beverage sales, 1950-1960s
- b.10 f.4 Customer counts, 1940-1960s
- b.10 f.5 Rail counts, 1950s
- b.10 f.6 Prices for menu offerings & related material, 1940-1960s
- b.10 f.7 Miscellaneous information on comparative sales, 1930-1960s
- b.33 Robert F. Byrnes's weekly sales figures, 1917-1920 (loose leaf binder)
- b.33 Manufacturers Hanover Trust common stock, c1970s (blue binder)

II. Horn & Hardart Baking Co., Philadelphia

This series contains a portion of the records of the Horn & Hardart Baking Co. of Philadelphia, such as annual reports (1920-1970s), notices of meetings to stockholders (1960-1970s), and reports to stockholders (1950-1960s). The remainder of the series consists of an address by the company's president Joseph V. Horn in 1930, internal correspondence (1930-1970s), bankruptcy documents and contracts. There is also an assortment of financial records of the Horn & Hardart Baking Co., Philadelphia, such as balance sheet projections (1963), dividends and shares (1964), and miscellaneous accounts.

- b.15 f.1-8 Annual reports, 1929-1970s
- b.15 f.9 Notice of meeting to stockholders, 1960-1970s
- b.15 f.10 Report: Board of Directors, 1912
- b.15 f.11 Reports: Stockholders, 1950-1960s
- b.15 f.12 Address of President Joseph V. Horn, 1930
- b.16 f.1-2 Internal correspondence, 1930-1970s
- b.16 f.3 Report: Effects of new activities
- b.16 f.4 Bankruptcy
- b.16 f.5 Agreement with Horn & Hardart Co., 1950
- b.16 f.6 Agreement with Tradesmen's National Bank, 1952
- b.16 f.7 Agreement with William J. Curtis (termination)
- b.16 f.8 Balance sheet projections, 1963
- b.16 f.9 Debt service study, 1958-1975
- b.16 f.10 Dividends and shares, 1964
- b.16 f.11 Financial statements and supplemental schedules, 1965
- b.16 f.12 Bakery extension, 1924
- b.16 f.13 Cost sheet for recipes
- b.16 f.14 Stockholders in Philadelphia, 1940-1950s
- b.16 f.15 Miscellaneous accounts

III. Photographs

This series is comprised of black and white photographic prints from the 1930s through the 1960s depicting interior and exteriors of the automats. In addition to architectural and design details, the photographs show customers enjoying meals, servers, and exterior shots taken outside the automats showing a busy metropolitan scene of buses, cars and taxis. The series includes photographs of automats in the boroughs of Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Bronx and Queens as well as in Yonkers, White Plains and Long Island.

Manhattan

East Side

Arranged south to north overall, west to east within streets

- b.19 f.1 58 East 8th Street
- b.19 f.2 115 East 14th Street

III. Photographs (cont.)

Manhattan (cont.)

East Side (cont.)

115 East 14th Street (cont.)

- b.19 f.3-4 115 East 14th Street renovations
- b.19 f.5 440 East 14th Street
- b.19 f.6 444 East 14th Street
- b.19 f.7 54 East 23rd Street
- b.19 f.8 56 East 23rd Street
- b.19 f.9 50 East 42nd Street
- b.19 f.10 60 East 42nd Street
- b.19 f.11-12 Airlines Terminal Building, 80 East 42nd Street
- b.20 f.1-3 200 East 42nd Street
- b.20 f.4-6 47 East 59th Street
- b.20 f.7 163-165 East 86th Street
- b.20 f.8 173 East 86th Street
- b.20 f.9 121 East 170th Street

West Side (Arranged south to north overall, then east to west within streets)

- b.21 f.1 202 West 23rd Street
- b.21 f.2 52 West 33rd Street
- b.21 f.3 155 West 33rd Street
- ##### Pennsylvania Station
- b.21 f.4 Retail shop
- b.21 f.5 Dolphin Bar
- b.21 f.6 Iron Horse Restaurant & Bar
- b.21 f.7 Coffee shop
- b.21 f.9 250 West 42nd Street
- b.21 f.10 106 West 50th Street
- b.21 f.11 600 West 50th Street
- b.21 f.12 611 West 50th Street
- b.21 f.13 104 West 57th Street
- b.21 f.14 170 West 72nd Street
- b.21 f.15 611 West 181st Street

Avenues

Arranged east to west overall, south to north within each avenue

- b.22 f.1 389 First Avenue
- b.22 f.2 565 Third Avenue
- b.22 f.3 410 Lexington Avenue
- b.22 f.4 451 Lexington Avenue
- b.22 f.5 465 Lexington Avenue
- b.22 f.6 236 Fifth Avenue

III. Photographs (cont.)

Manhattan (cont.)

Avenues (cont.)

b.22 f.7	401 Fifth Avenue
b.22 f.8	501 Fifth Avenue
b.22 f.9-10	545 Fifth Avenue
b.22 f.11-12	968 Sixth Avenue
b.22 f.13	1089 Sixth Avenue
b.22 f.14-15	1165 Sixth Avenue
b.23 f.1	218 Seventh Avenue; 220 Seventh Avenue
b.23 f.2	455 Seventh Avenue
b.23 f.3	754 Seventh Avenue
b.23 f.4	857 Seventh Avenue
b.23 f.5	182 Broadway
b.23 f.6	308 Broadway; 386 Broadway
b.23 f.7	575 Broadway
b.23 f.8	632 Broadway
b.23 f.9	743 Broadway
b.23 f.10	1111 Broadway
b.23 f.11	1241 Broadway (at West 31st Street)
b.23 f.12	1391 Broadway
b.23 f.13-14	1441 Broadway
b.23 f.15	1447 Broadway
b.23 f.16-17	1557 Broadway
b.24 f.1	1725 Broadway
b.24 f.2	2712 Broadway
b.24 f.3	3546 Broadway
b.24 f.4	3550 Broadway
b.24 f.5	461 Eighth Avenue
b.24 f.6	764 Eighth Avenue
b.24 f.7	768 Eighth Avenue
b.24 f.8	977 Eighth Avenue
b.24 f.9	682 Eleventh Avenue
	Below Houston Street
b.24 f.10	96 Chambers Street
b.24 f.11-12	128 Chambers Street
b.24 f.13	2 John Street
b.24 f.14	78 Nassau Street
b.24 f.15	146 Nassau Street

III. Photographs (cont.)

Manhattan (cont.)

Below Houston Street (cont.)

- b.25 f.1 15 Park Row
- b.25 f.2-3 122 Pearl Street
- b.25 f.4 68 Trinity Place
- b.25 f.5-6 Unidentified interior photographs
- b.25 f.7 Food preparation area
- b.25 f.8 Exterior views of unidentified automats

Bronx

- b.26 f.1 1412 East Avenue
- b.26 f.2 2231 Grand Concourse

Brooklyn

- b.26 f.3 882 Flatbush Avenue
- b.26 f.4 427 Fulton Street
- b.26 f.5 551 Fulton Street
- b.26 f.6 3 Willoughby Street

Queens

- b.26 f.7 61-40 188th Street, Flushing
- b.26 f.8 37-03 82nd Street, Jackson Heights
- b.26 f.9 37-57 74th Street. Jackson Heights
- b.26 f.10 116-63 Queens Boulevard
- b.26 f.11 71-63 Austin Street, Forest Hills
- b.26 f.12-13 61-15 190th Street, Fresh Meadows
- b.26 f.14 Flushing
- b.27 f.1 Yonkers, NY - Cross County Center, 1 West Drive
- b.27 f.2 White Plains, NY - Mamaroneck Avenue
- b.27 f.3-4 Nassau County, Long Island, NY - Roosevelt Field
- b.27 f.5 Paramus, NJ - Bergen Mall
- b.27 f.6 Color photographs of sketches of automats
- b.27 f.7-11 Food products
- b.28 f.1-5 Retail shops
- b.28 f.6 Strikers picketing
- b.28 f.7 Assorted photoprints
- b.28 f.8 Employer, employees, and others
- b.29 f.1-6 Employer, employees, and others
- b.29 f.7 Unsorted prints
- b.30 Assorted oversize photographs
- b.31 Three framed pictures of employees and others

III. Photographs (cont.)

- b.31 Smithsonian Magazine, 1986
- b.31 Photographic negatives

IV. Recipes, ephemera, and printed material

- b.17 Recipes of Augustin S. Hardart
- b.18 Press clippings; ephemera; memorabilia; tokens
 - Horn & Hardart Herald
 - 1953 Jul - 1956 Oct
 - 1957 Nov - 1959 Jun
 - 1960 Mar - 1963 Feb
 - Scrapbooks of newspaper clippings
 - 1915-1926, 1926-1936 (two volumes in one slipcase)
 - circa 1940-1960s (two volumes in one slipcase)
- b.34 Loose pages, circa 1938-1940, n.d.