

Collection #
P 0876

**FREDERICK SCHMEDEL SMITH COLLECTION
1910-1976, N.D.**

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Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: One half-size photograph box

COLLECTION DATES: 1910–1976, n.d.

PROVENANCE: Gift from Emily Smith Creswell of Phoenix, Arizona, April 1995

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1995.0818X

NOTES: *See also:* Group portrait of the Purdue University Student Army Training Corps, Company 1, Section A, 25 November 1918, which was part of this accession. It is in the Indiana Historical Society Panoramic Photograph Collection: P 0062, folder 107, and can be viewed here:
<https://images.indianahistory.org/digital/collection/dc013/id/817/rec/1>

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Frederick “Fred” Schmedel Smith was born in Indianapolis on 28 August 1899 to Herman Frederick Smith (1859–1929) and Emma E. Schmedel Smith (1863–1922). He graduated from Manual Training High School in Indianapolis and attended Purdue University in 1918, where he was a Sigma Phi Epsilon member, before leaving for brief service in the Army in World War I. He served as treasurer and vice president of the Empire Life and Accident Insurance Company and volunteered for many years at the Indianapolis Children’s Museum. He also served as president of the National Association of Clock and Watch Collectors.

While playing clarinet in the Indianapolis Symphony, Fred met Elsa Holzworth, a violinist in the orchestra. They married on 25 June 1921, Elsa’s twenty-third birthday. Elsa was born in 1898 in Indianapolis. She graduated from Shortridge High School in 1914, then attended Indiana Normal School, Butler University, and Indiana University. She then taught elementary students in the Indianapolis Public School system until 1922, when her son was born. Fred and Elsa had three children, Thomas Frederick (1922–2002), Emily Wynn (Creswell) (1924–2007), and Myra Jean (1928–1931).

In his volunteer work with the Children’s Museum, Fred helped construct numerous exhibits. He also repaired donated items, such as an antique toy carousel that was in poor condition. He repaired and refurbished it, and Elsa made the awning for it.

Elsa was a rockhound and both she and Fred were active in the Indiana Geology and Gem Society. Fred also collected stamps, Native American artifacts, clocks, and music boxes. He helped to guide many Boy Scouts with their stamp collecting merit badges. Fred corresponded with hobbyists all over the country. When he began to lose his eyesight and he and Elsa were about to retire to Arizona, he sold some of his collections, with people coming from all over the country to buy his clocks and music boxes.

Fred and Elsa moved to Prescott, Arizona in the early 1960s for their retirement. Elsa died there on 31 March 1982 and Fred died in 1989.

Fred had a younger brother, John Louis Smith (1902–1991). In June 1928, John married Mildred Noble in Indianapolis. Mildred was born on 10 November 1906 in Indianapolis to Lewis Harold Noble and Ida M. Neall Noble. Mildred attended Butler University. She died on 14 February 1960. Mildred had a younger brother, Neall Harold Noble (1910–1964), who married Jean Allison Hutchins (1915–2013) in May 1937. After Mildred and then Neall both passed away, John Smith married Jean Hutchins Noble in 1965.

Captain Benjamin Ross Jacobi was born on 27 February 1894 in Illinois, but later lived in South Dakota. He was listed in the 1921 Kokomo, Indiana city directory as a pilot for the Curtiss-Indiana Company. He also served in an Observation Squadron of the Indiana National Guard. He gained some fame in July 1921 when he flew photographs of the Jack Dempsey versus Georges Carpentier boxing match in Jersey City, New Jersey, to the *Chicago Tribune*, delivering them to the newspaper in record time. On 4 May 1923, Jacobi was killed in a car accident in Texas where he had just completed training at the U.S. Air Corps Advanced Flying Observation School at Brooks Field.

John “Jack” Baker Shideler was born on 8 August 1922 in Indianapolis to Fred W. and Chellah Baker Shideler. He was in the same Boy Scout troop as Thomas Frederick Smith. Jack earned the recognition of Eagle Scout as well as two Eagle Palms. He attended Arsenal

Technical High School and afterwards worked for the Western Electric Company in Cleveland, Ohio. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and the Korean War, as an Electrician's Mate First Class. In 1953 he became a licensed electrician. He married Isabelle Mae Clemmer (1927–2011) in July 1949. In 1950 they lived in Lawrence in Marion County, where Jack worked for the telephone company and Isabelle worked as a clerk/typist for the state. He was a member of the Millersville Masonic Lodge F & AM #126. In 1982, Jack and Isabelle moved to Phoenix, Arizona. After her death, he moved to Greenville, South Carolina in 2014, and back to Indianapolis in 2016. Jack died on 17 February 2019 and was buried with High Military Honors in the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona in Phoenix.

Sources:

Information from the donor

Ancestrylibrary.com (Accessed 5 February 2024):

- Find a Grave
- Indiana, U.S., Death Certificates, 1899–2017
- Indiana, U.S., Marriage Index, 1800–1941
- Marion County, Indiana, U.S., Marriage Index, 1925–2012
- United States Federal Census, 1900–1950
- U.S., City Directories, 1822–1995
- U.S., School Yearbooks, 1900–2016
- U.S., Select Military Registers, 1862–1985
- U.S., Veterans Administration Master Index, 1917–1940
- U.S., World War I Civilian Draft Registrations, 1917–1918

“Auto Accident Victim: Captain B.R. Jacobi.” *The Indianapolis News*, 5 May 1923, p. 8.

“Daring Air Feat Brings Tribune First Pictures.” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 4 July 1921, p.3.

“Indiana Flyer Killed in Texas Auto Crash.” *The Indianapolis News*, 4 May 1923, p. 1.

Krum, Morrow. “Night Flight of Hoosier Aviator Great News Beat: Jacobi’s Daring Makes Scoop of the Year Possible.” *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, 10 July 1921, part 8, p. 7.

Obituary for Elsa Holzworth Smith. *The Indianapolis Star*, 3 April 1982, p. 34.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of photographs, articles, publications, and ephemera pertaining to the life and activities of Fred S. Smith and his family. Included are group portraits from his childhood of school and church groups and his work with Empire Life and Accident Insurance Company. There are also materials related to his volunteer work with the Indianapolis Children's Museum and his collecting hobbies. There are also snapshots of his sister-in-law, Mildred Noble Smith, and pilot Benjamin Ross Jacobi. There is a snapshot of Fred's daughter, Emily, cars, and the houses of neighbors and friends, Leon and Ann Fisch. There are several postcards of the Girl Scouts' Camp Dellwood and snapshots of the Boy Scouts' Camp Chank-Tun-Un-Gi. There is a portrait of Eagle Scout John "Jack" Baker Shideler. There is a group photo of the Indianapolis delegation from a Unitarian church at Conference Point Camp in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, 1940. There is a group portrait, which includes Fred Smith, of a customer administrative class at the IBM Corporation School in Endicott, New York, 1956. Also included are some newsletter publications from the Empire insurance company and the Children's Museum, as well as correspondence regarding a donation of hearing aids that Fred Smith made to the museum. There is also a 1941 Broad Ripple High School graduation program and a one-page typed manuscript about the old Indiana State Museum building (Indianapolis City Hall).

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Indianapolis Public School number 8, eighth grade graduating class, 12 June 1913. [Fred S. Smith appears in the second row from the top, sixth from left.]

Mounted photo shows 57 students and adults posed outside brick building. Information printed on back: E.R. Ray, principal; Nathalie Connelly, asst. principal; Helen Loeper, music and Latin; Ella Regan, math. (photo by Cassius Alley)

Mounted group photo of E & R [Evangelical and Reformed] church confirmation, April 1914, shows seven boys, two girls, and a man. [Fred S. Smith is in the back row, second from right.]

Group portrait of the Purdue University Student Army Training Corps, Company 1, Section A, 25 November 1918, shows large group of unidentified men with buildings in the background (panoramic photo by O.L. Foster).

Mildred Noble, age 4, standing by fence at north edge of school 43 grounds and bordering Ketcham Woods, Indianapolis, 1910.

Five small photos taken at Kokomo airport in 1922: Mildred Noble and Captain Jacobi standing by plane; Captain Jacobi and Mildred Noble standing in front of plane with two unidentified men aboard plane; Captain Jacobi holding a small dog next to a plane (Kokomo Aviation Corp.); airplane (written on back: "ships at Kokomo Airport / DeHaviland? or Jenny"); car parked by a building (written on back: "Perry's car at ofc - Kokomo Airport").

Four small snapshots: Emily Smith on her sixth birthday, 2 September 1930, holding two dolls, one is a Patsy doll; Emily's new bicycle at 5640 Guilford Avenue, with the house of Leon and Ann Fisch, at 5641 Guilford seen in background, 1930s; Fisch house in the snow, 26 February 1939; Model A car owned by Jim East, 1940.

CONTAINER

Box 1, Folder 1

Box 1, Folder 2

P 0062, folder 107
View online (see link in Notes on page 1 of this guide)

Box 1, Folder 3

Box 1, Folder 3

Box 1, Folder 4

- Later home of Leon and Ann Fisch at 7030 N. Central, Indianapolis, 1949. The couple and their eldest son fled from Poland before Hitler started sending Jews to extermination camps. They were proprietors of Fisch's Jewelry stores in downtown Indianapolis and Broad Ripple. (hand-colored black-and-white photo) Box 1, Folder 4
- Color snapshot of the Marion Building at Meridian and Ohio streets, Indianapolis, ca. 1973. Box 1, Folder 4
- Camp Dellwood – Indianapolis Girl Scout Camp – seven postcards: two sepia-tone printed postcards show the interior of Sycamore Lodge and the pioneer kitchen; five black-and-white photo postcards show the exterior of Sycamore Lodge, Council Bowl, swimming pool, swinging bridge, and “The Log Cabin,” ca. 1935. Box 1, Folder 5
- Camp Chank-Tun-Un-Gi – Boy Scout Camp in northeastern Marion County: snapshot of row of tents, 24 June 1939. Box 1, Folder 6
- Two snapshots taken on 9 July 1939: 1) large building (written on back: “Sheridan's house ‘Roundtaft’ / in Ravenswood”); 2) a teenaged boy (who was in the same Boy Scout troop as Thomas F. Smith) and a dog (written on back: “Roddy & Roland at Sheridan's”). Box 1, Folder 6
- Portrait of John “Jack” Baker Shideler as an Eagle Scout, 28 March 1939. Box 1, Folder 6
- Group photo of the Indianapolis delegation from a Unitarian church at Conference Point Camp in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, 1940. On a separate sheet, a list identifies most of the people in the group: Mrs. Teegarden, Mrs. Doepers [Doepers], Mr. Backus, Dorothy Bernd, Elizabeth Myers, Fritz Schaeffer [Fritz H. Schaefer], Mr. Teegarden, Danny Doepers, “Mother”, Mrs. Doepers Jr., Mrs. Stoddard, Leone Patrick, Miss Schaeffer, Marjorie Petrilviszeh[?], Mary Schaefer, Alvaretta Stoddard, Miss Bivens, Betsy Jane Greene, Mrs. Backus, Jody Robinson, George O'Connor, “Me”, Anne Asperger, Jeanne Anne Bloemker, Bonnie Bess Myers, Norma Condon [or Norma Conlon?], Marg, Mary Elsa Stoddard, (*continued on next page*) Box 1, Folder 7

Group photo of the Indianapolis delegation from a Unitarian church at Conference Point Camp in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, 1940 (*continued*): Dick Clark (Pappy), Dan Steel [or Don Steel?], Adelhaide Pholeman [Adelheid Poehlmann], Josephine Stoddard, Roxana Fye, Frannie Robinson, Tommy & Stanley, Rose Myers.

Box 1, Folder 7

Empire Life and Accident Insurance Company items: page from *The Broadcaster* [company newsletter], July 1955, announcing Fred S. Smith's election as vice president and treasurer; photocopy of news clipping from *The Bedford Daily Times-Mail* (of Bedford, Indiana), 15 February 1956, titled "Empire Life Officials Visit Bedford To Inspect New District Office Building" with a photo that includes Fred Smith and others; group photo that includes Elsa and Fred Smith at Empire convention at French Lick on 31 October 1958; two photos of Empire convention on 1 November 1958 (one includes Fred and Elsa Smith); *Souvenir Photographic Section* with photos from the French Lick Convention of 31 October–2 November 1958; page 9 from *The Broadcaster*, February 1962, with a photo of Fred Smith at his desk; group photo of Saturday night banquet at convention at French Lick on 18 August 1962; *The Broadcaster*, September 1962 issue.

Box 1, Folder 8

Group photo of IBM Customer Administrative Class, 23 April 1956, at International Business Machines Corporation School [in Endicott, New York], with Fred Smith in second row from the top, second from right. Separate sheet with list of names of others.

Box 1, Folder 9

Indianapolis Children's Museum materials: *Fifty Years Young: The Children's Museum* (32-page pamphlet of speech by David H. Kenny, which was delivered on 4 December 1975. Two members' newsletters: spring 1975 and 50th anniversary issue. Letter to Fred Smith from Estelle P. Bell, dated 26 May 1975, regarding how much the museum had changed. Correspondence and receipt regarding Fred Smith's donation of hearing aids to the museum, August 1976: two letters from Fred Smith to Mildred Compton; note to Fred Smith from Mildred Compton; letter from Weimer K. Hicks, Jr. to Fred Smith.

Box 1, Folder 10

“Fred S. Smith Is A Born Collector,” photocopy of article from *The Daily Courier*, Prescott, Arizona, 30 March 1965, about Fred Smith, with an emphasis on his clock collecting.

Box 1, Folder 11

Broad Ripple High School Commencement program, 1941. One-page typed manuscript regarding the old Indiana State Museum Building (Indianapolis City Hall), designed by Rubush and Hunter in 1909, n.d.

Box 1, Folder 12