

Collection #
M 0998
OMB 0119
BV 3694–3698

INDIANA BOTANIC GARDENS RECORDS, CA. 1866–1980S

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Processed by

Paul Brockman

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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	8 manuscript boxes; 1 oversized manuscript box; 5 bound volumes; 1 photograph, 3 tintypes
COLLECTION DATES:	ca. 1866–1980s
PROVENANCE:	David Meyer, Chicago, Illinois, October, 2010; November, 2011
RESTRICTIONS:	None
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ALTERNATE FORMATS:	
RELATED HOLDINGS:	
ACCESSION NUMBER:	2010.0318; 2011.0327
NOTES:	

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The Indiana Botanic Gardens (originally named the Indiana Herb Gardens) was started by Wisconsin born Joseph E. Meyer in 1910. Meyer came to Chicago where he worked as a printer but soon moved to Hammond (Lake County) where he worked on the local newspaper, The Hammond Times. After leaving the Times, Meyer operated his mail order herb business out a cottage at the back of his home with the assistance of his family while herbs were grown in a vacant lot next door. The business expanded when it published *The Herbalist* in 1918. Meyer purchased land along the Little Calumet River that included a large number of herbs which he used in his products and constructed a 36,000 square foot gabled building completed in 1926 that served as the production and mail order house for the company. In 1925 Meyer initiated an annual publication title *The Herbalist Almanac* which contained a variety of information on herbal medicine and other useful material. The following year the business was reorganized under the name Indiana Botanic Gardens, Inc. Meyer also published *The Old Herb Doctor* which took its information from customer's letters.

The Herbalist Almanac ceased publication in 1979 and the operation was taken over by David Meyer, Joseph's grandson, who with great-grandson, Tim Cleland moved the business to Hobart, Indiana, where they expanded from selling only herbs to include vitamins and nutritional supplements. In recent years Indiana Botanic Gardens Inc. has increased its size to become the world wide leader in the mail order sale of herbs although the herbs are no longer home grown but purchased from suppliers.

Sources:

The History of Botanic Choice and Indiana Botanic Gardens, Inc.

www.botanicchoice.com/The-Botanic-Choice-Story accessed 18 January 2010.

Indiana Botanic Gardens. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indiana Botanic Gardens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indiana_Botanic_Gardens)

accessed 18 January 2010

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Included in the collection are formulas/recipes, financial records, publications, and testimonials pertaining to the operation of the Indiana Botanic Gardens, 1900s–1980s. Most of the formulas/recipes are for compound medicinal teas and flavorings and herbal tablets, wafers and vitamins, 1910s–1970s.

Among the company's business records are receipts regarding the construction of the new building, 1926; an expense ledger, 1928–1933; and records of herbs, barks, and other raw items purchased from farmers and gatherers, 1922–1923. Also included are advertising materials and some publications including a collection of labels, 1910s–1920s, the *Herbal Pocket Prescriber* (1939), a mockup of a book by Meyer containing articles from the *Herbalist Almanac*, and original art work and letters for labels and advertisements, 1940s–1970s. Other items are a collection of clippings and relevant information collected by Joseph E. Meyer around 1900 and called his *Book of Plans and Ideas* and *Merrick's 1907 Index: An Encyclopedia for the Chemist, Pharmacist, and Physician* which includes notes presumably made by Meyer as well as additional clipping and pamphlets.

The largest part of the collection consists of testimonials provided by customers. Some are arranged by product number or name while others are in chronological order, 1930s–1970s.

There also are three tintypes photographs of Joseph E. Meyer and his brother, Edward, and one formal portrait of Joseph E. Meyer.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Formulas/Recipes, ca. 1866–1970s

CONTENTS

Medical Notebook, author unknown, ca. 1866–1883

Formula Book, ca. 1920s

Formula/Recipe Book, ca. 1926

Formula Book, n.d.

Tea Formula Book, 1920s

Recipes, 1910s–1940s (1 of 3)

Recipes, 1910s–1940s (2 of 3)

Recipes, 1910s–1940s (3 of 3)

Formula Book, 1950s

Compound List, 1950s–1960s

Formula/Record Book, Tablets & Wafers, 1963–1964
(1 of 2)

Formula/Record Book, Tablets & Wafers, 1963–1964
(2 of 2)

Formula Book, 1970s (1 of 3)

Formula Book, 1970s (2 of 3)

Formula Book, 1970s (3 of 3)

Recipes, Teas & Flavorings, 1975

Recipes, Not Used, 1930s–1960s

CONTAINER

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Box 1, Folder 3

Box 1, Folder 4

Box 1, Folder 5

Box 1, Folder 6

Box 1, Folder 7

Box 1, Folder 8

Box 1, Folder 9

Box 2, Folder 1

Box 2, Folder 2

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Series 2: Business Records, 1916–1983

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Joseph Meyer, Bank Books (2), 1916–1926
Herbs & Other Materials Purchase Book, 1922
Account Book, 1923
Building Construction, 1926 (1 of 3)
Building Construction, 1926 (2 of 3)
Building Construction, 1926 (3 of 3)
Expense Ledger, 1928–1933
Day Book, 1930
Correspondence, 1929–1983
Pocket Diary, 1939
Order Fulfillment Book, 1960s–1970s
Sales Tabulation, June 1967–June 1968
Batch Production Records, 1973–1975 (1 of 2)
Batch Production Records, 1973–1975 (2 of 2)

CONTAINER

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Series 3: Publications & Art Work, 1882–1980s

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Joseph E. Meyer Book of Plans and Ideas, 1900
Loose Items from Meyer Book of Plans and Ideas
Merrick's 1907 Index/Meyer Work Book
Loose Items from *Index*/Work Book
Catalog, 1914
Loose Items from Catalog, 1914

CONTAINER

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BV 3697
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Mock up of Book, "Herbalism", 1920s–1930s	BV 3698
<i>Herbal Pocket Prescriber</i> , 1939	Box 4, Folder 1
<i>Indian Household Medicine Guide</i> , 1882	Box 4, Folder 2
Literature, 1970s, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 3
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Artwork (Proofs), October, 1943, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 6
Artwork (Proofs), n.d.	Box 4, Folder 7
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Art-Lettering, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 9
Lettering & Art, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 10
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No. 18, Geranium Liniment, 1940s–1970s	Box 6, Folder 3
No. 21, Nervine, n.d.	Box 6, Folder 4
No. 26, Headache, n.d.	Box 6, Folder 5
No. 29, Viro, 1950s–1970s	Box 6, Folder 6
No. 30, Tea, n.d.	Box 6, Folder 7
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No. 44, Poultice, n.d.	Box 6, Folder 9
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No. 120, Tea Testimonials, 1950s	Box 6, Folder 13
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No. 301, Herbal Smoke, 1951	Box 6, Folder 26
No. 407, Voice Tonic, n.d.	Box 6, Folder 27
No. 409–A, Compound/Menopause, 1950s–1960s	Box 6, Folder 28
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Joseph E. Meyer Portrait, n.d.

Joseph Meyer as child, n.d.

Joseph Meyer and two unidentified men, n.d.

Ed Meyer (Joseph's brother)

CONTAINER

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Photographs:
Tintypes, Box 1

Photographs:
Tintypes, Box 1

Photographs:
Tintypes, Box 1

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0998).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.