

**REFERENCE CODE:** AkAMH

**REPOSITORY NAME:**

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**TITLE:** Becky Gay Collection

**COLLECTION NUMBER:** B2009.037

**OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION**

Dates: circa 1939-1944

Extent: 53 items

Language and Scripts: The collection is in English.

Name of creator(s): unknown

**Administrative/Biographical History:**

This collection may contain unrelated groups of photos. It was previously physically processed by another individual and some donor details may have been lost since this time. There is a note within the accession file for a 'Becky Gay' and it is presumed that at least a portion of the negatives were donated by her. There is no information about her relation to the photographs or those pictured within, except that she is not the photographer or pictured subject in any way.<sup>1</sup>

The negatives of the Japanese on Attu (.1a-.3b) are noted on the reverse side of an envelope sent by Sgt. Lester H. Best, and it is presumed that they were previously stored in this envelope. According to his U.S. Army Enlistment Record, Sgt. Best was born in 1917 and enlisted in the Army Air Corps on 3 November 1945 in Pennsylvania. It is unclear how he is associated with the Aleutian Campaign, World War II, or the photographs included herein.

Col. Otis E. Hays Jr. is among those listed in the donor file; however it is unclear as to which

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<sup>1</sup> Becky Gay is noted as being in her 60s at the time of processing.

pictures are related to him, if any. Hays did serve in the Alaska Defense Command during WWII so it is possible that he created or collected a portion of these images,<sup>2</sup> though he was also a WWII historian and author so it is possible he is related in that manner to this collection.

There is another envelope that is noted as having contained one negative of a man in a fleece flight jacket (.11) and is labeled as 'Negative, Jared (or Janet) Hefley (sp)'. It is possible that this is the pilot pictured, the photographer of the portrait, or the collector/donor of the image. There are no details known about J. Hefley or the man pictured.

#### Scope and Content Description:

This is a collection of 64 black and white negatives and one print photograph. Film formats are varied and included nitrate and acetate film stocks. Subjects pictured are diverse but photographs appear to have all been taken in the 1940s, with one dated as being circa 1939. Topics include: military pilots; Japanese on Attu (pre-Battle of Attu); and military men with civilian women (recreational life). Many of the images are of unidentified locations, but some show details similar to Adak, Attu, or other Aleutian Islands. The recreational images may be of Fort Richardson or Anchorage or another base near a town.

#### Arrangement:

The negatives have been arranged according to film type and further by subject. This collection was partially processed in the past and any original order has been lost.

### **CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS AND USE**

**Restrictions on Access:** The collection is open for research use. Restricted items noted in the finding aid. Please contact ARC staff for details.

**Physical Access:** Original items in good condition. Access to original negatives limited.

**Technical Access:** No special equipment is needed to access the materials. A light box may be used to view transparencies. Computer access required to view digital scans.

#### Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:

The Anchorage Museum is the owner of the materials and makes available reproductions for research, publication, and other uses. Written permission must be obtained from the Anchorage Museum before any reproduction use. The Anchorage Museum does not necessarily hold copyright to all of the materials in the collections. In some cases, permission for use may require seeking additional authorization from the copyright owners.

#### Preferred Citation:

Becky Gay Collection, Anchorage Museum, B2009.037

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<sup>2</sup> Geni, "Otis Earl Hays, Jr. Genealogy Record," last updated 17 July 2015: <http://www.geni.com/people/Otis-Earl-Hays/6000000035019282455>

## ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

### Acquisition and Appraisal Information:

Collection accessioned in September of 2009. Accession notes indicate that the materials may have been donated by Becky Gay.

### Processing Note:

Collection was physically processed prior to 2015 and most original envelopes appear to have been discarded at that time. Six negatives regarding Japanese soldiers on Attu came out of an envelope from Sgt. Lester H. Best. One negative was discarded for duplicate image and deterioration. Any captions were provided at time of previous processing and are presumed to have been written on the negative's original containers. Negatives digitized in 2015 and removed to freezer.

## RELATED MATERIALS

CIHS Griffin, B1966.007

Aleutian Campaign Collection, B1975.090

AHFAM FIC Collection, B1980.001; .38-.45

Helen E. Jones Collection, B1988.055; .1-.192

Vern Brickley Collection, B1998.014

James L. Oswald Jr. Photographs, B2017.017

## SUBJECTS

United States. Army Air Forces

United States. Army – Alaskan Department

United States. Army – Aviation

United States. Army – Military life

World War, 1939-1945—Social aspects

World War, 1939-1945 – Campaigns – Alaska – Aleutian Islands

World War, 1939-1945 –Aerial operations, American

Anchorage (Alaska)

Attu Island (Alaska)

### Detailed Description of the Collection:

#### B1

.1a – [copy negative, Japanese on Attu, men seated at table]

.1b – [copy negative, Japanese on Attu, three men posed in wintertime]

.2a – [copy negative, Japanese on Attu, man in military vehicle, appears to be P.O.W.]

.2b – [copy negative, Japanese on Attu, some type of artillery shell or other weapon]

.3a – [copy negative, Japanese on Attu, two men posed in wintertime]

.3b – [copy negative, Japanese on Attu, three men in winter gear stand by tent]

.4a – [close-up of military radio with portraits of woman framed above, c. 1939. One of the

- portraits is the same image as .37]
- .4b – [same radio scene as .4a but with soldier posed in front of radio, c. 1939]
  - .5a – [soldier in airplane]
  - .5b – [similar to .5a, different soldier who is smiling]
  - .6 – [military pilot in cockpit]
  - .7 – Love All Ways, Always Your Gal [studio portrait of woman with message in bottom left corner]
  - .8 – Flier [exterior shot of soldier wearing flight jacket on tundra]
  - .9 – Flier [similar scene as .8, the same pilot now posed standing]
  - .10 – Flier [same pilot as above, now wearing fur gloves]
  - .11 – [man in fleece flight jacket, originally from negative sleeve labeled as 'Jared Hefley' (sp), same pilot as above images]
  - .12 – Fliers [three men in pilot uniforms stand posed together]
  - .13 – Fliers [five men in wintertime pilot gear are posed on a grassy field, possibly tundra which could place this image in the Aleutian Islands]
  - .14 – Flier [man in flight gear stands posed against a doorway, the same man as .11]
  - .15 – Flier [same as .14, different photo angle]
  - .16 – Flier [close-up of pilot, same as .14 and .15]
  - .17 – [close-up of pinup girl paintjob on aircraft. Original image blurry]
  - .18 – [exterior view of Quonset hut in winter, possibly Adak or other Aleutian Island]
  - .19 – [excavation by steam shovel, hillside, possibly Aleutian Island]
  - .20a – [closer view of just the steam shovel picking up soil]
  - .20b – [similar to .20a, appears to be taken a few moments after the previous photo]
  - .21 – [interior of barracks (possibly Quonset hut), close-up of military radio and pinup photos around it]
  - .22a – [same as .21]
  - .22b – [same as .22a]
  - .23a – Men at Base, Flyers [three men posed in front of tundra and Quonset huts, possibly Adak or other Aleutian location]
  - .23b – Men at Base, Flyers [one man from above .23a group posed by himself]
  - .24a – Men at Base, Flyers [pilot in fur coat pets a dog]
  - .24b – Men at Base, Flyers [presumably the same pilot as .24a, now posed smoking a pipe]
  - .25 – Men at Base, Flyers [similar tundra and hut scene as .23a and 23.b, one pilot stands in heavy flight pants outside huts, possibly Adak]
  - .26 – Men at Base, Flyers [four men in uniform are seated in front of long wooden building (possibly a post exchange), two men have the insignia for sergeant on their uniforms]
  - .27a – [seven soldiers in winter gear stand near firing range targets]
  - .27b – [line of men stand shooting at targets]
  - .28 – [soldier posed with coat over his shoulder smiling at camera, possibly one of the men from .26]
  - .29a – [close-up portrait of soldier]
  - .29b – [soldier posed standing on wooden poles]
  - .30 – [soldier and woman posed on house doorstep, appears to be the same soldier as .11]
  - .31 – [same house as .30, woman stands on sidewalk with another woman sitting on grass]

nearby]

- .32a – [officer and two women sitting on grass in park]
- .32b – [same officer as .32a and a fellow soldier sitting]
- .33 – [same scene as .32a with two bicycles nearby]
- .34a – [woman with flower in her hair from .32a lying on grass]
- .34b – [soldier from .32b laying on grass]
- .35 – [woman adjusting her shoe in front of building]
- .36 – [woman from .34 posed]
- .37 – [woman wearing kerchief is posed in front of trees, autumn scene]
- .38 – [same woman from .37 laying on what appears to be a picnic table in park, autumn]
- .39 – [woman wearing scarf is posed in front of tree, spring or summer]
- .40 – [woman posed next to wall, wearing checkered skirt, same woman as .39?]
- .41 – [same scarf woman as .39, standing on top of lumber]
- .42 – [same woman as .41, now seated on top of wooden pilings]
- .43 – [same woman as above photos, standing on top of wooden pilings]
- .44 – [similar to .42, different photo angle]
- .45 – [woman with scarf posing in park]
- .46 – [same woman with scarf posing against a building]
- .47 – [woman in polka-dot shirt standing in park]
- .48 – [woman with scarf seated at picnic table]
- .49 – [woman with scarf standing next to woman wearing polka-dots]
- .50 – [woman with scarf standing in front of large two-story building]
- .51 – [woman with scarf sitting and smiling at camera]
- .52a – [large stone tower surrounded by palm trees and roads, previously identified as possibly being a San Francisco landmark]
- .52b – [similar image as .52a]
- .53 – [Restricted because of sensitive content]

Guide written: August 10, 2015

Guide updated: August 19, 2022