

REFERENCE CODE: AkAMH

REPOSITORY NAME:

Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center
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Guide prepared by: Amy Valentine, Archivist

TITLE: Vern Brickley Photo Album

COLLECTION NUMBER: B2022.006

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Dates: 1928-1938

Extent: 1 box

Language and Scripts: The collection is in English.

Name of creator(s): Fred Brickley, Vern Brickley, Ellis, Gordon Springbett

Administrative/Biographical History:

Vern Brickley (1909-1970) came to Valdez, Alaska from Tacoma, Washington, in 1936 not as a photographer, but to work on a movie set. He lived through one winter on Fox Island in Prince William Sound, where he was involved in the herring fishery and raising foxes. Just prior to WWII he moved to Fairbanks, then was drafted into the Army as a photographer, and moved to Anchorage in 1940. He was in the Army at Fort Richardson for about three years and discharged in 1945. He traveled throughout the Aleutians during the Japanese invasion, and many of the photographs of Attu from the campaign bear his name. It is thought that he traded for some of these images, since he was printing them commercially.

Until 1954 Brickley and family lived in Anchorage at 920 B East 15th Avenue. He is listed continuously in the phone book until April, but no business is listed in the yellow pages. At that time the family moved to Moose Pass, and Brickley worked at the military rehab center in Seward, teaching dark room techniques. According to his son Bill, this is when he picked up the historical negatives of Seward. They moved back to Anchorage in 1958, and Brickley then became a photographer for the Army Corps of Engineers, working for the District Engineers at Elmendorf Air Force Base. Many of the Corp photographs of the 1964 earthquake are his work.

He died October 28, 1970, survived at the time by his widow, Margaret; a son, William; two daughters, Mrs. Don Parker, and Miss Eileen Brickley.

Scope and Content Description: Collection consists of one leatherbound photo album with a hand-painted cover depicting a bulldog and U.S.S. Marines insignia. Album contains: three pages (front and back) of friends' signatures and comments dating from July 1930 – August 1934; and black and white photographic prints and commercially produced photographic postcards documenting Brickley's time served in the Marines. The collection also includes newspaper clippings and three documents.

Some images depict Brickley's family, primarily his siblings and parents in Tacoma, Washington. Most of the album documents Brickley's fellow Marines aboard the U.S.S. Relief (a hospital ship) and battleship U.S.S. Maryland at various ports including those in California, as well as locations throughout the Panama Canal and Caribbean, including Trinidad, Panama, Nicaragua, and Cuba.

Arrangement: Original album order maintained. Loose materials organized by format.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS AND USE

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research use.

Physical Access: Original items in good condition.

Technical Access: No special equipment is needed to access the materials.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:

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Preferred Citation: Vern Brickley Photo Album, Anchorage Museum, B2022.6

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition and Appraisal Information

Collection donated by Susan and Duane Maney in 2022.

Processing Note

Newspaper clippings photocopied onto archival paper and originals discarded. Three pages with 22 images were discarded on 1/27/2025 as materials did not fit collecting scope.

Newspaper clipping copies, one negative, six loose photos, and three documents housed in folders within album box.

Notes

This collection contains outdated language and sentiments, and potentially harmful imagery that does not reflect the mission and goals of the Anchorage Museum. We consent to input and recommendations from communities as we work on decolonizing our collections.

RELATED MATERIALS

B1998.014 Vern Brickley Collection
B2011.011 Doris Rhodes Scrapbooks
B2015.004 Jose Romano Collection
B2025.003 Vern Brickley Souvenir Photographs

SUBJECTS

Brickley, Vern, 1909-1970
Hoover, Herbert, 1874-1964
Armed Forces
Families of military personnel – United States
Hospital ships – United States
Marines
Military personnel
Relief (Hospital ship)
U.S.S. Maryland (Battleship)

Detailed Description of the Collection

B1

Album

.5 – A Big Pile of “Bricks” [Brickley siblings posed on residential walkway, L-R: Fred, Mable, Delcie, Vern (in U.S. Marine blue dress uniform), Ruth, Gayle, Hazel, and James. Likely Tacoma, WA]
.22 – Taken June, 1930 – Irish and Brick. The Brick is sort of Busted [W.F. Daugherty on left and Vern Brickley with a bandaged jaw on right, both in uniform on deck of possibly the U.S.S. Relief, a hospital ship]
.80 – Ready for Inspection [Marines in blue dress uniform in formation on ship deck, presumably aboard the U.S.S. Maryland]
.83 – Mary’s 16 inch Turrets No. I & II [Brickley posed between the U.S.S. Maryland’s twin 16” guns]
.121 – Mr. & Mrs. Hoover, Aboard, Maryland, Nov. 1928 [President-elect Herbert Hoover and wife, Lou Henry Hoover, on deck of the battleship U.S.S. Maryland during the 1928 Good Will Tour]
.204 – [from back:] I guess you know this bunch April – 30 [six people posed in front of Brickley Radio Service storefront, April 1930, Tacoma, WA. Fred Brickley at far right.]

B1/F1

Photo Prints and Negatives

B1/F2

Newspaper Clippings

B1/F3

Documents

Guide written: January 7, 2026