



Legacy Finding Aid for Manuscript and Photograph Collections

801 K Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

What are Finding Aids?

Finding aids are narrative guides to archival collections created by the repository to describe the contents of the material. They often provide much more detailed information than can be found in individual catalog records. Contents of finding aids often include short biographies or histories, processing notes, information about the size, scope, and material types included in the collection, guidance on how to navigate the collection, and an index to box and folder contents.

What are Legacy Finding Aids?

The following document is a legacy finding aid – a guide which has not been updated recently. Information may be outdated, such as the Historical Society’s contact information or exact box numbers for contents’ location within the collection. Legacy finding aids are a product of their times; language and terms may not reflect the Historical Society’s commitment to culturally sensitive and anti-racist language. This guide is provided in “as is” condition for immediate use by the public. This file will be replaced with an updated version when available.

To learn more, please

Visit [DCHistory.org](https://dchistory.org)

Email the Kiplinger Research Library at Library@DCHistory.org (preferred)

Call the Kiplinger Research Library at 202-516-1363 ext. 302

The Historical Society of Washington, D.C., is a community-supported educational and research organization that collects, interprets, and shares the history of our nation’s capital. Founded in 1894, it serves a diverse audience through its collections, public programs, exhibits, and publications.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, D.C.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS REGISTER

Title: MS 632 The David George “Duke” Zeibert Collection, ca. 1950s-1998

Processor: Nathaniel Kulyk

Date: April 14, 2005

David George “Duke” Zeibert (1911-1997), was the owner of the popular downtown Washington establishment Duke Zeibert’s Restaurant. A native of Troy, NY, he began his lifelong career in the restaurant business as a dishwasher in the resorts of the Catskill Mountains. He then went on to bus tables and worked his way up to the position of headwaiter. In the 1940s, he worked at a number of Fan & Bill’s restaurants in Upstate New York, Miami, and Washington. He earned his nickname “Duke” because of the white silk pants he would wear to work while he was in Miami. He married Joan Siner in 1946, but the two later divorced.

He first opened Duke Zeibert’s Restaurant in 1950 in Washington, D.C. It was located in the LaSalle Building at 17th and L Streets NW, just off of Connecticut Ave. The restaurant became a local hub for thousands of lunch and dinner meetings, and boasted numerous politicians, sports figures, media celebrities, and business executives as clientele. Some of the more famous names included President Harry Truman, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, President John F. Kennedy, President George H. W. Bush, President Bill Clinton, Washington Redskins owner Jack Kent Cooke, talk show host Larry King, and former Democratic Party Chairman Robert S. Strauss.

Zeibert’s was known for its trademark sour pickles, seeded onion rolls, chicken in the pot, matzoth ball soup, and many other dishes. Duke Zeibert himself successfully cultivated a customer base by presiding over the dining room, chatting with patrons, giving handshakes and pats on the back, telling jokes, and having an innate sense of who was who. People loved him for his sense of humor, his gracious hospitality, and his ability to make everyone feel important.

When not running his restaurant, Zeibert could be found playing golf or playing cards in the Woodmont Country Club. When the LaSalle Building was torn down in 1980, Zeibert retired to play golf and bet on horse races. However, he soon found himself bored with retirement and, in 1983, he opened a new Duke Zeibert’s Restaurant on the second floor of the new Washington Square Building, located at L Street and Connecticut Ave. He remained at that location until he retired for good in 1994. Duke Zeibert died in August 1997 of cancer and heart ailments.

Scope and Content: The David George “Duke” Zeibert Collection, ca. 1950s-1998, is arranged in two series:

SERIES I: PERSONAL PAPERS, ca. 1950s-1998, consists of correspondence, newspaper and magazine clippings, menus, certificates, and other memorabilia relating to the life of David George “Duke” Zeibert and his work as a restaurant owner in Washington D.C. This material is arranged in three sub-series each of which is arranged chronologically.

Sub-Series A: Correspondence, 1954-1987, consists of letters, telegrams, postcards, and greeting cards written to David Zeibert from restaurant patrons and personal friends.

Sub-Series B: Newspaper and Magazine Clippings, 1955-1998, consists of clippings from assorted newspapers and magazines related to Duke Zeibert’s Restaurant.

Sub-Series C: Memorabilia, 1957-1994, includes menus, certificates and awards, Washington Redskins posters and memorabilia. (Oversized items described and housed in Container 4 and Folders 40 and 41).

SERIES II: PHOTOGRAPHS, ca. 1950s-1990s, consists of photographs of events that took place at Duke Zeibert’s Restaurant, sports personalities and events, photographs of celebrities, and photographs of David “Duke” Zeibert with restaurant patrons. This material is arranged in three sub-series:

Sub-Series A: Restaurant Photographs, 1960s-1990s, consists of photographs of different parties and events occurring at Duke Zeibert’s Restaurant. The sub-series is generally arranged chronologically.

Sub-Series B: Sports Photographs, 1960s-1990s, includes photographs related to different sporting events, including football, baseball, basketball, horse racing, golf, tennis, soccer, and boxing. The sub-series is arranged by sport and then chronologically when applicable.

Sub-Series C: Celebrity Photographs, 1950s-1990s, consists of photographs of celebrities, some of which are autographed, which were displayed at Duke Zeibert’s Restaurant. The sub-series is arranged based on whether the photograph is autographed, and also by sport celebrities, and political celebrities.

(Oversized items described and housed in Container 4 and Folders 40 and 41. Items are arranged in similar order to Sub-Series A-C above).

Donor: Randy Zeibert, 2001.119

Size: 2 cubic feet (4 containers and 2 oversized folders)

Restrictions: None

Preferred Citation: [Identified item], *The David George "Duke" Zeibert Collection*, [Container #, Folder #]. The Historical Society of Washington D.C.

Container List

SERIES I: PERSONAL PAPERS, ca. 1950s-1998

Sub-Series A: Correspondence 1954-1998

Container 1

Folder 1: Correspondence, 1954-1987, consisting of letters written to Duke Zeibert from patrons, many of them extending their personal thanks and compliments for their experiences at the restaurant and with Duke Zeibert himself. Includes letters from the following:

Congressman Abraham J. Multer of New York, April 19, 1954;

Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown of California, October 23, 1962;

Governor John M. Dalton of Missouri, December 4, 1963;

Merv Griffin, April 9, 1965;

Joe Pollack, Public Relations Director of the St. Louis Football Cardinals, October 25, 1966;

William H. Sullivan Jr., President of the Boston Patriots Football Club, May 10, 1967;

Senator Warren G. Magnuson of Washington (State), May 16, 1967;

Senator George McGovern of South Dakota, August 27, 1970;

Charles G. Driesell, Head Basketball Coach at the University of Maryland, October 7, 1974;

Arnold "Red" Auerbach, President and General Manager of the Boston Celtics Basketball Club, September 13, 1977;

Governor Marvin Mandel of Maryland, October 30, 1974;

Joseph A. Califano Jr., Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, April 12, 1979; May 3, 1979; July 30, 1979;

Marion Barry Jr., Mayor of Washington D.C., February 10, 1983;

Undated letter on legal pad from **Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill**, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, undated.

Folder 2: Correspondence, 1963-1985, including greetings cards and telegrams.

Sub-Series B: Newspaper and Magazine Clippings, 1955-1998

Container 1 (cont.)

Folder 3: Newspaper clippings, 1955-1969

Folder 4: Newspaper clippings, 1970-1979

Folder 5: Newspaper clippings, 1980-1993

Folder 6: Newspaper clippings, undated

Folder 7: Magazine articles and clippings, 1966-1998.

Sub-Series C: Memorabilia, 1957-1994

Folder 8: Invitations 1967-1985; awards, 1970-1980; restaurant postcards c. 1960s?; "Taste of the Town" packet, July 25th and 26th, 1981; Washington Redskins Super Bowl Champions napkin, 1983.

Folder 9: Duke Zeibert's Restaurant menus, 1955-1980, including Bicentennial Celebration Menu, 1976.

Folder 10: Programs, 1957-1994, includes:
Washington Senators Official Program and Score Card, 1957;
16th Tournament of Champions at the Stardust Hotel and Country Club, Las Vegas, Nevada, April 18th-April 21st 1968?;
Touchdown Luncheon Program, July 29, 1970;
District of Columbia Public Schools Gifted and Talented Education Program, Breakfast for Champions program, Friday June 10, 1994. Hosted by Duke Zeibert's Restaurant.

SERIES II: PHOTOGRAPHS, ca. 1950s-1990s

Sub-Series A: Restaurant Photographs, 1960s-1990s

Folder 11: Photographs showing the interior (no customers) and exterior of Duke Zeibert's Restaurant, ca. 1960s-1970s.

Folder 12: Photographs of Duke Zeibert and his staff, ca. 1970s.

Folder 13: Photographs of customers at Duke Zeibert's Restaurant, ca. 1960s-1990.

Container 1 (cont.)

Folder 14: Photographs of Duke Zeibert, photographs of Duke Zeibert with family, photographs of Duke Zeibert's friends, ca. 1964-1989.

Folder 15: Photographs from the 20th Anniversary Celebration of Duke Zeibert's Restaurant, Monday November 2, 1970.

Folder 16: Photographs from the "going out of business" party at Duke Zeibert's Restaurant, May 1980.

Container 2

Folder 17: Photographs from *People* Magazine article on Duke Zeibert's Restaurant, February 4, 1981.

Sub-Series B: Sports Photographs, ca. 1960s-1990s

Folder 18: Racetrack photographs, 1965, including photographs of Duke Zeibert at the 1965 Kentucky Derby; photograph of a horse with a "Duke Zeibert's Restaurant" banner draped on it, 1965.

Folder 19: Golf photographs, ca. 1960s-1976, includes photograph of Duke Zeibert with Mike Souchak at the Tournament of Champions, 1965; photographs of Duke Zeibert practicing his golf swing, 1971; photographs of Duke Zeibert at the 1974, 1975, and 1976 Vince Lombardi Memorial Golf and Tennis Tournament.

Folder 20: Golf photographs (formerly matted and framed) from the Vince Lombardi Memorial Golf and Tennis Tournament, 1975.

Folder 21: Basketball photographs, undated, includes photographs of Duke Zeibert on the sidelines of an unidentified basketball game with the commentators; photographs of Charles G. Driesell, Head Basketball Coach at the University of Maryland.

Folder 22: Baseball photographs, ca. 1960s, including photos of Duke Zeibert with Roddey Mims of the Minnesota Twins, ca. 1960s; Duke Zeibert at the bat in a Washington Senators uniform, ca. 1960s.

Folder 23 & 24: Football photographs, ca. 1960s-1992, includes photographs of two unidentified men brining a horse with Dallas Cowboys banner draped on it into Duke Zeibert's Restaurant, undated; New York Giants players dining at Duke Zeibert's Restaurant, 1971; Series of "victory cake" receptions for Washington Redskins players and coaching staff, 1971-1976. Duke Zeibert pictured with the Vince Lombardi Trophy from Super Bowl XXVI, 1992.

Container 2 (cont.)

Folder 25: Soccer photographs, undated.

Folder 26: Boxing photographs, undated.

Sub-Series C: Celebrity Photographs, ca. 1950s-1990s

Folder 27: Autographed celebrity photographs ca. 1960s-1980s, including Andre the Giant, Coach George Allen of the Washington Redskins, Beryl Middleton, and January Jones.

Folder 28: Non-autographed celebrity photographs, ca. 1960s-1980s, including photographs with Milton Berle, and Jayne Mansfield.

Container 3

Folder 29: Political celebrity photographs, ca. 1950's-1993, includes photographs of Group shot of the Carter Family, 1979;

Duke Zeibert with Speaker of the House Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neil, ca. 1970s;
George H. W. Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev, ca. 1980s;

Folder 30: Autographed sports celebrity photographs, undated, including Bob Lanier of the Detroit Pistons.

Folder 31: Non-Autographed sports celebrity photographs, ca. 1970s-1980s, includes George Allen, Sonny, Sam & Frank: The Washington Redskins Broadcast Team.

Folder 32 & 33: Photographs from the Moe Siegel Testimonial Roast, May 6, 1994.

Container 4 (oversize)

Folder 34: Oversized memorabilia, 1958-1983, including "Doonesbury" comic autographed by creator Garry Trudeau, 1978.

Folder 35: Oversized restaurant photographs, ca. 1970s-1990s, includes photograph of "Duke's Gang" on Duke Zeibert's birthday, ca. 1990s.

Folder 36: Oversized celebrity photographs, ca. 1960s-1980s, includes Larry King, Angie Dickinson, Lynda Carter, The Crew of Apollo 16 (John Young, Ken Mattingly, and Charlie Duke), and Father Harthe.

Container 4 (cont.)

Folder 37: Oversized non-autographed celebrity photographs, ca. 1960s-1980s, includes photograph of Duke Zeibert and Muhammad Ali; Duke Zeibert with George McQuinn, Walter Matherson, Mickey Yernon, George Case, and Eddie Yost, ca. 1970s.

Folder 38: Oversized political celebrity photographs, ca. 1950s-1993, includes photographs of Duke Zeibert and Harry Truman, ca. 1950s; Duke Zeibert and John F. Kennedy, ca. 1960s; Duke Zeibert and Mikhail Gorbachev, ca. 1980s; Duke Zeibert and Bill Clinton, July 1993.

Folder 39: Oversized sports celebrity photographs, undated, includes photograph of Duke Zeibert with Ted Williams.

Drawer A-5

Folder 40: Oversized photographs and sports memorabilia, ca. 1970s-1996, including photograph of George Allen, ca. 1970s; matted photographs of the Washington Redskins on the field, undated; team photograph of the Washington Bullets, ca. 1970s; Washington Redskins Posters and Super Bowl posters, 1983-1996.

Folder 41: Oversized photographs, ca. 1980s, including photograph of Ronald and Nancy Reagan with Coach Joe Gibbs of the Washington Redskins and the Vince Lombardi Super Bowl Trophy, 1983; RFK Stadium (aerial view), undated; photograph of White House, with Washington Monument in the background at sunset, 1988.