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Pine Beach Association Collection

Digital

1922-1980

1 box (0.5 linear foot)

Call no.: MS 666

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Founded in Athol, Mass., prior to 1922, the Pine Beach Association operated a summer resort on the northern end of Lake Rohunta, a 383-acre reservoir owned largely by the Rodney Hunt Company. Recognizing the touristic and recreational opportunities, the Association built Pine Beach into a facility that included the Rohunta Inn (the former Elm Lodge Clubhouse), a restaurant, camping facilities, and a lifeguard-patrolled swimming area with water slides and other recreational facilities, all with the intent of becoming the "leading inland bathing beach of New England." Although the hurricane of 1938 washed away Rodney Hunt's dam and hydroelectric station, Pine Beach remained a popular destination, freely available to the company's employees. In the 1980s, the properties were sold to the not-for-profit Lake Rohunta Beach Association, an association of 15 residential properties.

This small collection contains postcards, photographs, and ephemeral material relating to the Pine Beach Association, concentrated in its early years.

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Background on Pine Beach Association

Founded in Athol, Mass., prior to 1922, the Pine Beach Association operated a summer resort on the northern end of Lake Rohunta. The history of the Association can be traced back to the decision of the Rodney Hunt Company to acquire property with water rights at Partridgeville, Mass., and to rename the adjoining lake Lake Rohunta, a portmanteau of the company name. In 1908, Rodney Hunt built a hydroelectric plant there to power their factories in the nearby town of Orange.

With the development of the Mohawk Trail as a scenic motorway after World War I and the expansion of regional tourism, the Pine Beach Association developed Pine Beach into a summer resort pitched directly to motor tourists. At its peak in the 1920s and early 1930s, Pine Beach, situated on the northern end of Lake Rohunta, included the Rohunta Inn (the former Elm Lodge Clubhouse), the Colony Cottages, a restaurant, camping facilities, and a lifeguard-patrolled swimming area with a high dive, water slide, and other recreational amenities. As stated in their early promotional brochures, the goal for Pine Beach was to become a "leading inland bathing beach of New England."

The resort was heavily damaged in the hurricane of 1938, which washed away the dam and power station, and it was five years before reconstruction was completed. Pine Beach remained a popular destination, freely available to Rodney Hunt employees for another three decades. In the 1980s, the properties were sold to the not-for-profit Lake Rohunta Beach Association, a private association of 15 residential properties.

Scope of collection

This assemblage of postcards, photographs, and ephemera documents the efforts of the Pine Beach Association from the 1920s through 1980s to operate a lakeside resort in Western Massachusetts. The earliest materials in the collection reflect the ambitious origins of the Association and its attempts to capitalize on the boom in regional tourism, especially automobile tourism, with the brochures and postcards apparently directed to a general audience of summer vacationers. Most of later materials are photographs from annual outings of the Rodney Hunt Company employees between 1959 and 1980.

Inventory

Ephemera: Pine Beach Association letter to New England Amusement Men's Association

1930

Box 1: 1

Ephemera: Pine Beach on Lake Rohunta: 'The ideal field day resort'

ca.1925

Box 1: 2

Ephemera: Pine Beach and Rohunta Inn brochures

1924-1944

Box 1: 3

Ephemera: 'New Rohunta dam nears completion,' Orange Enterprise and Journal



Bather on a zip line, Lake Rohunta, ca.1925

1943 Aug. 26

Box 1: 4

Ephemera: Rohunta Frolic [Halloween Frolic]

1928

Box 1: 5

Ephemera: Rohunta Inn menus

ca.1925

2 menus

Box 1: 6

Photographs: Aerial views

ca.1925

2 gelatin silver prints

Box 1: 7

Photographs: Diving from the high board at Pine Beach

ca.1922

4 gelatin silver prints

Box 1: 8

Photographs: Diving platforms at Pine Beach

ca.1925

Gelatin silver prints

Box 1: 9

Photographs: Lake side views, Pine Beach, Lake Rohunta

1922

1 gelatin silver prints

Box 1: 10

Photographs: Pine Beach

ca.1930-1935

Gelatin silver prints

Box 1: 11

Photographs: Pine Beach from the water, panorama view by Clapp Studio

ca.1925

Gelatin silver prints

Box 1: 12

Photographs: Pine Beach outing

1959

Gelatin silver prints

Box 1: 13

Photographs: Pine Beach outing

1963

Gelatin silver prints

Box 1: 14

Photographs: Pine Beach outing

1964

Gelatin silver prints

Box 1: 15

Photographs: Pine Beach outing

1965

35mm negatives

Box 1: 16

Photographs: Pine Beach outing

1969

35mm negatives

Box 1: 17

Photographs: Pine Beach outing

1970

35mm negatives

Box 1: 18

Photographs: Pine Beach outing

1971

35mm negatives
Box 1: 19
Photographs: Pine Beach outing
1980
Color prints
Box 1: 20
Photographs: Pine Beach outing
0000
Gelatin silver prints
Box 1: 21
Photographs: Swimmers at Lake Rohunta
1922
Gelatin silver prints
Box 1: 22
Postcards: Bathing beach
ca.1925
Real photo postcards
Box 1: 23
Postcards: Diving tower and beach sports
ca.1925
Real photo postcards
Box 1: 24
Postcards: Lake Rohunta
ca.1925
Real photo postcards
Box 1: 25
Postcards: Pine Beach and Lake Rohunta
ca.1925
Real photo postcards
Box 1: 26
Postcards: Rohunta Inn
ca.1925
Real photo postcards
Box 1: 27
Postcards: Tourists' camp
ca.1925
Real photo postcards
Box 1: 28

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Gift of the Harris Family, 2010.

Digitized content

Selected images have been digitized and are available online through SCUA's digital repository, Credo.

Processing Information

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Search terms

Subjects

Athol (Mass.)--History
Lake Rohunta (Mass.)
Lakes--Massachusetts--Athol
Picnics--Massachusetts--Athol
Pine Beach Association
Rodney Hunt Machine Company
Rodney Hunt Machine Company--Employees--Recreation
Rohunta Inn (Athol, Mass.)
Summer resorts--Massachusetts--Athol

Contributors

Pine Beach Association [main entry]

Genres and formats

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