

Charlie's Cafe Exceptionale Collection

M/A 2000.185.01-18

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

James K. Hosmer Special Collections Library

May 2016

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Summary Information

Repository	James K. Hosmer Special Collections Library
Title	Charlie's Cafe Exceptionale Collection
Date	1929-2001
Extent	16.0 boxes
Language	English

History

Charlie's Café Exceptionale opened in December of 1933 at 716 4th Ave. S. in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It was started by Charles Herlin and Charles Saunders who were the head bartender and waiter respectively. Charles Saunders gained sole ownership of the café upon the death of Charles Herlin in 1933. The Café existed at the same location until 1948 when a new building was constructed across the street. Ten years later, in 1958, another addition was built to the restaurant. The building was described as being in the English Tudor style constructed of white brick with a slate roof. Outside the entrance there was a bronze statue of a nude woman that was dubbed Scherzo. This statue became a symbol of the restaurant, and generated a fair amount of controversy in its day. The restaurant consisted of four dining rooms, a bar, cocktail lounge, and three banquet rooms. In addition to the dining areas the restaurant also included several interesting facilities including: a butcher shop, bakery, laundry, wine cellar, and liquor room.

Charles proved to be a skilled restaurateur, and his café began to become a fixture of the Minneapolis social scene. It was written about by several columnists in Minneapolis papers gaining the restaurant even more prestige. It was also chosen to host the Les Amis D' Escoffier annual dinner in 1956. This was an annual event for people involved in the culinary profession, and was considered to be an important event.

In addition to being a restaurateur, Charles Saunders was an accomplished pilot and owned several planes during his lifetime. He served in World War Two as a cargo plane pilot. During this time he would give out cards to fellow airmen telling them to visit his "bar" when they returned to the United States. Those who took him up on his offer were often surprised to find that they had been invited to an upscale supper club.

Furthermore, He also owned a small farm in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, where he raised livestock. This included horses which he raced at various venues around the Midwest, including the Minnesota State Fair.

In 1959 Charles Saunders was married to Louise Herou, a lawyer, who had held several positions in the Minnesota State Bar Association. Before they met Louise had lead a very successful life. During her time at the University of Minnesota Louise had been a proficient speed skater and golfer. During her senior year she was assistant to Dean Stanly Kinyon of the law school. She graduated with a B.S. in law in 1948 and continued on to receive her Doctorate of Jurisprudence in 1950. In 1949, shortly before she graduated, she was elected as one of the 100 outstanding students of the University of Minnesota. After graduating she served as law clerk of Justice LeRoy Matson of the Minnesota Supreme Court. Thereafter she became an associate in the law firm of Larson, Loevinger, Lindquist, Freeman and Fraiser in Minneapolis Minnesota. Furthermore, she was admitted to practice in both state and federal court as well as before the Interstate Commerce Commission. In addition she was also permitted to practice before the Board of Immigration Appeals as well as the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

In 1964 Charles Saunders died of a heart attack, and ownership of the café passed to Louise H. Saunders. Although she was trained as a lawyer, and had no experience as a restaurateur, she chose to continue operating the Cafe. Under her leadership the Café continued to do excellent business, and they were the

recipients of several awards. The business became nationally known and attracted several celebrities such as Bob Hope and President Nixon.

In addition, Louise Saunders became a fixture of the Minneapolis business scene attracting both local and national attention to herself. She went on to serve on the board of directors for several organizations including: North American Life and Casualty Company, The Minneapolis Downtown Council, and Minnesota Restaurant and Foodservice Association. Also, she was president of the Minneapolis Downtown Council as well as Commissioner of the White House Conference on Small Business in 1979.

Louise Saunders continued to operate the cafe from the mid 1960's until the 1980s. In July of 1982 Charlie's Cafe Exceptionale ceased operation. The property was sold to the Turner Development Corporation which erected an office building on the site. However, several of the recipes continued to be served by other local restaurants. Also, the bar fixtures were purchased by the Monte Carlo Cafe and Restaurant in Minneapolis who used them to recreate the bar which once existed at Charlie's.

Description of Collection

The collection consists of 18 boxes containing a variety of materials related to the café and its ownership. These include personal correspondence from both Charles and Louise Saunders, biographical materials, newspaper clippings, various photographs and media, audio recordings, restaurant menus, promotional materials and assorted artifacts.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

James K. Hosmer Special Collections Library May 2016

Related Materials

Related Material

See Also: The Louise Herou Collection (M/A 1998.50.) Also in Minneapolis Collection, Special Collections.

Controlled Access Headings

Geographic Name(s)

- Minneapolis (Minn.) -- Buildings, structures, etc.

Personal Name(s)

- Herlin, Charles, 1876-1934
- Herou, Louise, 1921-2003
- Saunders, Charles, 1902-1964
- Saunders, Louise H., 1921-2003

Subject(s)

- Business enterprises -- Minnesota -- Minneapolis.
- Businessmen -- Minnesota -- Minneapolis.
- Businesswomen -- Minnesota -- Minneapolis.
- Lawyers -- Minnesota -- Biography.
- Restaurants -- Minnesota -- Minneapolis.

General

Collection Inventory

General Undated, 1929-2001

Scope and Contents note

This series includes general history of the cafe, building, organization and business

	Box	Folder
History: Cafe Undated, 1965-1980	1	1
History: Original Cafe Undated, 1933-1935	1	2
History: Scherzo Statue 1929-1973	1	3
Building Plans 1948	1	4
Building Plans: Addition 1957	1	5
Organization Charts Undated	1	6
Employees 1975-1980	1	7
Recipes 1955-2001	1	8
Index of Events, Themes and Menus 1971-1976	1	9

Charles Saunders

Charles Saunders		
	Box	Folder
Biography 1940-1964	1	10
Correspondence 1940-59	1	11
Correspondence 1960-1964	1	12
Newspaper Clippings		
Scope and Contents note		
This series contains clipped newspaper and magazine articles relating to Charlie's Cafe Exeptionale (including advertisements for the restaurant), Louise Saunders, and Charles Saunders.		
	Box	Folder
Newspaper Indexes 1934-1982	2	1
General Charlie's Cafe		
	Box	Folder
Newspaper Clippings 1940-1949	2	2
Newspaper Clippings 1950-1959	2	3
Newspaper Clippings 1960-1969	2	4

Newspaper Advertisements

Newspaper Clippings 1970-1971	2	5
Newspaper Clippings 1972	2	6
Newspaper Clippings 1973	2	7
Newspaper Clippings 1974	2	8
Newspaper Clippings 1975	2	9
Newspaper Clippings 1976	2	10
Newspaper Clippings 1977	2	11
Newspaper Clippings 1978	2	12
Newspaper Clippings 1979	1	13
Newspaper Clippings 1980	2	14
Newspaper Clippings 1981	3	1
Newspaper Clippings 1982	3	2
Newspaper Clippings 1984,1994	3	3
Newspaper Advertisements		

Newspaper Advertisements

	Box	Folder
Newspaper Ads Undated, 1953-1969	3	4
Newspaper Ads 1970-1971	3	5
Newspaper Ads 1972	3	6
Newspaper Ads 1973	3	7
Newspaper Ads 1974	3	8
Newspaper Ads 1975	3	9
Newspaper Ads 1976	3	10
Newspaper Ads 1977	3	11
Newspaper Ads 1978	3	12
Newspaper Ads 1979	3	13
Newspaper Ads 1980	3	14
Newspaper Ads 1981	3	15
Newspaper Ads 1982, 1994	3	16

Louise Saunders

Louise Saunders		
	Box	Folder
Newspaper Clippings 1952-1975	4	1
Newspaper Clippings 1976-1978	4	2
Newspaper Clippings 1979-1982	4	3

Charles Saunders		
	Box	Folder
Newspaper Clippings: Airplanes	4	4
Newspaper Clippings: Horses 1947-1957	4	5

Awards and Certificates		
Awards and Certificates		
This series contains awards and certificates presented to Charlie's Cafe Exceptionale between 1952-1981.		

	Box	Folder
Awards and Certificates 1952-1974	4	6
Awards and Certificates 1975-1979	4	7

Promotional Materials

Awards and Certificates 1980-1981	4	8
Promotional Materials		
Scope and Contents note		
This series contains the different types of promotional materials used by Charlie's Cafe Exceptionale including letters, dining guides, printed advertisements, scripts for radio advertisements and related working drafts.		
	Box	Folder
Letters and Drafts 1971-1974	4	9
Printed Materials undated, 1967-1976	4	10
Dining Guides undated, 1970-1981	4	11
Dining Guide Questionnaires undated, 1971-1981	4	12
Radio Advertising Scripts undated, 1970-1980	4	13
Events		
Scope and Contents note		
This series includes planning information and correspondence of Louis H. Saunders pertaining to Charlie's Cafe sponsorship of the 10,000 Lakes Speedskating Championship in 1978.		
	Box	Folder

Louise Saunders

10,000 Lakes Speedskating Championship 1978	4	14
Louise Saunders		
Scope and Contents note		
This series includes awards and certificates, biographical information, correspondence, and speeches pertaining to Charlie's Cafe Expetionale owner, Louise H. Saunders.		
Related Archival Materials note		
See Also: The Louise Herou Collection (M/A 1998.50.01-06) Also in Minneapolis Collection, Special Collections.		
	Box	Folder
Awards/Certificates Undated, 1966-1973	5	1
Awards/Certificates 1974-1982	5	2
Biography Undated, 1921-1982	5	3
Correspondence		
	Box	Folder
Correspondence Undated, 1967-1969	5	4
Correspondence 1970	5	5
Correspondence 1971	5	6

Speeches

Correspondence 1972	5	7
Correspondence 1973	5	8
Correspondence 1974	5	9
Correspondence 1975	5	10
Correspondence 1976	5	11
Correspondence 1977	5	12
Correspondence Januray 1978 - April 1978	6	1
Correspondence May 1978 - December 1978	6	2
Correspondence 1979	6	3
Correspondence 1980	6	4
Correspondence 1981	6	5
Correspondence 1982	6	6
Correspondence 1983	6	7

Speeches

Media

	Box	Folder
Speeches 1973	6	8
Speeches 1977	6	9
Speeches 1978	6	10
Speeches 1979	6	11
Speeches 1980	6	12
Speeches 1982	6	13

Media**Media inventory**

1 film reel (not in a canister) 153 Transparencies 58 negatives 30 audio cassettes 7 audio discs 699
Photoss

Photographs**Scope and Contents note**

This series contains pictures of Charlie's Cafe Exceptionale, Charles Saunders, Louise Saunders, and other topics related to them such as horses, airplanes and speedskating, as well as events like the Presidential Summit on Small Business

Charlie's Cafe Exceptionale undated

Charlie's Cafe Exceptionale**Scope and Contents note**

This subseries contains pictures of Charlie's Cafe Exceptionale interiors, exteriors, construction, people and other related and historical images.

	Box	Folder
CCE 1-5 undated	7	1
CCE 6-10 undated	7	2
CCE 11-15 undated	7	3
CCE 16-20 undated	7	4
CCE 21-25 undated	7	5
CCE 26-30 undated	7	6
CCE 31-35 undated	7	7
CCE 36-40 undated	7	8
CCE 41-45 undated	7	9
CCE 46-50 undated	7	10
CCE-51-55 undated	7	11
CCE 56-60 undated	7	12

Charlie's Cafe Exceptionale

CCE 64-65 undated	7	13
CCE 66-70 undated	7	14
CCE 71-75 undated	7	15
CCE 76-80 undated	7	16
CCE 81-85 undated	7	17
CCE 86-90 undated	7	18
CCE 91-94 undated	7	19
CCE 96-100 undated	7	20
CCE 101-105 undated	7	21
CCE 106-110 undated	7	22
CCE 111-115 undated	7	23
CCE 116-120 undated	7	24
CCE 121-125 undated	7	25
CCE 126-130 undated	7	26

Charles Saunders

CCE 136-140 undated	7	28
Exterior & Interior Undated	8	17
Interiors Undated	8	18
Banquet 1 Undated	8	19
Banquet 2 Undated	8	20
Banquet 3 Undated	8	21
Banquet 4 Undated	8	22
Charles Saunders		
	Box	Folder
CS 1-5 undated	7	29
CS 6-10 undated	7	30
CS 11-15 undated	7	31
CS 16-20 undated	7	32
Louise Saunders		
	Box	Folder

Other

LHS 1-5 undated	7	33
LHS 6-10 undated	7	34
LHS 11-15 undated	7	34
LHS 16-20 undated	7	36
LHS 21-25 undated	7	37
LHS 26-30 undated	7	38
LHS 31-35 undated	7	39
LHS 36-40 undated	7	40
LHS 41-45 undated	7	41
LHS 46-50 undated	7	42
LHS Portraits Undated	8	15
LHS Portraits Undated	8	16
Other undated		
	Box	Folder

Other

Eden Prairie Farm 1 undated	8	1
Eden Prairie Farm 2 undated	8	2
Eden Prairie Farm: Fire 1 undated	8	3
Eden Prairie Farm: Fire 2 Undated	8	4
Eden Prairie Farm: Fire 3 Undated	8	5
Eden Prairie Farm: Fire 4 Undated	8	6
Horses 1 Undated	8	7
Horses 2 Undated	8	8
Airplanes 1 Undated	8	9
Airplanes 2 Undated	8	10
Airplanes 3 Undated	8	11
Airplanes 4 Undated	8	12
Airplanes 5 Undated	8	13
Airplanes 6 Undated	8	14

Other

Miscellaneous 1 Undated	8	23
Miscellaneous 2 Undated	8	24
Miscellaneous 3 Undated	8	25
Miscellaneous 4 Undated	8	26
Contact Sheets Undated, 1975	8	27
		Box
Snapshots and small format undated		9

Scope and Contents note

348 snapshots, candid images and other small format photos

Transparencies Undated

	Box	Folder
Mixed materials	8	28
		Box
Mixed materials		9

Negatives undated

	Box	Folder
Mixed materials	8	28
		Box

Other

Mixed materials

9

Box

9

Slides

Scope and Contents note

106 35mm color slide transparencies in housing

Audio tapes and audio discs undated

10

Scope and Contents note

A number of materials on audio tape in this sub-series have been digitized and included in box 7 on compact disk or DVD. Summaries of these materials are as follows:

Disk 1:

Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce Show, Louise Saunders guest. 30 Minutes. In this episode of the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce show Louise Saunders talks about several topics. These include various construction projects downtown such as the Greenway, expansion of Nicollet Ave, and skyway construction. In addition she discusses her time as an athlete and pilot. Finally, she talks about the founding and operation of Charlie's Cafe Exceptionale as well as their take out service "Charlie's Butler."

Disk 2:

Speech by Louise Saunders at the Minneapolis Women's Club 11-17-1977 47 minutes. In this speech to the Minneapolis Women's Club Louise Saunders relates tales of her and her associates' international fact finding mission. The trip took them to locations in the Middle East as well as Asia where they experienced the local restaurants and hotels. She discusses not only the experiences that she had in each location, but also the viability of American businesses to enter their markets. The places visited were: Tehran Iran, Kabul Afghanistan, New Delhi India, Nepal, Manila in the Philippines, and finally Tokyo Japan.

Disk 3:

Speech by Louise Saunders at Southwestern University Women's Career Day March 1978 25 minutes. In this speech to Southwestern University students Louise Saunders describes what she feels is necessary for one to be a successful and well rounded human being. She discusses love and charity as well as the definition of success. She also explains her belief that success can become a prison, and that failure should be treated as a way to learn and alter one's plans. In addition she speaks about the need for one to get a good education. While this is no replacement for real world experience it does help to prepare one for the real world. Furthermore she suggests learning about the world through travel even if it is to someplace nearby. Finally, she stresses the need to maintain ones health, and closes by saying that it is never too late to do these things.

Disk 4:

2 speeches by Louise Saunders 1 hour (each speech is about 30 minutes) Where Are We Going? (Speech about women in business October 1979) In this Speech Louise Saunders gives some of her views on where she believes women are heading in the workplace as business owners. She begins by giving some statistics on where women are in the business community, and where they will be heading in the near future. She continues by explaining the impact that women have had in the workforce, and the problems that are present in wage disparities. In addition she describes the lack of infrastructure for both men and women to cope with the challenges of women in business roles. She also explains the need for women to be able to maintain a normal social and home life in addition to their business life. She continues by describing the things that women will need to succeed in the future such as recognizing the needs of others, and compassion for those who are not as fortunate as themselves. She closes with remarks about the White House small business conference being held in 1980 and how women need to educate both sexes on the need for their presence in the business community. Managing Stress in a Restaurant Environment. In this speech Louise Saunders explains how the people in her organization deal with the stress of operating a restaurant. She begins by explaining the history and operation of Charlie's Cafe Exceptionale, and gives a description of the cafe's facilities. She then goes on to talk about how she learned the restaurant trade on the job, and several of the ways that she has learned to reduce both her and her employees stress. This includes a personal concern for the wellbeing of the employees

Other

on the part of management, and a need for good communication amongst all of the staff. She encourages listening to ones employees to earn their confidence. Furthermore, she stresses the need for organization and charts that show who is responsible for what. In addition, regular staff meetings are vital as well as passing on praise from customers to the staff. Finally, she stresses the need for owners to join professional societies so that they can influence lawmaking related to their businesses.

Disk 5:

The 60th Annual NRA Show "Women (Actually) in Business",

1 hour 30 minutes

In this recording of the panel from the 60th annual National Restaurant Association Show Louise Saunders and others consider women's roles as business owners. Each of the panelists comes from a different background with businesses of various sizes. Each of the panelists is first asked to describe their particular business, and then they continue to discuss various topics related to women in ownership roles. These include: the management of employees, the effects of the equal opportunity amendment, and the similarities and differences between the management styles of men and women.

Disk 6:

Commercials

1 hour 2 minutes

These commercials are included as a single audio track summarized as follows including time stamps:

Pat Lindquist, State Fair Grounds Sept. 2 1978 (0-3:35)

Improv radio spots WDGY 4 spots (3:35-9:35)

Improv radio spots WDGY for Saint Patrick's Day (9:35-14:18)

Charlie's Butler ad (14:18-17:23)

Two improv radio spots WDGY for Valetines Day (17:23-19:59)

Improv radio spots WDGY fo Saint Patrick's Day (19:59-24:47)

Other

American Express ad with Louise Saunders (24:47-25:18)

Seven improv radio ads (25:18-32:52)

Hungarian lunch and dinner commercials (32:52-35:02)

Tropical meal commercials (35:02-36:05)

Charlie's ads Scripts 108-109 (36:05-38:10)

Charlie's ads Scripts 108-109 (Duplicates), 110, 111 (38:10-42:28)

Charlie's ads Scripts 110-111 Revised (42:28-44:32)

Charlie's ads Scripts 112-113 (44:32-46:33)

Charlie's ads Scripts 128-130 (46:34-49:44)

Charlie's ads Scripts 125-127 (49:44-52:42)

Charlie's ads Scripts 130-131 (52:42-54:51)

Charlie's ads Scripts 133-134 (54:51-56:59)

Charlie's ads Scripts 135-137 (56:59-59:07)

Charlie's ads Scripts 138-140 (59:07-1:02:21)

Disk 7:

Interview with John Rimarcik (July 27, 2011)

37 Minutes

In this interview John Rimarcik describes his experiences with and impressions of Charlie's cafe Exceptionale as well as the restaurant business in Minneapolis Minnesota. He describes meeting Charles Saunders as well as his feelings about Louise Saunders and the closing of the restaurant. He also describes the Minneapolis restaurant scene and how it has changed over the years. This includes comparisons between Charlie's and his own restaurants. He explains the differences in service between them, and describes how he feels the atmosphere of a restaurant can affect the taste of the food. In addition he explains some of his feeling about being in the business. Note: This interview was recorded on July 27, 2011 by Heather Lawton and Benjamin Skinner. It took place at the

Menus

Monte Carlo Restaurant in Minneapolis Minnesota of which Mr. Rimarcik is the owner.
The interview starts and ends abruptly.

Oversize Photographs undated

11

Menus

Scope and Contents note

This series contains the different types of menus that were used at Charlie's Cafe Exeptionale, including coffee menus, menu inserts, table standees, take away menus, and standard lunch and dinner menus.

Box **Folder**

Coffee Menus Undated, 1977-1982

12

1

Menu Inserts

Box **Folder**

Monthly/Seasonal Undated, 1973-1978

12

2

Themed Undated, 1972-1974

12

3

Themed 1975-1977

12

4

Themed 1978-1982

12

5

Table Standees

Box **Folder**

Take Away Menus

Table Standees Undated, 1964-1972	12	7
Take Away Menus		
	Box	Folder
Take Away Menus Undated, 1972-1974	12	10
Take Away Menus 1975-1977	12	11
Take Away Menus 1978-1981	12	12
Table Standees 1973-1976	12	8
Table Standees 1977-1982	12	9
	Box	Folder
Miscellaneous Undated, 1972-1981	12	6
	Box	Folder
Dessert Menus 1978-1982	18	1
Dinner Menus 1940-1974	13	2
Dub Room Menus Undated, 1972	13	3
Late-Late Menus 1978	13	4

Artifacts

Newsletter Menus 1974-1977	13	5
Snack Menus undated	13	6
Special Event Menus 1960-1977	13	7
Wine Lists Undated, 1975-1978	13	8
Miscellaneous	13	9
		Box
Oversize Menus Undated, 1978-1982		18

Scope and Contents note

Contains menu numbers MEN0358-MEN0561

Artifacts**Plaques and awards undated, 1971-1974**

Box
14-16

Box
11

Scope and Contents note

Box 11: Oversize paper awards: Mobil Travel Guide 1979 Louise Saunders Appointment to Advisory Commission of Economic Development Holiday Honor Awards 1954, 1956, 1964-1970, 1976, 1980

Box 14: 5 items: Corporate Report, Silver Spoon Award, 1974 - 12" diameter Cafe de Chintas, Espana, 1971 - 10.25" diameter I/V Award, Institutions/VFM publication, 1972 - 13" x 10.5" Order of Sant 'Yago

Plaques and awards

Certificate, 11.5" x 15.5" Publication plaque, Town & Country, Jun 1974
- 14" x 20"

Box 15: 4 items: Benson & Hedges Plaque "100 Recipes from 100 of the
Greatest Restaurants" - 9.5" x 13" Venture Critics Choice Award 10.5" x
12 5/8" Holiday Dining Distinction 10th Consecutive year - 13 1/2" x 16
1/4" Hospitality Magazine Hall of Fame, Jul 1970

Box 16: 15 items: AAA recommended 1981, plastic plaque Corporate
Reort Silver Spoon Awards for 1976, 1979, 1981, 1977, 1980, 1975 - 7"
x 9"/ea American Express Charter Membership, brass plaque, 1958-1978
University of Minnesota Presidents Club award, Louise H Saunders - 8
1/4" x 12 1/4" Business Executives Dining Award 1973 Duff's Celebrity
Golf and Tennis Tournament, 1977 - 9.5 x 8.25 Community Leaders
Noteworthy AMERICANS Award 1975-76 to Louise Saunders Personalities
of the West and Mid-West Award 1972 Golden Cup award from Pan-
American Coffee Bureau, 1973 - 2 parts Diners Club Award, pewter plate

Miscellaneous artifacts

	Object
Mixed materials	loose
	Box
Mixed materials	17

Scope and Contents note

8 wood backed metal/plastic printing plates 3 metal printing plates 1934 credit card sewing kit flashlight
4 matchbooks letter/poem on canvas by/from Jim Bown

Scope and Contents note

Presentation Board with paper flap taped at upper edge Label on paper flap " Charlie's Cafe
Exceptionale; Architectural drawing; Minneapolis History Collection" Ink drawing on board with a layer

Plaques and awards

of translucent blue film and tracing paper over it 3 small color swatches attached to the blue plastic film.
2 color art print brochures attached to the inside of the flap.