

BAILEY THEATRE RECORDS

Mss. 3336

Inventory

Compiled by

Duck Babin

Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library
Louisiana State University Libraries
Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University

2022

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SUMMARY

Size	0.70 linear ft.
Geographic Locations	Bunkie, Louisiana
Inclusive Dates	1943-1955
Bulk Dates	1944-1953
Languages	English
Summary	The Bailey Theatre, located in Bunkie, Louisiana, was owned by Robert Lee Bailey and was attached to the Blooms Arcade shopping center. The collection consists of financial records and correspondence pertaining to the theatre.
Access Restrictions	None.
Reproduction Note	May be reproduced.
Copyright	For those materials not in the public domain, copyright is retained by the descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. Copyright law.
Related Collections	None
Citation	Bailey Theatre Records, Mss. 3336, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries Special Collections, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack Location(s)	45:25

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

The Bailey Theatre was built in 1925 by Robert Lee Bailey, Sr. and architect Fred Nehrass. This theatre opened in 1929 and served as a headquarters for Bailey, who later began a chain of theaters throughout Louisiana. The theatre was not only used for showing films, but as a center for musical programs, dance and music recitals, beauty pageants, and other performances. The theatre was later altered by architect John M. Gabriel. In the late 1970s, the theatre was purchased by Le Theatre des Bon Temps and was soon added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. Soon after the Bailey was added to the National Register of Historic Places, the building was demolished in a fire in the early 1980s.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Collection consists of business and financial records, as well as correspondence to and from the theatre that documents how the Bailey Theatre operated as a business. Records include inventory and box office reports, production and staff information, and receipts for deposits and advertisement slots. There are also bound record books including ledger books, pick-up theatre books, an accounting booklet, and a cash book. The correspondence includes office memos, business reminders, and letters to patrons, other businesses, and staff of the theatre.

LIST OF SERIES AND SUBSERIES

Series I. Correspondence (1948-1955)

Series II. Reports and Records (1943-1955, undated)

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series I. Correspondence (1948-1955)

The Bailey Theatre's correspondence largely consists of office memos, reminders, and letters to and from the theatre. The memos and letters were written to remind staff and managers about upcoming programs and events, new business policies, and concerns regarding the remodeling of the building. The letters consist of requests to and from companies, such as the Louisiana Neon Electric Company, information regarding competing theatres, such as the Joy Theater, rental confirmation for the theatre, and policies regarding ticket distribution.

Series II. Reports and Records, (1943-1955, undated)

The Reports and Records series consists of financial and business records held by the Bailey Theatre, including the Bailey Theatre record books. Also included in this series are daily box office reports, drink inventory reports, deposit and advertisement receipts, and published copies of *Managers' Round Table* and *The Product Digest*.

The volumes of record books in this series include a booklet from Southern Amusement Company, which was a business partner of the Bailey Theatre. The accounting booklet contains the dates (Aug. 7, 1943-April 2, 1945) and amounts deposited by the Southern Amusement Company to an account with Avoyelles Trust and Savings Bank in Bunkie, Louisiana. Half of the booklet is not filled out. The four ledger books detail the dates (Aug. 29, 1943-Jan. 3, 1948) and profits of the films being shown each day. The ledgers also include the weather of each day, as well as a total weekly profit. The two pick-up receipt books provide receipts from Transway, Inc. The theatre used this transportation company to receive and return film reels to their respective production company. The receipts document the theatre/location, dates (March 5, 1949-Nov. 23, 1950), the production company, Film reel information, and notes from the theatre/driver. The cash book kept a record of the theatre's staff. Entries were made daily (Sept. 21, 1953-Nov. 14, 1954) and recorded which staff member worked which position, the hours each staff member worked, as well as which manager was on staff.

The majority of items in this series are the Daily Box Office Reports (1952-1955). These reports document the theatre's daily information, such as the featured attraction and production, ticket sales and prices (both the matinee and night showings), concession sales, total attendance, total profit, cash register report, weather, day/date, theatre name/location, and staff. Regardless of the title of the report, each report has the same information: week ending date; a chart of the week's drink sales; inventory of cups; inventory of syrup; theatre name/location; and manager's signature. The advertisement receipts (1952-1953, undated) list the dates and the companies that the theatre is advertising for the week. The deposit receipt (Aug. 3, 1953) reports a deposit of \$93.00 to Avoyelles Trust and Savings Bank in Bunkie, Louisiana. Published copies of *Managers' Round Table* and *The Product Digest* (1952-1954) contain reviews, ratings, synopses, release dates, and run times of the films. These were used by the theatre when deciding what films to show.

INDEX TERMS

Materials relating to these people, places, and things can be found in the series indicated, as represented by their numbers.

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CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
Series I. Correspondence, 1948-1955			
45:25	1	1	Correspondence (Jan. 29-Feb. 26, 1948)
		2	Correspondence (May 5-Nov. 18, 1948)
		3	Correspondence (June 14, 1949-Aug. 11, 1953)
		4	Correspondence (Feb. 6, 1951-Aug. 19, 1955)
Series II. Reports and Records, 1943-1955, undated			
45:25	1	5	Southern Amusement Accounting Booklet (Aug. 7, 1943-April 2, 1945)
		6	Ledger Book 1 (Aug. 7, 1943-Aug. 26, 1944)
		7	Ledger Book 2 (Aug. 27, 1944-Oct. 21, 1945)
		8	Ledger Book 3 (Oct. 21, 1945-Jan. 4, 1947)
		9	Ledger Book 4 (Jan. 5, 1947-Jan. 3, 1948)
		10	Pick-up Receipt Book 1 (March 5-April 26, 1949)
		11	Pick-up Receipt Book 2 (Sept. 12-Nov. 23, 1950)
		12	Cash Book (Sept. 21, 1953-Nov. 14, 1954)
		13	Daily Box Office Reports (May 3-June 30, 1952)
		14	Daily Box Office Reports (Jan. 1-March 28, 1953)
	2	1	Daily Box Office Reports (April 6-July 31, 1953)
		2	Daily Box Office Reports (Aug. 1-Oct. 31, 1953)
		3	Daily Box Office Reports (Nov. 1-Dec. 31, 1953)
		4	Daily Box Office Reports (Jan. 1-March 31, 1954)
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		6	Daily Box Office Reports (Aug. 1-Oct. 28, 1954)
		7	Daily Box Office Reports (Nov. 1- Dec. 31, 1954)
		8	Daily Box Office Reports (Oct. 1-Oct. 28, 1955)
		9	Weekly Drink Inventory Reports (June 21, 1952-Oct. 31, 1953)
		10	Weekly Drink Inventory Reports (Nov. 7, 1953-Sept. 18, 1954)
		11	Advertisement Receipts (June 21, 1952-Aug. 31, 1953, undated)
		12	Deposit Receipt (Aug. 25, 1953)
		13	<i>Managers' Round Table</i> and <i>The Product Digest</i> (Nov. 1, 1952-Oct. 2, 1954)