

1121-072-GSM-gau (USMARC)

City of Savannah Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia [GSG (OCLC/LYRASIS)]

Record Series #: 1121-072
Name: Olaf Otto, Sr., photograph collection
Dates: 1922-1931, 1955, 1960, no date
Extent/Size: 1 half document case, 1 oversized box (1 cubic foot)
Language: English

Creator:

Olaf Otto, Sr.

Biographical History:

Olaf Otto, Sr. (1881-1960) was born in Oslo, Norway on July 9, 1881. Otto received his education in Porsgrunn, Norway and Strelitz, Germany. His first position was at Armstrong Whitworth Company, one of the largest builders of ships and artillery, in New Castle, England. He immigrated to the United States of America in 1903 to New York City. Otto married Katharine Wilson on June 8, 1908. They eventually settled in Savannah, Georgia in 1911. Once in Savannah, Otto worked for several contracting firms as a civil engineer. Otto served in both World Wars. Otto and Katharine had two sons, Olaf Otto, Jr. and Dr. Walter Wilson Otto. Over the years, as a contractor, Otto built several iconic Savannah structures, including the Armstrong Mansion, the Savannah River Bridge, Municipal Stadium, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, and several residences. In 1914, Otto built his own family home at 101 East 54th Street. Otto became a naturalized citizen in 1914. Otto was Chairman and founder of the Board of the Atlantic Savings and Trust Company, he was in the Rotary Club for over forty years, a member of Christ Episcopal Church, and life member of the American Society of Civil Engineers. He received the Americanism Medal from the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1959 for his patriotism and leadership. Otto died on July 18, 1960 and is buried in Bonaventure Cemetery.

Scope & Content:

The Olaf Otto, Sr., photograph collection (1922-1931, 1955, 1960, no date) consists of photographs, documents, and a scrapbook created by Olaf Otto, Sr. The documents in this collection detail Otto's life and work. The photographs are portraits of Otto throughout his life, of family and friends, and of Otto's building projects, including the house he lived in, 101 East 54th Street. The highlight of this collection is a scrapbook of newspaper clippings and photographs displaying the progress of the Savannah River Bridge construction from 1922-1929. Photographs and news clippings show laborers and business men during the construction and automobiles driving on the bridge once finished.

System of Arrangement & Ordering:

The collection is arranged in alphabetical order by subject.

Conditions Governing Access:

None

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Olaf Otto, Sr., photograph collection

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Access Points:

Bridges—Design and Construction
Historic buildings--Georgia--Savannah.
Historic sites--Georgia--Savannah.
Otto, Olaf, Sr., 1881-1960
Savannah (Ga.)--Buildings, structures, etc.
Savannah River Bridge (Ga.)

Preferred Citation:

Record Series 1121-072, Olaf Otto, Sr., photograph collection. City of Savannah Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Processed by:

M. Kerkhoff, January 2020.

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Olaf Otto, Sr., photograph collection

Inventory:

Box #1121-072-01

- Folder 1: Correspondence and related material on the life of Olaf Otto, Sr., 1960, no date [3 items]
- Folder 2: Olaf Otto's metal tie clip, no date [1 item]
- Folder 3: Photographs, building projects, no date [3 items]
- Folder 4: Photographs, family and friends, 1955, no date [5 items]
- Folder 5: Photographs, Olaf Otto, Sr., portraits, no date [3 items]
- Folder 6: Savannah River Bridge scrapbook, loose items, 1922-1923, 1931, no date [4 items]

Box #1121-072-02

- Savannah River Bridge scrapbook, 1922-1929 [1 item; handle with care]