



Rockefeller Family and Associates (Room 5600), General Files, 1962-1996

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Rockefeller Archive Center

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rockefeller Archive Center
Creator - aut:	Rockefeller, David
Creator - aut:	Rockefeller, Laurance Spelman
Creator - aut:	Mauze, Abby Rockefeller
Creator - aut:	Rockefeller, Nelson A. (Nelson Aldrich)
Creator - aut:	Rockefeller, John D., III (John Davison), 1906-1978
Creator - aut:	Rockefeller, Winthrop
Title:	Rockefeller Family and Associates (Room 5600), General Files, 1962-1996
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Biographical / Historical

The central figure in the creation and operation of the Standard Oil Company during its rise to the top of the petroleum industry, John D. Rockefeller (JDR) established for the family a leading role in business and philanthropy. From the days of his earliest employment, Rockefeller, a devout Baptist, was generous in his giving to worthy causes, especially those of a religious nature. During the 1890s he developed an orderly system of philanthropic giving through an office staff that included his close advisor, Frederick T. Gates (1853-1929) and his son, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (1874-1960). With the advise of these and other associates, Rockefeller established the University of Chicago, The Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research (now The Rockefeller University), the Rockefeller Foundation, and other philanthropic organizations working nationally and internationally in the fields of education, religion, and health. Rockefeller's total donations to philanthropic endeavors are estimated to have been \$540 million.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (JDR Jr.) joined his father's office on October 1, 1897. He oversaw the expansion and diversification of the philanthropic work begun by his father. During his lifetime, the younger

Rockefeller gave more than \$537 million to educational, religious, cultural, medical, and other charitable projects.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and his wife, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller (1874-1948), passed the Rockefeller philanthropic impulse on to their children. John D. 3rd (1906-1978), Nelson A. (1908-1979), Laurance S. (1910-2004), Winthrop (1912-1973), and David (1915-2017) further expanded and diversified Rockefeller influence and interests, establishing their own philanthropic organizations, most notably the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (1940), and becoming more active politically.

In the period following the Second World War, John D. Rockefeller, Jr.'s sons returned from service to assume an increasing role in family business and philanthropic endeavors, even as they were pursuing their own careers and interests. The office provided family members with a range of services from routine office support (office space, staffing, purchasing, payroll and accounting, travel, security) to specialized investment, economic and philanthropic advising, legal counsel, a library collection, and a public relations staff.

To support their broad activity – a 1951 list of the family's associations detailed more than seventy organizations in which the five Rockefeller brothers actively participated in a business or philanthropic capacity – the family had long relied on a system of associates who worked with individual family members and provided specialized assistance and advice. The Rockefeller family office was originally located at 26 Broadway in the Standard Oil Building, but it moved to Rockefeller Center when the RCA Building opened in the fall of 1933. The family office occupied the 56th floor (and eventually the 54th and 55th floors) of the RCA Building, and was often known as Room 5600. Rockefeller philanthropies such as the American Conservation Association, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the Sealantic Fund also operated out of the family office space, and many affiliated businesses (such as Eastern Air Lines and Rockresorts, Inc.) were neighboring Rockefeller Center tenants.

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Scope and Contents

The general files chronicle management of the philanthropic affairs of the third generation of the Rockefeller family primarily Abby Rockefeller Mauze, John D. Rockefeller 3rd, Nelson A. Rockefeller, Laurance S. Rockefeller, Winthrop Rockefeller, and David Rockefeller.

Over the years the Rockefeller family has been involved in virtually all aspects of modern philanthropy at the local, national and international levels through their foundation activities as well as their individual personal giving. Major interests include: physical and mental health, conservation, education, international relations, politics, population, religion, social welfare, the visual and performing arts, cultural exchange programs, and economic and social development of underdeveloped areas.

The general files primarily consist of correspondence, reports, pamphlets, memoranda, charters and certificates of incorporation, minutes and meeting records as well as documentation of contributions,

finance and investment materials, real estate, newspaper clippings, diaries, notebooks, calendars, audio tapes, and printed material.

Additional materials will be available as records are processed and open for research.

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Arrangement

Arranged in 4 record groups by date, 1962-1996, files from 1962-1991 also have associated index cards available.

Rockefeller Family and Associates (Room 5600), General Files, 1962-1976, RG 3. Rockefeller Family and Associates (Room 5600), General Files, 1977-1981, RG 33. Rockefeller Family and Associates (Room 5600), General Files, 1982-1986, RG 37. David Rockefeller General Files, 1992-1996, RG 39. Rockefeller Family and Associates (Room 5600), General Files, 1962-1996, Index Cards, RG 3-RG 44.

Within each record group the files are arranged alphabetically by subject/topic.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Conditions Governing Access

Open for research in accordance with the terms of donation from the David Rockefeller Estate, January 2019. Brittle or damaged items are available at the discretion of RAC.

Researchers interested in accessing audiovisual material (audio cassettes, VHS, etc.) in this collection must use an access surrogate. The original items may not be accessed because of preservation concerns. To request an access surrogate be made, or if you are unsure if there is an access surrogate, please contact an archivist.

When requesting to view audiovisual material, please refer to the Title and the AV Number (example: AV 1916). Researchers are asked to check the "Restrictions" note for each Title. If a Title does not currently have an access copy, please contact a RAC archivist for further instruction.

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