

JACK CHRISTIAN PAPERS

Mss. 5240

Inventory

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

2025

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SUMMARY

Size	1.5 linear feet
Geographic Locations	Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Inclusive Dates	1948–1990, undated
Bulk Dates	1953–1964
Languages	English
Summary	The Jack Christian Papers contain materials related to Baton Rouge councilman and mayor Jack Christian. Items in this collection cover his time in Baton Rouge politics and include correspondence, photographs, and scrapbooks.
Access Restrictions	Scrapbooks are fragile; please handle them with care.
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	Jack Christian Papers, Mss. 5240, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries Special Collections, Baton Rouge, La.
Stack Location(s)	20:4, 10:64

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Jack Christian was born on January 22, 1911, in Vicksburg, Mississippi to John Curphey Christian and Bessie Nicholson and had one sister, Bethia Christian. After attending public schools in Vicksburg, he attended Louisiana State University to study engineering. After one year, he returned to Vicksburg to help run his father's automobile business, Christian & Brough Company, a job he held from 1930 to 1937. He then joined the Yellow Truck and Coach Manufacturing Company from 1937 to 1938, working in Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Arkansas. In 1938, he founded his own company in Baton Rouge, the Baton Rouge Motors Company, that sold Cadillac, La Salle, and Oldsmobile.

His work in the auto industry was interrupted by World War II, when he served with the United States Navy as a reserve from 1942 to 1945, attaining the rank of lieutenant. During this time, he married Carol Caulfield in 1942.

After his discharge, he was the head of the Jack Christian Motor Company in Baton Rouge from 1946 to 1952, before liquidating the company and becoming sales manager of McInnes Chevrolet from 1952 to 1956.

Jack Christian took up politics in 1953, when he was elected to the Baton Rouge City Council for Ward One. He was an ally of the anti-Long Democrats in Louisiana. On August 22, 1956, he was elected as Mayor of Baton Rouge and held the office from January 1, 1957, to December 31, 1964. During this time, he dealt with various civil rights issues, including the desegregation of pools in Baton Rouge, for which he formed a bi-racial committee. He was also a committed member of the Lakeshore Lions Club and even served as president.

After his mayoral stint, Jack Christian served as vice president and general manager of McInnes-Peterson Chevrolet until his death on December 31, 1972.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Jack Christian Papers contain materials relating to Christian's political career as a councilman and mayor of Baton Rouge. Items from his mayoral tenure mostly contain materials about a trade mission to Latin America and a trip to Europe with the Eighth American Municipal Study Mission as well as various news clippings in scrapbooks. Also included are photographs of events, portraits, and several issues of *The Register*, a society magazine focused on Baton Rouge.

LIST OF SERIES

Series I. Professional Papers, 1953–1990, undated

Series II. Photographs and Memorabilia, 1948–1977, undated

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Materials in the Jack Christian Papers are arranged into two series that cover his time in politics in Baton Rouge as a councilman and mayor.

Series I. Professional Papers, 1953–1990, undated

The materials in this series are arranged by diplomatic trips, physical format, and topics. When possible, items are arranged chronologically, and the trade mission delegation is arranged alphabetically by last name.

This series contains materials related to Jack Christian's political career, focusing mostly on his time as Mayor of Baton Rouge. Most of this series' materials are dedicated to two trips abroad.

First, a trade mission to Latin America in August 1959, visiting Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, and Venezuela, "aimed at increasing [Baton Rouge's] trade with Latin America and to improve [Baton Rouge's] relations in several of these countries" as well as to "create interest among [Baton Rouge's] Latin American neighbors in events attendant to International Week slated in New Orleans and Baton Rouge." Materials pertaining to this trip include roster information on the trade delegation's members (including passport photographs), itineraries, correspondence, and a flag and coin from Venezuela.

The second trip, undertaken in the summer of 1963, was the Eighth American Municipal Study Mission Overseas. This trip included delegates from all over the United States, as they visited various countries in Europe and attended events such as the 16th International Congress of Local Authorities sponsored by the International Union of Local Authorities in Brussels. Materials include itineraries, correspondence, and printed materials pertaining to different cities and events. Of special note are the materials about a visit to Rouen, France, which Baton Rouge wanted to make a sister city.

Other items in this series include issues of *The Register*, Baton Rouge's journal of society, containing articles about Jack and Carol Christian, and news clippings.

Series II. Photographs and Memorabilia, 1948–1977, undated

Photographs in this series were arranged first by event and/or subject, then chronologically within that event or subject, when possible. Loose items from volumes were removed and housed separately.

This series contains photographs and other memorabilia, such as scrapbooks and photo albums. Photographs cover the 1959 Latin American trip, the Delta Airlines 20th Anniversary Dinner, and Jack Christian himself. [Conservation Note: The Delta Airlines photographs were originally housed in an album that was disassembled and placed in folders for conservation purposes. The original order of the photographs has been preserved.]

Scrapbooks contain a variety of items such as photographs and news clippings. Loose items have been removed and placed in folders.

INDEX TERMS

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

Baton Rouge (La.)--Politics and government--20th century.	I, II
Christian, Jack, 1911-1972.	I, II
Correspondence.	I
Magazines (periodicals)	I
Mayors--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.	I, II
Newspaper clippings.	I, II
Photograph Albums.	II
Photographs.	II
Scrapbooks.	II

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
Series I. Professional Papers, 1953–1990, undated			
20:4	1	1	Latin America Trade Mission Roster, 1959
		2-4	Latin America Trade Mission Delegation, 1959
		5	Latin America Trade Mission Materials, July 1959–November 1960, undated
		6	Latin America Trade Mission, flag and coin from Venezuela, undated
		7	American Municipal Study Mission Information, 1963, undated
		8	American Municipal Study Mission Correspondence, 1962–1963, undated
		9-10	American Municipal Study Mission Printed Materials, 1962–1963, undated
		11	American Municipal Study Mission-Rouen, 1958–1963, undated
		12	Rouen, France, printed materials, 1962–1963, undated
		13-14	<i>The Register</i> , November 14, 1953–January 21, 1961
		15	News clippings, 1956–1990, undated
Series II. Photographs and Memorabilia, 1948–1977, undated			
10:64	2	1	Latin America Trade Mission Photographs August 19–29, 1959
		2-4	Delta Airlines 20 th Anniversary Dinner Photo Album, December 2, 1948
		7	Jack Christian Photographs, circa 1957–July 1977
		8	Jack Christian Portraits, undated
		9	Miscellaneous Photographs, January 1953–February 1967, undated
		10	Photographic slides, 1959, undated
	3	--	Vol. 1: Inauguration and Latin America Trade Mission Photographs, 1957, 1959
	2	5-6	Loose Photographs from Vol. 1, 1957, 1959
	3	--	Vol. 2: Scrapbook, 1959
20:4	1	16	Loose Items from Vol. 2, January 1959–December 1975, undated
10:64	4	--	Vol. 3: Scrapbook, 1952–1957
		1	Loose Items from Vol. 3, May 1952–June 1957, undated
		2	Loose Newspaper Items from Vol. 3, August 1956 – October 1964, undated