

ROHONY FAMILY PAPERS, 1937-1957 AND UNDATED [BULK 1944] 2011.377.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
Washington, DC 20024-2126
Tel. (202) 479-9717
e-mail: reference@ushmm.org

Descriptive summary

Title: Rohony family papers

Dates: 1937-1957 and undated [bulk 1944]

Accession number: 2011.377.1

Creators: Rohony family

Extent: 11 folders

Repository: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW, Washington, DC 20024-2126.

Abstract: The Rohony family papers are comprised of postcards and photographs documenting the Rohony family's circumstances during World War II, between 1943 and 1944. Comprised of János, his wife Anna, and their daughter, Zsusana (later Susan), the Rohony family was living in Budapest, Hungary until 1943 when János was forced into the Hungarian labor battalions and Anna was arrested by the Gestapo. János perished in Ohrdruf in 1944. Anna and Zsusana survived the war. The vast majority of this collection consists of extensive correspondence in the form of postcards and letters between János and Anna written while János was in the forced labor brigades in Transylvania and later, the outskirts of Budapest. Also included are photographs of the family in the years before the war.

Language: Hungarian

Administrative Information

Access: Collection is open for use, but is stored offsite. Please contact the Reference Desk more than seven days prior to visit in order to request access.

Reproduction and use: Collection is available for use. Material may be protected by copyright. Please contact reference staff for further information.

Preferred citation: (Identification of item), Rohony family papers (2011.377.1) United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC.

Acquisition information: The Rohony family papers were donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2011 by Susan Rohony Ungar.

Accruals: Accruals may have been received since this collection was first processed, see archives catalog at collections.ushmm.org for further information.

Processing history: Colleen Benoit, February 2016

Biographical note

The Rohony family is comprised of János Rohony, his wife Anna Gereben, and their daughter, Zsuzana (later Susan). The family lived in a wealthy part of Budapest, Hungary, where János owned a factory employing over one hundred employees producing chemicals and plastics. In the summer of 1943 János, a Jew, was forced into the Hungarian labor battalions and taken to Transylvania. After a little over a year of labor there, János was moved to a work station near Budapest, where he was granted visits with Anna and Zsuzana from time to time. He was later deported to Buchenwald and then Ohrdruf, where he died in December 1944 from injuries he sustained. Around this same time, Anna was arrested by the Gestapo and sent to prison. Zsuzana meanwhile had been sent to a neighbor's home and evaded capture. She was subsequently sent to an orphanage owned by an Evangelical minister, Emil Koren, in the outskirts of Budapest. After suffering immensely there from hunger and lice, Zsuzana and another young girl left the orphanage and returned to Budapest. Zsuzana returned to her grandparent's apartment to find them very ill with typhus. Shortly after, Anna was released from prison and returned to the apartment where the mother and daughter were reunited. They stayed in Hungary until the Hungarian revolution in 1956, at which time they fled to Austria. In 1973, Zsuzana immigrated to the United States and settled in New York City, where she worked as a literary agent.

Scope and content of collection

The Rohony family papers are comprised of postcards and photographs documenting the family's circumstances between 1943 and 1957. The vast majority of this collection consists of extensive correspondence in the form of postcards and letters between János and Anna written while János was in the forced labor brigades. The letters discuss their life and relationship before the war, care packages Anna sent to János, the deteriorating situation for Jews in Budapest, the loss of their possessions and property, and the effects of war on the city. The last postcards were sent by János in the weeks leading up to his death in December 1944, with one from the Józsefváros train station near Budapest where he bids his love for Anna and describes his uncertainty about the future. János wrote his last postcard around December 9th stating his brigade was at the border and he bids farewell to his wife, daughter, and country. The photographs comprised in this collection depict the Rohony family before, during, and after the war between 1925 and 1950. Images of Anna, Zsuzana, and other extended family members are contained here within.

System of arrangement

The Rohony family papers are arranged as two series:

- Series 1: Documents, 1943-1957 and undated
- Series 2: Photographs, 1937-1955 and undated

Indexing terms

Rohony, János (1897-1944).

Rohony, Anna (1905-).

Rohony, Susan (1936-).

Buchenwald (Concentration camp).

Ohrdruf (Concentration camp).

Jewish businesspeople--Hungary--Budapest.

Holocaust survivors--Hungary--Budapest.

Holocaust victims--Hungary--Budapest.

Jewish refugees.

Jewish children in the Holocaust--Hungary.

Escapes--Hungary--Budapest.

Forced labor--Hungary.

Budapest (Hungary).

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Documents, 1943-1957 and undated

Folder	Title
1	Envelopes, 1944 and undated
2	Letters, 1944 and undated
3	Letters to Anna and Zsusana, 1957
4	Rohony, Anna, 1944
5-6	Rohony, János, 1943-1944 (2 folders)
7	Telegrams, 1949-1955

Series 2: Photographs, 1937-1955 and undated

Folder	Title
8	"Bubi," 1942 and undated
9	Family photographs, 1937-1940 and undated
10	Rohony, Anna, 1937 and undated
11	Rohony, Zsusana, 1955