

Collection Title: Hometown, Inc. Records

Call Number: Mss-3068

Inclusive Dates: 1891 – 1990

Volume: 10.7 Cu. Ft.

Location: GV, Sh. 030-032

Company History: John T. Kopmeier, a native of Germany, started a milk delivery business in, however by 1849 he realized that the ice used to cool the milk was a more profitable venture. By 1879 his company had three retail ice routes, with much of its business revolving around breweries and meat packers throughout Milwaukee. In the late the 19th century, John H. Kopmeier expanded the business, buying out other ice companies and starting a cartage business. As a result, the company's name changed in 1893 to Wisconsin Lake Ice and Cartage Company.

The company continued diversifying, entering the coal business in 1917 and changing its name to the Wisconsin Ice and Coal Company. During this time, it also sold ice boxes and began manufacturing ice rather than harvesting it from the Milwaukee River and nearby lakes (the last ice harvest took place in 1923). By the 1930's the company had five ice plants, six warehouses, and twenty ice houses throughout the greater Milwaukee area. The year 1936 was the company's most productive, selling more than 131 tons of ice. In 1940 the company had 212 ice routes operating in the Milwaukee area seven days a week and was the largest ice supplier in Wisconsin.

In 1929, the company diversified again by going into the fuel oil business and later into gasoline retail. In 1952, it purchased the Sinclair Oil Terminal and by the 1960's had more than two dozen service stations under the name "Hometown." As petroleum products gradually replaced the ice and coal component of the company, its name was officially changed to Hometown Inc. in 1969. In 2005, the company sold its ice manufacturing business to Artic Glacier Inc. but still operates its petroleum business.

Scope Content Note: This collection is arranged into four series. Series 1 largely consists of meeting minutes and daily records from the company's early years, but also includes newsletters, trade publications, plat maps, and blueprints. Series 2 contains advertising and marketing material primarily from the 1950's onward, largely in the form of newspaper clippings and slides. The bulk of the collection is photographs contained in series 3 that span the entirety of the 20th century. Many photos picture early icehouses, coal yards, and vehicles, but also document employees and Kopmeier family members. Series 4 contains audio visual material, the bulk being 16mm films of ice harvests, VHS tapes, and audio cassettes of radio broadcasts.

Administrative Note: This collection was donated in January 2007 by Jon Day. It was originally processed in 2007 by L. Chasco. The collection was reprocessed in 2015 by Greg Comly.

Contents	Box #	Folder #
Series 1: Administrative and Business Material		
Wisconsin Lakes Ice and Cartage Company		
Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws, Meeting Material, 1893-1896	1	1
Meeting Minutes, 1891-1894	1	2
Meeting Minutes, 1896-1905	1	3
Meeting Minutes, 1914-1918	1	4
Stock Transfers, 1893-1914	1	5
Wisconsin Ice and Coal Company		
Meeting Minutes, 1918-1930	1	6
Meeting Minutes, 1933-1951	1	7
Business and Administrative Correspondence, Bound Ledgers		
Administrative and Mics. Matters, Dec. 1915 – Dec. 1923	1	14
Administrative and Mics. Matters, Aug. 1922- June 1923	2	Vol. 1
Administrative and Mics. Matters, March 1928- Sep.1929	2	Vol. 2
Administrative and Mics. Matters, Sept. 1929- Aug.1929	2	Vol. 3
Bills, June 1925-June 1931	2	Vol. 4
Common Sense Ice Box, Feb. 1917 – March 1928	2	Vol. 5
Ice and Coal Services, Dec. 1925 – Jan. 1927	2	Vol. 6
Ice and Coal Services, March 1928 – Oct. 1931	2	Vol. 7
Customer Complaints, 1929-1928	3	5-6
Customer Compliments, 1944 – 1967	3	7
Group Insurance Policy, Prudential Life, 1925, 1971	10 - Oversize	Loose
Historical File	3	8
Ice Industry Publications		
Ice Industry Business Newspapers, 1915-1928	3	9
Proceedings of the National Association of Ice Industry	3	10
Trade Journals, 1922-1950	3	11
Old Timers Diner, Service Awards, 1956	3	15
Material from Scrapbook containing blueprints of company property, Plat Maps, and Advertisements	13 – Oversize	Loose
Miscellaneous	3	13
Newsletters, 1938-1974	3	9
Newsletters [Duplicates], 1949, 1964	10 - Oversize	1
Plat Book and Atlas, Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee Counties, 1921, 1954, 1962	10 - Oversize	6
Salary and Wages, 1960-1977	3	16
Worker Instruction Poster, undated	11 - Oversize	5
Series 2: Advertising and Marketing		
Advertisements, 1950-1962	3	1
Advertisements, 1960's	3	2

Advertisements, Fuel Oil, 1967-1969	3	3
Advertisements, Competitive, 1966-1967	3	4
Hometown Inc. Subject File [Slides], 1965 -1975		
Advertisements and Production Allocation, 1973	Box 4 Carton: 1	Section: 3-4
Advertisements, 1970-1973	Box 4 Carton: 3	Section: 1-2
Advertisements, Gas Stations, 1965-1975	Box 4 Carton: 3	Section: 3-4
Contests and Awards, Oct. 1970	Box 4 Carton: 1	Section: 5
Promotion, Milk and Cookies, May 1965	Box 4 Carton: 2	Section: 7
Mascot, TopCat	Box 4 Carton: 1	Section: 2
Meeting Slides, 1970	Box 4 Carton: 3	Section: 7
Sales and Consumption, 1966-1972	Box 4 Carton: 3	Section: 5-6
Ice Bags	10 – Oversize	4
Kopmeier Motor Car Company Garage, Sketch, undated	11 - Oversize	6
Market Research Material, Gas and Coal, 1973-1983	3	12-14
Material from Scrapbook containing Wisconsin Ice and Coal Company Clippings and Advertisements, 1951-1953	12 – Oversize	Loose
Miscellaneous Clippings	1	12
Scrapbook on Pate Dealer Meeting, 1960	1	10-11
Sheet Music	1	9
“Take Me out to the Ball Game” – Advertisements Decca Album No. 120 Popular Series, 1971 Note: 4 - 78rpm Recordings	10 – Oversize	Loose
Series 3: Photographs		
Aerial Views, 12 th /13 th Street Docks, undated	10- Oversize	Loose
Charcoal Manufacturing	5	1
Coal Yards Identified		
Lakeside, Cambridge and North, 1924	5	2
Lakeside, Cambridge and North, 1924	11 – Oversize	Loose

West Allis, 42 nd and Orchard, 1927-1950	5	3
16 th Street Dock, 1929-1964	5	4
Canal Street Dock, 1920-1930	5	5
Delivery Men, 1900-1940's	6	1
Electric Cars and Other Miscellaneous Photographs	11 - Oversize	1
Headquarters, North Avenue, 1948-1949	5	6
Hometown Service Stations, 1956 - 1983	5	7
Employees, undated	5	8
Free Entertainment to Boys and Girls of Milwaukee, 1908	5	9
Free Entertainment to Boys and Girls of Milwaukee, 1908	10-Oversize	2
Free Entertainment to Boys and Girls of Milwaukee [Duplicates], 1908	10-Oversize	3
Hometown Inc. Subject File Photos [Slides], 1965 -1975		
Banquet, undated	Box 4 Carton: 2	Section: 4-5
Banquet, Nov. 1975	Box 4 Carton: 4	Section: 2
Banquet, Roger Zweig, undated	Box 4 Carton: 5	Section: 1-5
Broadwater Hotel, Biloxi, Mississippi	Box 4 Carton: 1	Section: 6
Enco Gas Stations	Box 4 Carton: 2	Section: 6
Employees, Service Stations	Box 4 Carton: 4	Section: 4-5
Gas Stations and Services, June 1965	Box 4 Carton: 1	Section: 1
Gas Stations, 1975	Box 4 Carton: 1	Section: 7
Gas Stations and Services, 1965-1966	Box 4 Carton: 2	Section: 1-2
Gas Stations and Advertisements, 1962-1973	Box 4 Carton: 2	Section: 3
Lakefront, 1975	Box 4 Carton: 4	Section: 1
Miscellaneous	Box 4 Carton: 4	Section: 6-7
Miscellaneous	Box 4 Carton: 6	Section: 1-7
Hometown Inc. Subject File Photos [5 x 7], 1980-1990		
A-G		
Cronin Oil Events and Gatherings	6	7

Golfing Events		
H		
Holiday Ice Sculptures, 1987 Home Improvement Show, 1988 Hometown Cartoons Hometown Gas Stations Hydro Races, 1990	6	8
I-Z		
Mics. Equipment Mics. Negatives Office Personnel, 1986 Office Personnel, 1987 Office Personnel, undated Parade South Branch	6	9
Ice Harvest, Milwaukee River, 1901-1919	6	2
Ice Houses Identified		
Barton, Ives, Center Street	6	3
22 nd Avenue, Cambridge & North, Silver Springs	6	4
Lake Side Plant, 1948-1951	11 - Oversize	4
Ice Houses Unidentified	6	5
Ice Plant, West Side Plant, 31 st and Cherry	6	6
John H. Kopmeier and Group Note: Glass Plate Negative - Separated From Collection	#22553 - #22557	
Management, 1926 – 1956	6	10
Hometown Warehouses	6	11
Manufacturing of Ice	6	12
Miscellaneous Photographs	6	14
North Avenue Showroom, 1931	11 - Oversize	Loose
Oil Storage Yard, Washington Street Terminal, 1975 Note: Photographs and Map	10 - Oversize	5
Pewaukee Lake, 1915	6	13
Photogravure Copper Plates Prints used in Historic Company Newspapers	7	Loose
Portraits		
Social Gatherings, 1906-1926	11 - Oversize	2
Kopmeier Family and Early Ice Workers, undated	11 - Oversize	3
John H. Kopmeier and Group	11 - Oversize	Loose
Store Displays	6	15
Truck Photographs		
Coal	6	16
Fuel Oil	6	17
Ice	6	18
Oil and Gas, Hometown	6	19

Series 4: Audio/Visual Material		
16mm Films (7)		
Ice Harvest, Random Lake Wisconsin, 1935	8	Loose
Oscar Meyer Ice Promo	8	Loose
Unidentified (5)	8	Loose
VHS(3), unidentified	9	Loose
Cassette Tapes (11), unidentified	9	Loose
OVERSIZED FRAMED PHOTOS	LOCATION	
-Company Truck, 1915	WH	
-Horse-drawn Wagons in Front of Company Offices, 1923	WH	
-Wagon with Ice in Front of Pabst Mansion, 1900	WH	
Addendum: Material added January 2016	Box #	File #
7 mock-up drawings of Hometown advertisements	12	Loose
Oversize Photos	11	Loose
-Wagons & Ice Stored Near Warehouse		
-2 nd Annual Dinner, National Ice Association, 1911		
-Wisconsin Ice & Coal Warehouse		
-Scissor Lifting Ice onto Railroad Car		
-Wisconsin Ice & Coal Trucks		
-Ice Cutting on Milwaukee River, 1897		
-Wisconsin Ice & Cartage Co. Workers		
-Group Portrait of Unidentified Workers		
-Lithograph-Panoramic View, Lake District, Waukesha County		