

Collection #  
M 1136  
OM 0569  
BV 4982–4984

**ARNOLD F. HABIG AND KIMBALL INTERNATIONAL  
COLLECTION, CA. 1902; 1950–2012**

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Processed by

Bobbi Fisher  
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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department  
William Henry Smith Memorial Library  
Indiana Historical Society  
450 West Ohio Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 manuscript box, 1 black and white photograph folder, 4 color photograph folders, 1 OVA folder, 1 OM folder, 3 bound volumes, 1 video, 1 book

COLLECTION DATES: CA. 1902; 1950–2012

PROVENANCE: Barbara T. Habig, Jasper, IN, 2013

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2013.0260

NOTES:

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Arnold F. Habig was born on 2 May 1907, in Jasper, Indiana. He was the third oldest of ten children of Frank A. Habig and Rosalia Rottet Habig. In September 1927, he was married to Mary Ann Jahn, his high school sweetheart. She died of a heart attack on the 23 January, 1972. On the 21 October, 1972, he married widow Barbara Cukierski Southard at St. Theresa's Catholic Church in Phoenix, Arizona.

Arnold and his first wife, Mary, had seven children, Thomas, Margaret Ann, John, Marilyn, Nancy, Douglas, and Barbara.

Mr. Habig attended Jasper High School, graduating in 1925. During this time he also worked at the J, operated a movie projector, played the piano at the Star Theater, and worked at the Coca Cola Bottling Plant. In the fall of 1925 he went to Spencerian Business College in Louisville, Kentucky. While attending college he worked almost every evening as an usher at the Walnut Theater. He graduated from business college in 1926, after developing skills in both shorthand and typing. His first job after college was with a company, which was in receivership, named Lampton, Crane and Remy Company in Louisville, Kentucky.

He wanted to get married so he moved back to Jasper and got a job at the Jasper Machine Works, and married his high school sweetheart, Mary Ann Jahn, in September 1927.

In 1928 Jasper Machine Works came up against hard times and Arnold was transferred to the Jasper Wood Products Company. There his duties included janitor, assistant bookkeeper, typing of business letters, and other jobs associated with the business. He remained at Jasper Wood Products for twenty years, eventually becoming plant manager and a member of the Board of Directors.

In January 1950, Arnold became manager, director, and president of Midwest Manufacturing Company, a small woodworking firm in Jasper, which then had about thirty employees and a 25,000 square foot production plant. The company's name was changed to The Jasper Corporation in March 1950, and to Kimball International in July 1974.

From 1950 through 1963, Arnold was the President of The Jasper Corporation. In 1963 he was named Chairman of the Board of Directors, which he remained until he stepped down in 1982. He was succeeded by his son Thomas, who had been President since 1963.

In 1949, Midwest Manufacturing Company had sales of \$152,163; in 1950, the Jasper Corporation, under Arnold Habig's direction, had sales of \$748,000, and net income of \$39,000; in 1981, Kimball International had sales of \$248,449,907, and net income of \$15,111,369.

In the 1950's, the Jasper Corporation became a leading independent producer of wood cabinets for major manufacturers of television sets and phonographs. In 1959, The Jasper

Corporation purchased the W. W. Kimball Company of Chicago, a famous manufacturer of pianos and organs since 1857, but a firm whose business had deteriorated drastically at the time of purchase. As a division of The Jasper Corporation (then Kimball International), Kimball Piano and Organ Company was rebuilt into the largest producer of keyboard instruments in the United States. Another division of the company was Conn Keyboards, Inc., which was formed by acquisition in 1980 and produces organs and pianos. In recent years, the parent company added Kimball home and office furniture to its product line and continued as a top supplier of television and stereo cabinets.

Kimball International had manufacturing facilities in eight states and Austria, England, and Mexico. The company employed more than 5,000 people and had production, warehousing, and office space of three-and-a-half million square feet.

All three Habig sons eventually held a position in Kimball International. In 1958, the company's profit-sharing trust purchased controlling interest in West Baden National Bank and French Lick State Bank. The two banks were merged in 1959 to form the Springs Valley National Bank, with branches in Springs Valley and West Baden, Indiana. Its assets grew from \$5 million to \$65 million by the 1980's.

Arnold Habig was a strong supporter of various philanthropies, particularly arts and education. A scholarship program started in 1963 has helped many Kimball International employees' children obtain a college education. Arnold was also actively involved in civic affairs, especially the Knights of Columbus, where he served three terms as Grand Knight of the Jasper Council. He was also a member of the Petroleum Club, Mid-America Club, Exchange Club, Jasper Country Club, and French Lick Springs Golf Club.

Mr. Habig and his second wife Barbara enjoyed spending the winter months in Scottsdale, Arizona. She survives and lives in Jasper, Indiana.

In 2014, the main offices of Kimball International are still in Jasper, Indiana. Arnold's son Douglas is still Chairman of the Board of Kimball International. Arnold's other two sons, Thomas and John, are both in their 80's and living in Jasper, Indiana.

Sources:

Materials in collection.

Kimball International website, accessed 11 September, 2014  
[https://www.kimball.com/executive\\_bios.aspx](https://www.kimball.com/executive_bios.aspx)

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

This collection is divided into eight series.

**Series One:** The contents of this series are Arnold F. Habig biographical materials, i.e. his personal autobiography, scrapbooks, video, and obituaries.

**Series Two:** The content of this series consists of biographical information about The Jasper Corporation and Kimball International, including various journal articles about its origins and growth and a scrapbook for the 25th Anniversary of Kimball Piano division.

**Series Three:** This series consists mostly of brochures originating within The Jasper Corp./Kimball International following their history and growth.

**Series Four:** This series consists of newspaper clippings about Arnold F. Habig and/or Kimball International.

**Series Five:** This series is a folder of black and white photographs taken of Arnold F. Habig ca. 1949-1999.

**Series Six:** This series consists of four folders of color photographs and portraits of Arnold F. Habig and his second wife Barbara ca. 1960's-1990's.

**Series Seven:** This series consists of a Habig family history compiled in 1981.

**Series Eight:** This series consists of some miscellaneous items of Arnold F. Habig.

## **SERIES CONTENTS**

### **Series 1: Arnold F. Habig Biographical Materials**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Typed copy of Arnold F. Habig Autobiography: Start of Kimball International, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 1
Typed copy of Biographical Data On Arnold F. Habig, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 1
Typed copy of "Arnold F. Habig Honored By Republic of Austria," 1987	Box 1, Folder 1
Scrapbook of Mr. and Mrs. Arnold F. Habig attending (honored guests) the L. Bösendorfer Klavierfabrik A. G. Soiree at the Palace Auersperg, 21 October, 1982	BV 4982
Copy of "Arnold Habig: His Expertise Turned an Ailing Firm Into an International Business," article by Martha Rasche for <i>The Saturday Herald</i> , 10 February, 1990	Box 1, Folder 1
Copy of Arnold F. Habig obituary published in <i>The New York Times</i> , 8 April, 1999	Box 1, Folder 1
Copy of Arnold F. Habig obituary published in the <i>Jasper Herald</i> , 29 March, 1999	Box 1, Folder 1
Arnold F. Habig 75th Birthday Celebration scrapbook	BV 4984
Arnold F. Habig 90th Birthday Celebration video, 1997	Videotape Storage Area

### **Series 2: Kimball International histories**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Copy of "W. W. Kimball Co. Merges With Jasper Corp. of Indiana," article from a Music journal (unknown title), n.d.	Box 1, Folder 2
Copy of <i>Whitney's Rapid Method for the Piano Forte</i> , W. W. Kimball Co., ca. 1902	Box 1, Folder 2

<i>Furniture Design &amp; Manufacturing</i> magazine, "The Jasper Corporation Growth Formula," page 38, Nov. 1965	Box 1, Folder 2
Copy of "Kimball International—A Man's Dream Observes Its 25th Anniversary," author and journal unknown, ca. 1975	Box 1, Folder 2
Copy of "25 Year Tribute" script honoring Arnold F. Habig and his association with Kimball International, Inc., ca. 1975	Box 1, Folder 2
Copy of Kimball International, Inc.: A History of Planned Growth, 1950–1985	Box 1, Folder 2
Copy of Kimball International, Inc.: A History of Planned Growth, 1950–1990	Box 1, Folder 2
Copy of story of Midwest Manufacturing Co. becoming The Jasper Corporation and eventually Kimball International, Inc., ca.1982	Box 1, Folder 2
Copy of "Kimball International—Playing a Sound Tune," article by Grant J. Wells, from unknown journal, ca. 1982	Box 1, Folder 2
Copy of "The Kimball Empire," article by Alan LeMond, written for <i>The Patoka Valley Citizen</i> , ca. 1982	Box 1, Folder 2
<i>Music Trades</i> magazine, containing "Kimball's 125 Year Saga," page 46-54 & 96, October 1982	Box 1, Folder 2
25th Anniversary Historical Log of Kimball Piano Division, presented by employees to Arnold F. Habig, 9 October 1986	BV 4983
Company memo from Kimball International noting Mr. A. F. Habig's being presented the "Knight's Cross 1st Class," 9 March, 1987	Box 1, Folder 2
<i>Indiana Business</i> magazine, featuring article about Kimball International, pages 11-17, Sept. 1987	Box 1, Folder 2
Copy of Arnold F. Habig—Comments, 10 July, 1990	Box 1, Folder 2

Original print of "Putting It All Together,,: the story of The Jasper Corporation and Kimball, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 2
Kimball International Memo Re: Discontinuation of Domestic Wholesale Piano Sales and Assembly, 13 February, 1996	Box 1, Folder 2
Brief History of Pembroke (drop leaf) Table, June 2002	Box 1, Folder 2
"Kimball International History," printed from www.kimball.com, 19 January, 2012	Box 1, Folder 2
<i>The Kimball Piano and Organ Story: 1857-1957</i> , written by Van Allen Bradley for the "Music for the Millions" series, Chicago: Henry Regnery Co, 1957	General Collection: ML661 .B72 1957

**Series 3: The Jasper Corporation/Kimball International Brochures**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
The Jasper Corporation Company Growth Chart, ca. 1949–1964	Box 1, Folder 3
The Jasper Corporation Company Growth Chart, ca. 1949–1967	Box 1, Folder 3
The Jasper Corporation Stockholder Information for year ended June 30, 1973	Box 1, Folder 3
Kimball International, Inc., 1999 Annual Report	Box 1, Folder 3
<i>Allegro</i> , articles from the world of keyboard music, ca. 1982	Box 1, Folder 3
<i>Soundboard: News and Views of Kimball International</i> , Vol.21 No. 12, June 1985	Box 1, Folder 3
<i>Soundboard: News and Views of Kimball International</i> , Vol.22 No. 4, October 1985	Box 1, Folder 3
<i>Kimmunicator</i> , October 1997	Box 1, Folder 3
Kimball International Corporate Showroom Grand Re-Opening brochure	Box 1, Folder 3

#### **Series 4: Arnold F. Habig/Kimball Int. Newspaper Clipping File**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
<i>The Louisville Times</i> , 27 March 1978	Box 1, Folder 4
<i>The Music Trades</i> , July 1978	Box 1, Folder 4
<i>The Herald</i> , 17 December 1981	Box 1, Folder 4
<i>The Herald</i> , 10 October 1984	Box 1, Folder 4
<i>Chicago Sun-Times</i> , 28 September 1986	Box 1, Folder 4
<i>The Herald</i> , 10 February 1990	Box 1, Folder 4
<i>The Herald</i> , 21 December 1991	Box 1, Folder 4
<i>The Evansville Courier</i> , 14 February 1996	Box 1, Folder 4
<i>The Herald</i> , 14 February 1996	Box 1, Folder 4
<i>The Herald</i> , from special section "Century of Success," 5 August 1999 (3 separate articles)	Box 1, Folder 4
Unknown Newspaper, "Banking Pioneer Remembered for her love for Valley," ca. 2004	Box 1, Folder 4
<i>Springs Valley Herald</i> , "Arnold Habig: Profile of a Master Craftsman," ca. 1987	Box 1, Folder 4
Special <i>Springs Valley Bank &amp; Trust Herald</i> supplement, May 2, 1989, celebrating Arnold F. Habig's birthday	OM 0569, Folder 1

#### **Series 5: Arnold F. Habig Black and White Photos**

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Arnold F. Habig, Wallet-size photo, n.d.	Photographs, Folder 1
Unknown subjects, n.d.	Photographs, Folder 1
Arnold and Barbara Habig portrait, n.d.	Photographs, Folder 1

Arnold F. Habig portrait, n.d.	Photographs, Folder 1
Arnold F. Habig receiving honorary doctorate pin, Vincennes University, 1991	Photographs, Folder 1
Arnold F. Habig receiving honorary doctorate framed certificate, Vincennes University, 1991	Photographs, Folder 1
Arnold F. Habig giving speech after receiving honorary doctorate, Vincennes University, 1991	Photographs, Folder 1
Arnold F. Habig (seated), Tom Habig (left), and John Habig (right), n.d.	Photographs, Folder 1
Arnold F. Habig with a group of unidentified people, February 1980	Photographs, Folder 1
Arnold F. Habig portraits, establishment of The Jasper Corporation, ca. 1949-50, (3 poses)	OVA Photographs, Folder 1

**Series 6: Arnold F. Habig Color Photos**

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The Jasper Corporation General Offices sign, Jasper,  
Indiana, ca. 1960's

Arnold F. Habig receiving an honorary doctorate from  
the University of Evansville, 1978

Arnold F. Habig, standing by University of Evansville  
sign, ca. 1978

Arnold F. Habig and his wife Barbara riding in the  
Pumpkin Parade, French Lick/West Baden, Indiana,  
1979

Holiday Greeting card from the Bösendorfer London  
Piano Centre with photo on front of Arnold F. Habig  
and unknown man, taken at Directors' Meeting, Long  
Eaton, England, 1980 (10 more photos inside card  
with note)

Directors, Long Eaton, Nottingham, England, 1980

CONTAINER

Color Photographs:  
Folder 1

Arnold F. Habig (second from left) with group celebrating Harriett Brown's 75th birthday (seated-chairman of Springs Valley Bank & Trust), 1980	Color Photographs: Folder 1
Arnold F. Habig and his wife Barbara standing outside the Palace at Westminster in London with two unknown men, ca. 1982	Color Photographs: Folder 1
1984 Olympic venue Los Angeles, California, Kimball Pianos and Organs selected as the official keyboards of the 1984 Olympics	Color Photographs: Folder 1
Arnold and Barbara Habig standing outside Artec in Los Angeles, Cal. after purchasing metal officer furniture maker Harpers, Inc., 1992	Color Photographs: Folder 1
Arnold Habig (center) with two of his sons, Christmas 1996	Color Photographs: Folder 1
Dr. Radler seated at 9' Kimball grand piano made by Bösendorfer, ca. 1982	Color Photographs: Folder 2
Arnold F. Habig, Vienna, Austria, 1982 (2 photos)	Color Photographs: Folder 2
Barbara Habig, Vienna, Austria, 1982	Color Photographs: Folder 2
Collage photo of pictures taken at Bösendorfer of Vienna 150-Year celebration, ca. 1982	Color Photographs: Folder 2
Arnold F. Habig and wife Barbara with Dr. Radler at Bösendorfer plant in Austria, 1989 (8 photos)	Color Photographs: Folder 3
Arnold F. Habig color portrait, ca. 1969-70	Color Photographs: Folder 4
Arnold F. Habig color portrait, ca. 1969-70	Color Photographs: Folder 4
Arnold F. Habig color portrait, ca. 1975 (2 copies)	Color Photographs: Folder 4
Barbara T. Habig, color portrait, ca. 1991	Color Photographs: Folder 4

## **Series 7: Habig Family History**

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Habig Family History and Crest, ca. 1981

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## **Series 8: Misc. Items**

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Invitation to Austrian Trade Commission reception in Chicago, from the Austrian Consulate General, October 1991

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Box1 , Folder 6

Arnold F. Habig personal stationery with family crest

Box1 , Folder 6

Biography of Arnold F. Habig, page one only - remainder is missing

Box 1, Folder 6

Article about John Muir from *Traces*, Winter 1993, given to Arnold F. Habig by "Kenny" (note attached)

Box 1, Folder 6

Annual Report 1980 for Springs Valley Bank & Trust Co. with shareholder letter inside to Barbara T. Habig

Box1 , Folder 6

*The Great Composers and Their Music: Bach*

Box1 , Folder 6

## CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:  
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 1136).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.