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Descriptive Summary

Title: Vera Nathans Semel papers

Date(s): 1830-1996

Creator: Semel, Vera Nathans, 1943-

Abstract: Photographs, birth certificates, marriage certificates, identity cards, passports, and other papers of Vera Nathans Semel, a Dutch Jew who survived World War II in hiding. Most papers, including birth and marriage certificates, relate to Nathans's maternal family, the Paerls. Pre-war photographs show Nathans's maternal grandparents and uncle in Amsterdam; post-war photographs show her, her parents, husband, and children in Beverwijk and Bussum, both in the Netherlands, and in Scarsdale, New York.

Extent: 0.25 linear feet
(5 folders)

Repository: Jewish Heritage Collection, Special Collections, College of Charleston Libraries
66 George Street
Charleston, SC 29424
Phone: (843) 953-8016
Fax: (843) 953-6319
URL: http://archives.library.cofc.edu

Call Number: Mss 1065-016

Language of Material: Materials in Dutch and English

Biographical Note

Vera Nathans was born in Amsterdam, Netherlands, on August 1, 1943. Her parents, Ans and Hemmy Nathans, were forced to place her in hiding with two nurses from a children's hospital in Haarlem, Netherlands, before they were deported to Bergen-Belsen. Nathans was hidden with two other children, including a boy nearly the same age named Nico Visjager. One of the nurses, Corrie Blauuw, claimed that Nathans and Visjager were her illegitimate twins. Nathans's parents survived Bergen-Belsen and Vera rejoined them in Beverwijk, Netherlands.

Nathans married Sandy Semel in 1965 in Bussum, Netherlands. The couple relocated to Scarsdale, New York, and had three children, Susan, David, and Adam.

Collection Overview

Photographs, birth certificates, marriage certificates, identity cards, passports, and other papers of Vera Nathans Semel, a Dutch Jew who survived World War II in hiding. Most papers, including birth and marriage certificates, relate to Nathans's maternal family, the Paerls. Pre-war photographs show Nathans's maternal grandparents and uncle in Amsterdam; post-war photographs show her, her parents, husband, and children in Beverwijk and Bussum, both in the Netherlands, and in Scarsdale, New York.
Collection Arrangement

Materials are described at the folder level.

Restrictions

Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research.

Copyright Notice

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Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person, family, or organization, by topical subject, by place, and by types of material.

Names
Semel, Vera Nathans, 1943-
Paerl family

Subjects
Hidden children (Holocaust)--Netherlands
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)
Holocaust survivors--Netherlands
Jewish children in the Holocaust--Netherlands
World War, 1939-1945--Atrocities

Places
Amsterdam (Netherlands)
Beverwijk (Netherlands)
Bussum (Netherlands)
Scarsdale (N.Y.)
Types of Material
- Birth certificates
- Black-and-white negatives
- Black-and-white slides
- Diplomas
- Identity cards
- Marriage certificates
- Passports
- Personal correspondence
- Photograph albums
- Photographs
- Photocopies

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Vera Nathans Semel papers, College of Charleston Libraries, Charleston, SC, USA.

Acquisitions Information
Materials were donated in 2000 by Vera Semel.

Alternate Form of Materials
Digital reproduction available online in the Lowcountry Digital Library.

Processing Information
Processed by Rebecca McClure, July 2011.
Encoded by Rebecca McClure, December 2011.
Reviewed and uploaded by Martha McTear, January 2012.
Link to digital library added by Martha McTear, July 2013.
Funding from the Council on Library and Information Resources supported the processing of this collection and encoding of the finding aid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Folder 1</td>
<td>Certificates and other papers, 1830-1911, 1941, 1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes birth certificates, marriage certificates, religious honors, and national militia</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>registration for members of the Paerl family, Nathans's maternal relatives. Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>items include her mother's false Dutch identification papers and Vera Nathans's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dutch passport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folder 2</td>
<td>Photographs, circa 1938-1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-war photographs show Nathans's maternal grandparents, Mietje Hymans and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barend Lion Paerl, in Amsterdam, Holland. Post-war photographs show Nathans and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>family in Holland; Nico Visjager, who was hidden with Nathans during the war; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>her husband, Sandy Semel, and children in the United States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folder 3</td>
<td>Negatives, 1918-1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negatives of Nathans, her parents, grandparents, sister, husband, children, and nurses who hid her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>during the war. Also includes negatives of her mother's false Dutch identification papers, Vera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nathans's Dutch passport, and pages from the photo album given to Sandy Semel by nurse Corrie Blauuw.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folder 4</td>
<td>Slides, 1918-1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Slides of material in folder 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folder 5</td>
<td>Photocopies, 1830-1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Photocopies of materials in folders 1-3.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>