



FINDING AID

M-431 Samuel Bromley Clark Collection / Famous-Barr Advertising Ephemera

DATE: 1950-1990

CREATOR: Clark, Samuel Bromley (1928-2014). Display director for Famous-Barr department stores from 1963 until his retirement around the turn of the century.

SCOPE: Archival materials from the advertising and window display departments of May Company / Famous-Barr Company.

EXTENT: Two 11x17 boxes of photographs, negatives, slides, and small miscellaneous advertisements. One 21x25 box of oversized prints and advertisements.

HISTORY: Samuel Bromley Clark, a native to St. Louis, began working in the department store trade shortly after graduating highschool in 1945. He first worked at the newly opened Famous-Barr store in Clayton, then, after serving in the Korean War, he returned to St. Louis and began working in the display department of Saks Fifth Avenue. In 1963 Morton May, CEO of May Department Stores Company, hired Clark as the display director over all the Famous-Barr department stores. His tenure became known as the golden age of window displays at the flag-ship downtown store. Not only was Clark the vision behind elaborate 21 window displays, particularly impressive around the holidays, but also he was responsible for the exhibition hall and visual merchandising in all the company's stores. Clark was integral to the expansion and growth of the stores into the suburbs and beyond.

The May Department Stores Company was founded by David May in Leadville, Colorado in 1877 during the Colorado silver rush. After moving around for a few decades, the company settled in St. Louis in 1905 and was officially incorporated as The May Department Stores Company in 1910. In 1911, The Famous Clothing Store (owned by May) and The William Barr Dry Goods Company merged to create Famous-Barr. May spent the next several decades acquiring stores around the country, creating a massive retail empire. In 1951 David May's grandson, Morton May, became chairman of the company, which he headed for the next 16 years. It was during this time that Morton May brought on Samuel Bromley Clark as display director. The company continued to grow and shrink over the years, acquiring and selling other companies until, in 2005, Federated Department Stores merged with the May Company and rebranded its stores as Macy's.



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Preferred Citation: When citing the material from this collection, the preferred citation is: From the Special Collections of the St. Louis Mercantile Library at the University of Missouri – St. Louis.

BOX LIST

Series 1: Photographs

Photographs are unidentified. Photographs were removed from adhesive albums when possible and kept in their original order.

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	Photos of staff and various displays, some dated 1953 - 1980
2	Photos of displays, negatives, slides, misc. advertisements

Series 2: Oversized Ephemera

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	Large prints and advertisements. Some images seem to be pulled from other books/sources.