



University Libraries Special Collections & University Archives

Collection Summary

Title: Sandor "Alex" Kvassay Papers

Call Number: 2016-02

Creator: Sandor "Alex" Kvassay

Inclusive dates: 1915-2014

Size: 4.5 linear ft. (5 boxes)

Abstract: Papers of Sandor "Alex" Kvassay, a retired marketer of business aircraft for Beech and Learjet; items include personal and educational records, correspondence, photographs, press clippings, corporate publications, contracts, writings, and audiovisual material.

Languages: Dutch, English, French, German, Hungarian, Spanish

Administrative Information

Source: Donated by Alex Kvassay in 2014

Citation: Sandor "Alex" Kvassay Papers, MS 2015-03, Wichita State University Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives.

Processed by: JZ, 9-2015

Restrictions: None

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Content Note

This collection contains papers preserved by Sandor "Alex" Kvassay which document his Hungarian ancestry, immigration to the United States following World War II, and career in aviation as a salesman of business jets within the international community. Items include certificates of birth and baptism, ID cards and passports, citizenship records, military service documents, educational transcripts and diplomas, letters of recommendation, job applications, resumes, news and magazine

clippings, writings, a pilot log and pilot license, scrapbooks of foreign travels, and photographs of aircraft and persons involved in aviation manufacturing and marketing. Notable items include material relating to Kvassay's Hungarian upbringing and post-World War II activities in Budapest and Istanbul, as well as correspondence, business records, published articles, and images reflecting his considerable travel and skill as a marketer for Beech and Learjet. The bulk of material extends from 1941 to 2014.

Biography

Sandor "Alex" Kvassay was born in Budapest, Hungary, on December 21, 1926, into a family recognized for its contributions to civil engineering and government. To avoid Hungary's pro-Nazi draft during World War II, he worked as a clerk in the Defense Department. Following the war Kvassay pursued a law degree, also working as a translator and interpreter in 1946 and 1947 for the post-war Hungarian Reparations Office, which was formed to administer reparations to the Soviet Union.

Kvassay also secretly performed work for the West during this time by photographing encrypted telegrams and code books created and used by the Hungarian Foreign Service, thus apprising the American and British governments of the rise of Communism in Hungary. Fearing for their safety, Kvassay and his family left Budapest for Istanbul in October 1947, where Kvassay's father held a position as consul general to Turkey. Following the Communist takeover of the government in 1948, Kvassay's family was recalled to Hungary with Sandor immigrating to the United States as a political refugee.

Aided by the American governments knowledge of his espionage work, Kvassay sought to attain citizenship as quickly as possible, working as a translator at the Pentagon before enlisting in the U.S. Army in December 1948. Initially assigned as an infantryman, Kvassay gained a transfer to Ft. Riley, Kansas, where he worked as a supply clerk and occasional translator. Following his discharge in late 1951, Kvassay returned to Washington, D.C., where he gained citizenship and resumed his role as a translator for the Pentagon before applying to Beech Aircraft Corporation in late 1952 where he was eventually hired.

Kvassay worked at Beech from 1953 until 1965, acting as a sales representative to foreign buyers of company aircraft. He left to join the international marketing division of Lear Jet, which was bought by Gates Aviation in 1967, and eventually became a vice-president in the company before joining Canadair in 1976. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Kvassay was also a founder and president of a jet leasing firm, Management Jets Worldwide, and acted as a consultant for other aviation companies until retiring in 1982. He is the father of three children and resides in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Arrangement Note

Organized into four series: (1) Personal and Family, (2) Business, (3) Writings and Publications, and (4) Images, Albums, and Scrapbooks.

Series Descriptions

Series 1: Personal and Family, 1910-2011, n.d.

Boxes 1-2

This series is made up of records relating to Alex Kvassay and his family; arranged into six subseries: (1.1) Personal, (1.2) Education, (1.3) Professional, (1.4) Military, (1.5) Family, and (1.6) Other. Items are in chronological order.

Subseries 1.1: Personal, 1926-2000

Box 1

This subseries consists of documents relating to the identity of Alex Kvassay, including records of birth, baptism, Hungarian citizenship, his resident alien status in the United States, passports, American naturalization, and his relinquishment of Hungarian citizenship and eventual regaining of it.

RESEARCHER NOTE: Kvassay's memoir, *Alex in Wonderland*, which details his early life in Hungary and subsequent career in aviation, is available in Special Collections.

Subseries 1.2: Education, 1932-1955

Box 1

This subseries houses Alex Kvassay's educational records from Hungary and the University of Wichita, along with assorted correspondence. Translations of most of Kvassay's Hungarian transcripts are present.

Subseries 1.3: Professional, 1944-1948

Box 1

This subseries contains records relating to Alex Kvassay's employment with the Hungarian Defense Department during World War II, as well as his postwar work with the Hungarian Reclamations Office and the Pentagon. Items include contracts and correspondence, with some Hungarian materials translated into English.

Subseries 1.4: Military, 1948-1952

Box 1

This subseries consists of Alex Kvassay's service record in the United States Army, various ID cards, as well as his application for a commission in the Air Force after his honorable discharge in 1951.

Subseries 1.5: Family, 1910-1964

Box 1

This subseries contains items relating to the Kvassay family, including the baptism certificate for Alex's father, Laszlo, and documentation relating Kvassay's efforts to gain American visas for his family during the 1950s and 1960s. Some Hungarian correspondence and affidavits are translated into English.

Subseries 1.6: Other, 1956-2011, n.d.

Boxes 1, 2

This subseries houses various items relating to Kvassay and his family, including correspondence, a DVD of Kvassay's 2011 trip to North Korea, an address book, and some commemorative artifacts honoring his grandfather, a celebrated civil engineer in late 19th and early 20th century Hungary.

Series 2: Business, 1952-1982

Box 1

This series contains records pertaining to Alex Kvassay's career in aviation and consists of four subseries: (2.1) Beech, (2.2) Lear Jet, (2.3) Canadair, and (2.4) Other. Material is arranged alphabetically by document type.

Subseries 2.1: Beech, 1952-1965

Box 1

This subseries consists of documents relating to Kvassay's career at Beech Aviation Corporation.

Subseries 2.2: Lear Jet, 1965-1976

Box 1

This subseries contains material documenting Kvassay's career at Lear Jet (known as Gates Learjet after 1969). Of note are the activity reports written by Kvassay which provide information on sales in the international market during the early 1970s, as well as the considerable correspondence following Kvassay's resignation from Gates Learjet in 1976.

Subseries 2.3: Canadair, 1976-1980**Box 1**

This subseries contains agreements, memos, reports, and correspondence relating to Kvassay's affiliation with Canadair.

Subseries 2.4: Other, 1952-1982, n.d.**Box 1**

This subseries houses records relating to Kvassay's career in aviation, including correspondence and reports concerning Management Jets Worldwide and Piper Aviation Corporation. Also present are items such as his pilot's license, pilot log, resumes, applications to other business firms, and an assessment analyzing Kvassay and his qualifications for employment.

Series 3: Writings and Publications, 1948-2014, n.d.**Boxes 1, 3**

This series houses articles authored by Alex Kvassay as well as magazine and news clippings he collected. For several years Kvassay wrote columns for *Professional Pilot* and *East Wichita News* in which he reminisced about his career in aviation and the many places and people he encountered; these writings and other unpublished material are collected in a scrapbook. Collected articles and publications focus on geopolitical issues in Hungary and Turkey, as well as Kvassay's associates. Material is arranged by creator.

Series 4: Images, Albums, and Scrapbooks, 1922-2004, n.d.**Boxes 1, 4-5**

This series contains loose images, scrapbooks, and photo albums depicting Alex Kvassay's Hungarian upbringing, as well as his immigration to the United States, military service, and subsequent career in aviation. Notable subjects include a telephone booth in Nazi Germany with a sign prohibiting Jews from using it, the destruction of Budapest by German and Soviet forces during World War II, as well as images of prominent figures at Beech and Lear Jet and the many countries Kvassay travelled to while marketing aircraft for these companies. Annotations and news clippings supplement many photos. Also of interest is the scrapbook Kvassay created to preserve feedback received from his associates upon publishing his memoir. Loose images are cataloged first, followed by the albums and scrapbooks.

Box and Folder Listing**Series 1 – Personal and Family****Subseries 1.1 – Personal**

Box 1 FF 1 Birth certificate, 1926

| | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| Box 1 | FF 2 | Certificate of baptism for Sandor Kvassay, 1936 |
| Box 1 | FF 3 | Certificate of Hungarian citizenship, 1942 |
| Box 1 | FF 4 | Diplomatic passport, 1943 |
| Box 1 | FF 5 | Certificate of Christian origin, 1944 |
| Box 1 | FF 6 | Draft exemption, 1944 |
| Box 1 | FF 7 | ID card, 1945 |
| Box 1 | FF 8 | Denazification document, 1945 |
| Box 1 | FF 9 | Certificate of identity, 1946 |
| Box 1 | FF 10 | Declaration of Intention and other immigration records, 1948-1949 |
| Box 1 | FF 11 | Resident alien identification card, 1949 |
| Box 1 | FF 12 | Application to File Petition for Naturalization, 1952 |
| Box 1 | FF 13 | Certificate of Naturalization, 1952 |
| Box 1 | FF 14 | Personal History Statement, 1952 |
| Box 1 | FF 15 | U.S. passports, 1952, 1956, 1960, 1965, 1972 |
| Box 1 | FF 16 | Request to be released from Hungarian citizenship, 1969 |
| Box 1 | FF 17 | Release from Hungarian citizenship, 1969 |
| Box 1 | FF 18 | Laissez-passer [travel document] to French Polynesia, 1972 |
| Box 1 | FF 19 | U.S. passports, 1976, 1981, 1996, 2006 |
| Box 1 | FF 20 | Certificate of Hungarian citizenship, 2000 |
| Box 1 | FF 21 | Hungarian passport, 2000 |

Subseries 1.2 – Education

| | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| Box 1 | FF 22 | Elementary school transcripts and graduation certificate, 1932-1935 |
| Box 1 | FF 23 | Gymnasium transcripts and diploma, 1936-1944 |
| Box 1 | FF 24 | Correspondence relating to scholarship, 1942-1943 |
| Box 1 | FF 25 | University transcripts and certificate of graduation, 1944-1948 |
| Box 1 | FF 26 | Veterans Administration eligibility documents, 1953-1954 |
| Box 1 | FF 27 | University of Wichita semester reports, 1954-1955 |

Subseries 1.3 – Professional

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|-------|-------|--|
| Box 1 | FF 28 | Defense Department records, 1944 |
| Box 1 | FF 29 | Hungarian Reclamations Office records, 1946-1948 |
| Box 1 | FF 30 | Correspondence, 1947-1948 |

Subseries 1.4 – Military

| | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| Box 1 | FF 31 | Service record, 1948-1951 |
| Box 1 | FF 32 | Army ID card, liberty passes, motor vehicle operator's permit, permanent pass, 1949-1951 |
| Box 1 | FF 33 | Honorable discharge, 1951 |
| Box 1 | FF 34 | Correspondence relating to USAF commission, 1951 |
| Box 1 | FF 35 | Application for USAF commission and correspondence, 1952 |

Subseries 1.5 – Family

| | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| Box 1 | FF 36 | Certificate of baptism for Laszlo Kvassay, 1910 |
| Box 1 | FF 37 | Correspondence and affidavits relating to Kvassay family, 1954-1964 |

Subseries 1.6 – Other

| | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| Box 1 | FF 38 | Correspondence, 1978-2010 |
| Box 1 | FF 39 | DVD of Kvassay's trip to North Korea, 2011 |
| Box 1 | FF 40 | Address book of Alex Kvassay, n.d. |
| Box 2 | | Bronze medallion and silver coin honoring Jeno Kvassay, n.d. |

Series 2 – Business

Subseries 2.1 – Beech

| | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| Box 1 | FF 41 | Achievement awards, Department of Sales Training, 1962, 1965 |
|-------|-------|--|

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|-------|-------|---|
| Box 1 | FF 42 | Agreement between Personnel Office and Employee, 1953 |
| Box 1 | FF 43 | Assignment record, 1953 |
| Box 1 | FF 44 | Correspondence, 1952-1965 |
| Box 1 | FF 45 | News release, 1962 |
| Box 1 | FF 46 | Organizational charts, 1960, 1962-1963 |
| Box 1 | FF 47 | Performance reviews, 1959-1960, 1962-1965 |
| Box 1 | FF 48 | Remarks, "The Airplane as a Tool of Management," 1962 |
| Box 1 | FF 49 | Separation notice, 1965 |

Subseries 2.2 – Lear Jet

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|-------|-------|--|
| Box 1 | FF 50 | Activity reports, 1971-1973 |
| Box 1 | FF 51 | Applications for employment, 1965, 1967 |
| Box 1 | FF 52 | Certificates, 1965, 1966, 1969 |
| Box 1 | FF 53 | Correspondence, 1965 |
| Box 1 | FF 54 | Correspondence, 1966-1968 |
| Box 1 | FF 55 | Correspondence, 1969-1971 |
| Box 1 | FF 56 | Correspondence, 1972-1976 |
| Box 1 | FF 57 | Correspondence on resignation and future plans, 1976 |
| Box 1 | FF 58 | News releases, 1965-1973 |
| Box 1 | FF 59 | Organizational charts, 1967, 1969, 1971-1972 |
| Box 1 | FF 60 | Performance reviews, 1966, 1968-1971 |
| Box 1 | FF 61 | Press clippings, 1965, 1969, 1976 |
| Box 1 | FF 62 | Remarks to Wichita City Commission, 1972 |
| Box 1 | FF 63 | Stock options, 1966 |

Subseries 2.3 – Canadair

| | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| Box 1 | FF 64 | Agreements, 1976-1979 |
| Box 1 | FF 65 | Correspondence, 1976-1980 |
| Box 1 | FF 66 | Memo on Learstar 600 International Organization, 1976 |

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|-------|-------|---------------------|
| Box 1 | FF 67 | Reports, 1978, 1980 |
|-------|-------|---------------------|

Subseries 2.4 – Other

| | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| Box 1 | FF 68 | Application to North American Rockwell, 1970 |
| Box 1 | FF 69 | Bylaws for Management Jets Worldwide, 1977 |
| Box 1 | FF 70 | Correspondence with George Sullivan Associates, Inc., 1969 |
| Box 1 | FF 71 | Correspondence and reports, Management Jets Worldwide, 1977-1982 |
| Box 1 | FF 72 | Correspondence and reports, Piper Aircraft Corporation, 1980-1981 |
| Box 1 | FF 73 | Employment assessment, 1952 |
| Box 1 | FF 74 | Pilot's log and pilot license, 1955-1967 |
| Box 1 | FF 75 | Resumes, c. 1953, c. 1969 |

Series 3 – Writings and Publications

| | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| Box 1 | FF 76 | Abelag 50th anniversary book, 2014 |
| Box 1 | FF 77 | Kvassay, Alex – Articles written by, 1948-2014 |
| Box 3 | | Kvassay, Alex – Scrapbook, 1948-2014 |
| Box 1 | FF 78 | Other clippings collected by Kvassay, c. 1963-2014 |

Series 4 – Images, Albums, and Scrapbooks

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|-------|-------|---|
| Box 1 | FF 79 | Images – Kvassay family, 1935, 1988, 1992, n.d. |
| Box 1 | FF 80 | Images – World War II-era Budapest and Kvassay family homes, 1945, n.d. |
| Box 1 | FF 81 | Images – Professional and travel, 1951, 1964, 1971, 1988-1990, n.d. |
| Box 4 | | Album – Old family photos received from Zsuzsa Nemes, 1999, n.d. |
| Box 4 | | Album – Family, 1922-2002, n.d. |
| Box 4 | | Album – Prewar Hungary, 1938-1964, n.d. |

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|-------|--|
| Box 4 | Album – Germany, 1941-1942, 1964 |
| Box 4 | Album – Istanbul, 1947-1948 |
| Box 4 | Album – U.S.A., 1947-1953, 1965, 1973 |
| Box 4 | Album – U.S. Army, 1949-1951, 1991, n.d. |
| Box 5 | Album – Beech (BP 1), 1953-1965 |
| Box 5 | Album – Beech (BP 2), 1953-1965 |
| Box 5 | Album – Beech (BP 3), 1953-1965 |
| Box 5 | Scrapbooks – Beechcraft, 1955-1964, n.d. |
| Box 5 | Scrapbooks – Aviation, 1964-1968, 1969, n.d. |
| Box 5 | Scrapbooks – Lear Jet, 1965-1976, n.d. |
| Box 5 | Scrapbooks – <i>Alex in Wonderland</i> feedback, 1995-1998, 2004, n.d. |

For information, please contact us at:
[Special Collections and University Archives](#)
Wichita State University Libraries
1845 Fairmount, Wichita, KS 67260-0068
E-mail: specialcollections@wichita.edu
Telephone: 316-978-3590