

Alton Morton independent film collection, 1947-1968

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Morton, Alton, 1905-1985
Title	Alton Morton independent film collection
Dates	1947-1968 (inclusive) 1947 1968 2011 (inclusive) 2011 2011
Quantity	3 VHS videocassettes, 2 compact discs
Collection Number	A0320
Summary	The Alton Morton independent film collection (1947-1968, 2011) consists of amateur and professional films by Utah filmmaker and inventor Al Morton. Morton's films includes narrative films about river running on the Green and Colorado Rivers as well as tourism films featuring Utah's scenic desert Southwest and national parks commissioned by the Utah Tourist and Publicity Council and other public organizations. The collection also includes an interview with Morton's daughter, Darlene Phillips, about her father's filmmaking career. This collection is part of the Utah Independent Film Archive (UIFA).
Repository	University of Utah Libraries, Special Collections. Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library University of Utah 295 South 1500 East Salt Lake City, UT 84112-0860 Telephone: 801-581-8863 special@library.utah.edu
Access Restrictions	Materials must be used on-site; no use of original material, access copies will be made available for viewing. Five business days advanced notice required. Access to parts of this collection may be restricted under provisions of state or federal law, condition of the material, or by donor.

Languages English

Biographical Note

Alton "Al" Morton (1905-1985) bought his first 8mm camera with money earned as a Salt Lake City area mail carrier, his first steady job after the Great Depression. In 1942, Morton helped to found the Utah Cine Arts Club, an organization of amateur filmmakers whose members participated in a national culture of art, innovation and exchange predating the independent film movements of New Hollywood and the 1960s.

Like other members of the Utah Cine Arts club and similar organizations across the country, Morton invented his own cinematic tools - splicers, tripods, waterproof camera housings, etc. - to help him turn his favorite hobbies into complex narrative films. An avid boater and river runner, Al Morton transformed river trips with his friends, notable river guides like Don Harris and Jack Brennan, into carefully edited cinematic adventures that screened at public venues in the Salt Lake Valley and at other cinema clubs across the nation. Al Morton was named a Fellow of the Amateur Cinema League in 1946.

Content Description

The Alton Morton independent film collection (1947-1968, 2011) consists of amateur and professional films by Utah filmmaker and inventor Al Morton. Morton's films includes narrative films about river running on the Green and Colorado Rivers as well as tourism films featuring Utah's scenic desert Southwest and national parks commissioned by the Utah Tourist and Publicity Council and other public organizations. Although Morton also made other narrative, art, and family movies, the bulk of the films in the collection feature river running and Utah's scenic areas. The collection also includes an interview with Morton's daughter, Darlene Phillips, about her father's filmmaking career.

This collection consists of VHS copies of Morton's films. With the exception of the interview with Darlene Phillips, originals are held by Utah Historical Society

All materials have been digitized and are available to for access on DVD and CD. This collection is part of the Utah Independent Film Archive (UIFA).

Use of the Collection

Restrictions on Use

It is the responsibility of the researcher to obtain any necessary copyright clearances.

Permission to publish material from the Alton Morton independent film collection must be obtained from the Special Collections Multimedia Archivist.

Preferred Citation

Initial Citation: Alton Morton independent film collection A0320, Special Collections and Archives. University of Utah, J. Willard Marriott. Salt Lake City, Utah.

*Following Citations:*A0320.

Administrative Information

Arrangement

Materials are arranged by subject matter

Processing Note

Processed by Roy Webb in 1998.

Related Materials

See also the Orland Lavell "Brig" Tapp independent film collection (A0938).

Detailed Description of the Collection

Tourism and river films, circa 1960

Cassette1

This VHS contains dubs of 16mm films held by the Utah Historical Society.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Cassette		
1		
Video		
1	"Utah Trails" part 1: Goblin Valley and Capitol Reef Sound, color Travelogue commissioned by the Utah Tourist and Publicity Council: San Rafael, Goblin Valley, Fremont River, Giles ghost town, Hanksville, Capitol Reef, Capitol Gorge, etc. 12 minutes.	circa 1960
2	"Utah Trails" part 2: Land of Standing Rocks Sound, color Travelogue commissioned by the Utah Tourist and Publicity Council: Fremont, Thousand Lake Mountain, Cathedral Valley, Poison Spring Wash, Dirty Devil River, across Fins, Land of Standing Rocks, edge of Cataract Canyon. With Ward Roylance. 13 minutes.	circa 1960
3	"River Thrills" Silent, color "An Account of a Rapid Shooting Expedition Down the Yampa and Green from Lily Park, Colorado to Jensen, Utah" with Harris-Brennan River Expeditions. Two cataract boats and one rubber raft. Slow motion rapid sequences, probably Tepee Rapid. On-board rapid shots in Whirlpool Canyon. 10 minutes.	undated

Tourism and river films, 1950s-1968

Cassette2

Alton Morton independent film collection, 1947-1968
<http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv53997>

This VHS contains dubs of 16mm films held by the Utah Historical Society.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
<hr/>		
Cassette		
<hr/>		
2		
<hr/>		
Video		
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1	"Canyonlands U.S.A." Sound, color Travelogue commissioned by the San Juan County Tourist and Publicity Council: Four Corners, Hovenweep, Navajo Twins, Goosenecks of San Juan River, Mexican Hat, Monument Valley, Navajo Indians herding sheep, weaving, spinning, North Wash, Dirty Devil, Colorado, and White Canyon Bridges, Natural Bridges N.M., Halls Crossing Marina and Lake Powell, Rainbow Bridge, Newspaper Rock, Canyonlands National Park, Needles District, Elephant Hill Road, Devil's Lane, Chesler Park, Angel Arch, Needles Overlook, Anticline Overlook, Grand View Point, Confluence Overlook, Dead Horse Point, Aerial Views of Angel Arch, Druid Arch, Anasazi ruins (?), Chesler Park, Confluence, Monument Canyon, Washerwoman Arch, Upheaval Dome, Woodenshoe Butte, Goosenecks, flowers, water skiing, golf in Monticello, Blue Mountains, Blue Mountain Ski Area. Narrated by Al Morton. 27 minutes.	circa 1968
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2	"Call of the Canyons" part 1 Sound, color Travelogue commissioned by the Utah Tourist and Publicity Council: "A Vacationist's View of Bryce, Zion and Grand Canyon." Grand Canyon North Rim: cowboys, wildlife, wildflowers, Grand Canyon Lodge, views of Canyon, Angel's Window, Inner Gorge, rapids, Zion National Park, Grat Arch overlook, self-guided tour, Zion-Mt. Carmel Tunnel, Court of the Patriarchs, Great White Throne, Narrows, Weeping Rock, Zion Lodge, swimming, horseback riding on West Rim Trail. Narrated by Al Morton. 13 minutes.	1950s
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3	"Call of the Canyons" part 2 Sound, color Travelogue commissioned by the Utah Tourist and Publicity Council: "A Vacationist's View of Bryce, Zion and Grand Canyon." Cedar Breaks National Monument, Red Canyon, Bryce Canyon National Park at dawn, chipmunks, ranger-guided nature walk, Commanche Trail, Navajo Trail, Temple of Osiris, Castle Canyon, Tower Bridge, "Queen Victoria," "Wall	1950s

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	Street," Bryce Point, autumn aspens, sunset, campfire songs. Narrated by Al Morton. 13 minutes.	
4	"Land of the Purple Sage" Silent, color " Scenic Adventure in Southeastern Utah." Desert flowers, cactus, sego lilies, rattlesnake, cowboys and cattle, cliff dwellings, campfire dances, sunrise, Panguitch, Escalante, Hole-in-the-Rock Road, Hole-in-the-Rock, Glen Canyon and Colorado River, Hole-in-the-Rock monument, cowboy breakfast at slickrock country ranch, loading pack horses, slickrock and narrows canyons, Gregory Arch. Thanks to Burnett Hendrix of Cameron Tours, Panguitch, Utah. 25 minutes.	1950s
5	"Waters of Lodore" Silent, color Edited river trip beginning in Green River, Wyoming: Green River, Expedition Island, launching boats, loading gear, Firehole Basin, Linwood, Minnie Crouse Rasmussen, petroglyphs, Flaming Gorge, Horseshoe Canyon, running rapids, view from rim, running Ashley Falls, campfire cooking, Browns Park, Shallow Canyon, Gates of Lodore, Winnie's Rapid, <i>Illinois Girl</i> boat, Disaster Falls, Harp Falls, Triplet Rapid, lining Hell's Half Mile on the right (Al Morton's boat only - it is labelled "FACL" (Fellow of the Amateur Cinema League). The two other boats ran the rapid), Gunnison Butte. Morton's editing breaks with reality here: Gunnison Butte is at the end of Gray Canyon, some 200 miles down river. The scene suddenly jumps from the end of Hell's Half Mile in Lodore Canyon to Gunnison Butte, and unexplainable anomaly.	1950s

River films, 1947-1950s

Cassette3

This VHS contains dubs of 16mm films held by the Utah Historical Society.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Cassette		
3		
Video		
1	"Adventure on the Colorado" Silent, color	1947

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	<p>"A Movie Record of a Boat Trip Down the Colorado River" with Harris-Brennan River Expeditions. This narrative treatment of a Colorado River trip won the Amateur Cinema League's award for the best film of 1947. The film begins with LeRoy M. Sessions, Ted Cannon and Karl A. Pannier watching the Days of '47 Parade in downtown Salt Lake City in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the arrival of Mormon Pioneers in the Salt Lake Valley. After lamenting the lack of pioneer-era adventure in the modern day, the parade-goers encounter "veteran rivermen Don Harris and Jack Brennan" and agree to accompany them - and Al Morton - on a trip down the Colorado River: Unloading and launching boats below Moab Bridge, motorind down the Colorado, arches and slickrock walls, abandoned oil well, cavorting in the river, Spanish Bottoms and the Doll House, hike into Doll House, rapids in Cataract Canyon, camping, rapids, Glen Canyon, petroglyphs, square tower cliff dwelling, arrowheads, Hole-in-the-Rock, Forbidden Canyon, Rainbow Bridge, motoring downriver, end of trip. 37 minutes.</p>	
2	<p>"Grand Canyon Voyage" Silent, color "A Movie Record of a Boat Trip through the Grand Canyon on the Colorado" with Harris-Brennan River Expeditions. This sequel to "Adventure on the Colorado" begins with a credits sequence displayed over scenes from North Rim of Grand Canyon. The trip begins: lower Glen Canyon, Lee's Ferry, launching boat, Don Harris, Jack Brennan, Al Morton and 4 unidentified passengers, on the river, under Navajo Bridge, Badger Creek Rapid, Soap Creek Rapid, driftwood in cliffs, Houserock Rapid, Vasey's Paradise, Bert Loper's boat (Buckfarm Canyon), Nankoweap ruins, mouth of Little Colorado River, Furnace Flats, Desert View Watchtower, Hance Rapid, Upper Granite Gorge, Sockdolager Rapid, scenes from boat in rapid, Kaibab Bridge, mule train on Bright Angel Trail, unidentified rapid (possibly Horn Creek), scenes from South Rim, Hermit Rapid, lunch and nap, unidentified rapids, Inner Gorge, Vulcan's Anvil, lava flows, Lava Falls, portaging and lining left side, sunset, sunrise, breakfast, Separation Canyon plaque, Lake Mead, end of trip, leading boats onto trailer, recap of trip, Hoover Dam. 43 minutes.</p>	1940s-1950s
3	<p>"Wild Water and Bouncing Boats" Sound, color "A saga of boats and boaters that have helped to conquer the rivers of the West, featuring a power boat run through Desolation and Gray Canyons on the Green River". Sponsored by Evinrude motors. Grand Canyon scenes near El Vado de</p>	1950s

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	<p>los Padres, Firehole Basin on the upper Green River, Grand Canyon scenes from South Rim, various river scenes, Navajo Bridge, Kaibab Bridge, Boulder Dam, John Wesley Powell monument, South Rim, Powell inscriptions, Music Temple, Bert Loper's boat, Kolb Studio, South Rim, Emery Kolb, Don Harris, Jack Brennan, Jack McKeller, Mike Hallacy, A.K. Reynolds, C.C. Lug Larsen, Wind River Rapids race, various boats - kayaks, canoes, oil drums, inner tubes, cataract boats - running rapids, Ouray, Green River Bridge, launching boats <i>Donz</i>, <i>Jax</i> and <i>Adventurer</i>, Evinrude and Johnson motors, <i>Captain Bligh</i> and Fred Spier, motoring downriver, Desolation Canyon, Jack Creek Rapid, rapids, bailing, Red Butte, rattlesnake, breakfast, Three Fords Rapid, upriver run of rapids, Gunnison Butte, details of <i>Adventurer</i> motor. Narrated by Al Morton. 32 minutes.</p>	

Interview with Darlene Phillips, 2011 January 13

Disc4-5

Interview with Al Morton's daughter, Darlene Phillips, at her home in Bountiful, Utah. The interview focuses on Morton's films and his involvement with the Utah Cine Arts Club but touches on his character, hobbies, career, home life, etc. Interviewers: Molly Creel, Roy Webb. 2 copies.

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Rivers--Recreational use

Corporate Names :

Amateur Cinema League

Geographical Names :

Colorado River (Colo.-Mexico)

Green River (Wyo.-Utah)

Utah

Form or Genre Terms :

Moving images

Sound recordings

Finding aid created by Roy Webb
1998



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