



THE ARCHITECTURAL ARCHIVES  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

AARON COLISH COLLECTION

Aaron Colish, 1910-1997

A Finding Aid for  
Architectural Records, 1939-1993 (bulk 1939-1967),  
in  
The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania

## Archival Description

### Descriptive Summary

- Title: Architectural Records, 1939-1993 (bulk 1939-1967).
- Coll. ID: 216
- Origin: Aaron Colish, 1910-1997, architect
- Extent: Photographs 56 photoprints; 12 photonegatives;  
Boxed files 13 folders.
- Repository: The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania  
102 Meyerson Hall  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-6311  
(215) 898-8323
- Abstract: This collection comprises photographic materials and memorabilia (chiefly marketing brochures) related to architectural projects of Aaron Colish (1910-1997), as well as drawings and other materials not related to projects.
- Indexes: This collection is included in the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Project, a searchable database of architectural research materials related to architects and architecture in Philadelphia and surrounding regions:  
<http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org>
- Cataloging: Collection-level records for materials in the Architectural Archives may be found in RLIN Eureka, the union catalogue of members of the Research Libraries Group. The record number for this collection is PAUP01-A37.

## Biographical/Historical Sketch

Architect and developer Aaron Colish was born in Philadelphia, the son of Sarah Goldberg Colish and Arthur Colish, and graduated from Northeast High School in 1927 before earning a B.Arch. from the University of Pennsylvania in 1932. He won the Walter Cope Memorial Prize in 1929, and placed second for the same award in 1931. He also earned upper junior honors in the academic year 1930-1931. Colish entered the office of Paul P. Cret after earning his degree. Colish also operated in partnership with Charles G. Etter as Colish & Etter until 1948; Colish established an independent practice that year. Colish joined the national AIA in 1944. He was a member of the Philadelphia Chapter, serving as a director between 1968 and 1970.

## Scope and Content Note

This collection comprises photographic materials and memorabilia (chiefly marketing brochures) related to architectural projects of Aaron Colish (1910-1997), as well as drawings not related to projects and a small amount of personal material. The bulk of the collection consists of 56 photographic prints and marketing brochures documenting seven of Colish's projects executed between 1939 and 1967. This includes his most celebrated project, the 2601 Parkway apartment building, which he designed in collaboration with Paul P. Cret. A small number of original drawings, dated 1976 appear to be illustrations for a "history of architecture" modeled on those found in Sir Bannister Fletcher's *History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*.

Photographs by identified photographers comprise a 1957 portrait photograph of Colish by Fabian Bachrach and project photographs by John Gruenberg (1), E. Penrose (1), Eleanor Price (4), Jules Schick (5), Skyphotos (2), Jacob Stelman (9) and Morris Worrell, Jr. (1)

This collection was assembled from materials remaining in Colish's home and office after his death by Myles D. Wilson, the executor of Colish's estate. The collection contains no project-related architectural drawings, project files, office files or models.

The collection is arranged in four series:

- I. Photographic Materials.
- II. Project Memorabilia.
- III. Drawings not Related to Projects
- IV. Personal Materials.

A full index to architectural projects represented in this collection is found in Appendix A. This list is arranged chronologically based on dates inferred from the photographic materials.

## **Access Points for Indexing**

Colish, Aaron, 1910-1997.

Cret, Paul Philippe, 1876-1945.

Bachrach, Fabian, 1917-

Schick, Jules.

Stelman, Jacob.

Price, Eleanor.

Architects--Archives.

Architectural design--History--20th century--Sources.

Architectural drawing--United States.

Architecture, Modern--20th century--United States--Designs and plans.

Form/Genre: Photographs.

## **Administrative Information**

Restrictions on access: This collection is available for research by appointment only.

Preferred citation: Aaron Colish Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania.

Acquisition: Gift of Myles D. Wilson, 2001.

Processing: The collection was processed and the finding aid prepared by William Whitaker, Emily Cooperman, Laura Stroffolino and Nancy Thorne, with the research assistance of Brett Fusco. Work was substantially completed in 2001, with additions and corrections in 2003.

## Container list

### Series I. Photographic Materials.

Extent: 56 photoprints, 14 negatives.

Arrangement: Arranged by project in chronological order.

Call#	Descriptive Title
[216.1.1-20]	<p>2601 Parkway Apartments</p> <p>[.1] photoprint of work completed in the one year 1939 – Turner Construction Co.</p> <p>[.2] photoprint of built work, ca. 1939, Jules Schick photographer, negative #0018.</p> <p>[.3] photoprint of graphic, 1939.</p> <p>[.4] photoprint of built work, ca. 1939.</p> <p>[.5] photoprint of built work, ca. 1939, Jules Schick photographer, negative #0022.</p> <p>[.6] photoprint of built work (interior), ca. 1939.</p> <p>[.7] photoprint of built work (interior artwork), ca. 1939, Eleanor Price photographer.</p> <p>[.8] photoprint of built work (interior artwork), ca. 1939, Eleanor Price photographer.</p> <p>[.9] photoprint of Built Work (interior artwork), ca. 1939, Eleanor Price Photographer.</p> <p>[.10] photoprint of built work (interior artwork), ca. 1939, Eleanor Price photographer.</p> <p>[.11] photoprint of built work (interior), ca. 1939.</p> <p>[.12] photoprint of built work (Gustave A. Liens Flowers of Distinction), ca. 1939.</p> <p>[.13] photoprint of built work (Rooftop), 1941, E Penrose photographer.</p> <p>[.14] photoprint of built work (Bar), ca. 1939</p> <p>[.15] photoprint of construction, ca. 1939</p> <p>[.16] photoprint of construction, ca. 1939</p> <p>[.17] photoprint of construction ca. 1939</p> <p>[.18] photoprint of built work, ca. 1939</p> <p>[.19] photoprint of built work, ca. 1939.</p> <p>[.20] photoprint of built work, ca. 1939.</p>
[216.2.1-9]	<p>Burroughs Research Center</p> <p>[.1] photoprint of model, ca. 1952.</p> <p>[.2] photoprint of model, 1952.</p> <p>[.3] photoprint of model, ca. 1952, negative #05888.</p> <p>[.4] photoprint of model, ca. 1952.</p> <p>[.5] photoprint of built work, 1954, Skyphotos photographer, negative #sw-6.</p> <p>[.6] photoprint of built work, 1954, Skyphotos photographer, negative #se-6.</p> <p>[.7] photoprint of interior, 1954, Jacob Stelman photographer, negative #54-838.</p> <p>[.8] photoprint of built work, 1954, Jacob Stelman photographer, negative #54-834.</p> <p>[.9] photoprint of interior, ca. 1954, John Gruenberg photographer.</p>
[216.3.1-5]	<p>Elkins Park House</p> <p>[.1] photoprint of graphic, 1955, Jules Schick photographer.</p>

- [.2-.3] photoprint of built work, ca. 1958, Jacob Stelman photographer, negative #58-340.
- [.4] photoprint of built work, ca. 1958, Jacob Stelman photographer, negative #58-339.
- [.5] photoprint of built work, ca. 1958, Jacob Stelman photographer, negative #58-342.
- [216.4.1-.4] Wyncote House,  
[.1] photoprint of graphic, 1959, Jules Schick photographer.  
[.2] photoprint of built work, 1961, negative #88.  
[.3] photoprint of built work, 1961, Jacob Stelman photographer, negative # 61-782.  
[.4] photoprint of built work, 1961, Jacob Stelman photographer, negative # 61-783.
- [216.5.1-.2] Barclay Building,  
[.1] photoprints of built work, 1960, Jacob Stelman photographer, negative # 60-362.  
[.2] photoprints of built work, 1960, Jacob Stelman photographer, negative # 60-546.
- [216.6.1-.3] Unidentified Pool  
[.1-.3] photoprints of built work, 1963.
- [216.7.1-.6] Holiday Inn of Atlantic City  
[.1] photoprint of graphics, 1967.  
[.2] photoprint of built work, 1966.  
[.3] photoprint of built work, 1966, Morris Worrell Jr. photographer, negative #229.  
[.4] 7 photographs of built work, 1967.  
[.5] 3 negatives of built work, 1967.  
[.6] 11 negatives of built work, 1967.
- [216.8.1-.3] Portraits of Aaron Colish  
[.1-.2] photoprint of Aaron Colish, 1957, Fabian Bachrach photographer, negative #PG-10744-C6-H.  
[.3] photoprint of Aaron Colish, ca. 1992.

**Series II. Project Memorabilia.**

Call#	Descriptive Title
[216.9]	2601 Parkway Apartments, marketing brochures and floor plan.
[216.10]	Elkins Park House, marketing brochure.
[216.11]	Wyncote House, marketing brochure and floor plan.
[216.12]	Barclay Building, marketing brochure.
[216.13]	Holiday Inn of Atlantic City, marketing brochure.
[216.14]	Holiday Inn of Philadelphia, marketing brochure, ca. 1969.
[216.15]	Cherry Hill Hyatt House, marketing brochure and clipping: "His Way, Sinatra Shows His Thanks." <i>The Philadelphia Inquirer</i> , 3/12/76.

**Series III. Drawings not Related to Projects**

Call#	Descriptive Title
[216.16]	Unidentified watercolor, n.d.
[216.17]	Illustrations for an architectural history (?), 1976. Titled: "Egypt", "Gothic", and "Renaissance".
[216.18]	Preparatory sketches and other materials for the illustrations above.
[216.19]	Notes on Egyptian Architecture.
[216.20]	Portfolio containing five color plates of Egyptian ornaments.

**Series IV. Personal Materials.**

Call#	Descriptive Title
[216.21]	Passports, United States of America, issued 9/19/1962 and 8/8/1968.
[216.22]	Architectural Licenses, various states and Alumni Association Card (Northeast High School)

## Appendix A

### Chronological Project Index

#### 2601 Parkway Apartments

Greenberg, Joseph J.

2601 Pennsylvania Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

holdings dates: n.d.

note/s: Built 1931-1939, Paul P. Cret and Aaron Colish, associated architects. Sydney E. Martin and Walter H. Thomas, associated with Cret during the project, but not through completion. (Brownlee, David B. *Building the City Beautiful*. Philadelphia: The Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1989.)

holdings:

[216.1.1-.20] photoprints of graphic, construction and building as-built, ca. 1939 (20 photoprints).

[216.9.1-.3] brochures and floorplan of building, (1 drawing).

#### Burroughs Research Center

Burroughs Adding Machine Company

Paoli, Pennsylvania

holdings dates: n.d.

note/s: Built ca. 1953, Aaron Colish and Frank Hahn, associated architects.

holdings:

[216.2.1-.9] photoprints of model, and building as built, ca. 1952-1954 (9 photoprints).

#### Elkins Park House

client name unknown

7900 Old York Road, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania

holdings dates: n.d.

note/s: Built ca. 1958, Aaron Colish, architect.

holdings:

[216.3.1-.5] photoprints of graphic and building as built, ca. 1955-1958 (5 photoprints).

[216.10] brochure.

#### Wyncote House

Albert A. Toll, developer

25 Washington Lane, Wyncote, Pennsylvania

holdings dates: n.d.

note/s: Built ca. 1959, Aaron Colish, architect.

holdings:

[216.4.1-.4] photoprints of graphic and building as built, ca. 1959-1961 (4 photoprints).

[216.12.1-.13] brochure and floorplans, (12 drawings).

**Barclay Building**

Barclay

1 Belmont Avenue, Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania

holdings dates: n.d.note/s: Built ca. 1960, Aaron Colish, architect.holdings:

[216.5.1-.2] photoprints of building as built, ca. 1960 (2 photoprints).

[216.11] brochure.

**Unidentified Pool**

client name unknown

Unlocated [Philadelphia?]

holdings dates: n.d.note/s: Built ca. 1963, Aaron Colish, architect.holdings:

[216.6.1-.3] photoprints of built work, ca. 1963 (3 photoprints).

**Holiday Inn of Atlantic City**

Holiday Inn

Boardwalk at Missouri Avenue, Atlantic City, New Jersey

holdings dates: n.d.note/s: Built ca. 1967, Aaron Colish, architect.holdings:

[216.7.1-.6] photoprints of graphic and building as built, ca. 1966-1967 (6 photoprints)

[216.13.1-.2] brochures.

**Holiday Inn of Philadelphia**

Holiday Inn

4100 Presidential Boulevard, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

holdings dates: n.d.note/s: Built, ca. 1967, Aaron Colish, architect.holdings:

[216.14.1-.2] brochure, ca. 1969.

**Cherry Hill Hyatt House**

Hyatt

2349 West Marlton Pike, Cherry Hill, New Jersey

holdings dates: n.d.note/s: Built, ca. 1975, Aaron Colish, architect.holdings:

[216.15.1-.2] brochure, ca. 1975 and clipping, 1976.