Volume: 6 linear feet (9 document boxes, 1 oversized folder)

Acquisition: Items in this manuscript group were donated to Bridgewater State University by Edward P. “Ned” Kirby in 2014.

Access: Access to this record group is unrestricted with the exception of box 6b.

Copyright: The researcher assumes full responsibility for conforming with the laws of copyright. Whenever possible, the Maxwell Library will provide information about copyright owners and other restrictions, but the legal determination ultimately rests with the researcher. Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be discussed with the University Archivist.

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Rev. Paul John Rich III Collection

Biographical Sketch

Paul John Rich III was a minister at the First Parish Unitarian Church in East Bridgewater, MA. He began at the church while still a student at Harvard Divinity School in 1961 and was ordained by the Church and installed as its minister in 1962. He resigned from the Church on June 28, 1978 after a number of lawsuits and complaints were filed against him.

He began projects to renovate the Church soon after his start. He later began to purchase other properties for the Church around East Bridgewater with plans to build additions and renovate new buildings. His intent was to create a communal environment that would increase attendance at worship services and other events at the Church, as well as offer residents of the town a place to gather and explore the history of New England. He created several museums and rental apartments in the buildings purchased, commissioned outdoor art pieces, had grounds landscaped, created a robust environment for local boy scouts, and encouraged use of the properties to people throughout the New England area.

He was born December 10, 1938 in Buffalo, NY to Paul John Rich Jr. and Doris (Miller) Rich. The family is known for the Rich Products Corporation, based in Buffalo, NY.

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of documents, photographs and other ephemera from and about Rev. Paul John Rich and the East Bridgewater First Parish Unitarian Church (referred to as “Church” in Box and Folder list) from roughly 1894-2008, some Church-specific materials are prior to Rev. Rich’s tenure, but the bulk of materials date from 1963-1978.

Related collections include: First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church of Bridgewater.

Series Descriptions

Archival records – personal history, correspondence, published works, Church newsletters and directory, event announcements, newspaper clippings involving the Church.

Series 2: Photographs and Media, 1962-1978
Photographs of East Bridgewater First Parish Unitarian Church and Standish Museums. Audio recordings of Edward P. Kirby and Rev. Paul J. Rich III (restricted). Arrangement note: due to space constraints a bound personal calendar of Rich’s is physically located in Series 2, while the other similar bound volumes of Church records are located in Series 1, Box 3, Folders 2-5.

Files kept by lawyer Edward P. Kirby for legal proceedings with Rev. Paul John Rich III and the East Bridgewater First Parish Unitarian Church. Arrangement note: the files and folders in Series 3 have been kept in the original order that Kirby had filed them in.

Series 4: Oversized, 1968-1975
Oversized blueprints for proposed additions and buildings at East Bridgewater First Parish Unitarian Church.

Rev. Paul John Rich III Collection
Box and Folder List


Box 1
Folder
1. Waiver of personal and intellectual property rights of Paul John Rich III on material left with his attorney, Edward P. Kirby, Sept. 1978
3. Photocopy of Edward P. Kirby's account of PJR and the Church (original in Series 3), 2008
4. Education, employment and licenses of PJR, 1955-1978
8. Letters from Paul Richards to PRJ and others, 1972-1976
9. General correspondence involving PJR and others, 1972-1978
10. Published sermons by PRJ, undated
   - The Unitarians and Music
   - The Soul Let Loose
   - Prayers
   - The Next and Last War
   - Life’s Durable Satisfactions
   - Lyndon Johnson’s Ugly War
12. Church newsletters, 1965-1975
13. Drafts of Church newsletters by PRJ, 1970
14. News clippings involving the Church (includes photo of PRJ), 1968-1973
15. Parish/Church directory and other items, 1970
16. Church events/services, 1968-1973

Box 2
Folder
1. Documents on the buildings and the proposed buildings owned by the Church, 1970-1973
3. Information and correspondence about Church-sponsored trips, 1971-1976
4. Material on the Church and boy scouts, 1972-1973
5. Finances, Church binder, 1968-1969
6. Finances, mostly Church-related, 1970-1977
7. Legal material, research used by Ned Kirby, including Church trust fund annual reports and wills (photocopies), 1963-1978

Box 3
Folder
1. Pre-1962, Church material including annual reports from ministers, mostly 1950's, 1894-1961
2. Bound - East Bridgewater Unitarian papers, 1943-1963
3. Bound - East Bridgewater Unitarian papers, 1964
6. "An Examination of the Change at the First Parish Church, Unitarian, East Bridgewater", by Patricia King, 1973

Series 2: Photographs and Media, 1962-1978

Box 4
Folder
3. Church steeple with "Impeach Now" sign, c. 1968-1973
4. Hot air balloon display in Church, c. 1970
5. Standish Museum buildings, c. 1968-1973
6. Church steeple being replaced, c. 1968
7. Photographs with notes used for Church newsletters, c. 1968-1973
9. East Bridgewater Church events, interior and exterior, c. 1968-1973
10. Miscellaneous East Bridgewater Church photos, c.1968-1973
11. Aerial views of East Bridgewater and Church, c. 1970
12. East Bridgewater village green, c. 1968-1973
13. Photographs by Brockton photographer Stanley Bauman, 1938, c. 1975
14. East Bridgewater church negatives including railway car, c. 1968-1973
15. Negatives, undated
16. Slides, c. 1968-1973
17. Proofs, c. 1968-1973
18. Identified locations, not East Bridgewater Church, c. 1968-1973
19. Unidentified locations, not East Bridgewater Church, c. 1968-1973

Box 5
Folder
1. Identified people, not pertaining to East Bridgewater Church, c. 1968-1973
2. Unidentified people, not pertaining to East Bridgewater Church, c. 1968-1973, undated
4. Photographs (7) from the 19th century relating to East Boston Unitarian Church and Rev. W.
   H. Cudworth, undated
5. Exhibit examples, mostly gourds, c. 1968-1973

**Box 6a**
**Folder**
1. Oversized photographs, c. 1973
2. Photographs by Linda Deignan, including interior of railway car, c. 1975
3. Bound - Paul John Rich III's personal calendar, part of Series 1, 1961

**Box 6b**
(restricted)
- Film, 1 Reel, May 12, 1973
- Cassette tapes of Paul John Rich recordings, c. 1977-1978


**Box 7**
**Folder**
1. Internal Revenue status of churches and fellowships, 1969
2. Incorporation of the Standish Museums, 1974
3. Copies of letters and cancelled checked used for case exhibits, 1960-1978
   communications, 1977-1979
5. Rich, Paul John III, Kirby case #2738-3 – Receivership (second folder), Attorney & Court
6. Rich, Paul John III, Kirby case #2738-6 – Brockton Federation of Musicians versus, court
   communications, 1978
10. Applications recommending students to New England Academy, Kirby case #2738, 1977-1978
11. Case exhibit copies, Church annual reports, 1968-1970
15. Student applications to be returned, New England Academy, 1977
19. Edward Kirby from Boston, Motion to Dismiss, criminal charges, 1979
20. Edward Kirby from Boston, correspondence & transcripts from PJR, 1978-1979
Box 8
Folder
3. Folder Rich, Paul John III, (Bachman as Attorney), Kirby case #2738-2, (was in folder #2738-5), sale of firearms and gifts from GSA, 1961-1975, 1977-1978
5. Receivership Pleadings, Kirby case #2738-3, filings, motions, questions & answers in case CA77-5920 (Perkins/Kidwell v. Rich), 1978
11. PJRIII Trial, EPKirby notes (folder 1), 1978
12. PJRIII Trial, EPKirby notes (folder 2), copies of documents used as exhibits in #77-5920, 1961-1978

Series 4: Oversized, 1968-1975
Folder
   - Preliminary study for senior citizens housing for First Parish Unitarian Church Community Fund, 1968
   - Preliminary site plan, No. 2, low rental housing center, South Shore Unitarian Holding Corporation, East Bridgewater, 1970
   - South Eastern Academy located at First Parish Unitarian Church in East Bridgewater, 1975