Extent: 2 linear feet (one oversized box, one ½ manuscript box and one cassette box)

Biographical Note: João Rocha was born in Ponte de Lima, Portugal January 25, 1899. At the age of 13 he immigrated to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and came to the United States in 1920 at the age of 21. His first job was sweeping floors in a factory in Cambridge, but he soon opened a clothing business. He sold that a few years later and purchased a struggling Portuguese language magazine, Revista Portugal-America, based in Cambridge, MA, which he published for three years. He was naturalized a U.S. citizen in 1926. At some point Rocha became circulation manager for the Diario de Noticias in New Bedford, and also purchased a Portuguese weekly O Independente, which he published for eight years. In 1940 Rocha acquired an interest in the Diario de Noticias; he bought out his partner three years later and became publisher. He was associated with the paper for thirty years, until it ceased publication in October of 1973.

During his lifetime, Rocha was awarded many honors for his work with the Portuguese community and his journalistic goals of bringing about a better understanding between the United States, Brazil and Portugal. In 1946 he became the first U.S. citizen to receive the Order of the Crusader of the South (Ordem Cruzeiro do Sul) from the Brazilian government. In 1965 he was invited to be present at Ellis Island for Lyndon Johnson’s signing of H.R. 2580, An Act to Amend the Immigration and Nationality Act, and in 1966 he was awarded the rank of knight of the Order of Prince Henry the Navigator by the Portuguese government. Rocha interviewed many prominent individuals in the United States, Brazil and Portugal for the Diario, most notably Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio de Oliveira Salazar. Rocha was married to Mary M. Tavares of Belmont. They lived in Dartmouth and had one daughter, Joan. He died in 1977.

Scope and Contents Note: collection consists mostly of photographs, clippings, artifacts and ephemera that document special events in Rocha’s life, associated with his role as publisher of the Diario de Noticias.

Date: [1920s] - 1977

Creator: João R. Rocha (1899-1977)

Language: Materials in English and in Portuguese

Restrictions on access: none
Source of Acquisition: Gift of Joan Cass, daughter of João Rocha, Spring 2009


Inventory

Box 1

Folder #

1  Family photographs and portraits (7)
2  Photographs, various subjects (25), mostly Diario staff, politicians, and award ceremonies
3  Diario letterhead (blank)
4  Certificates, various
5  Correspondence, 1965-1977
6  UMD correspondence, 1973-1977
7  Ordem Cruzeiro do Sul award, 1946 (photos and clippings)
8  Board of Immigration and Naturalization (clipping), 1955
9  Actor Hal Peary visit to Diario, 1960 (photographs)
10  Brazilian Journalists tour, 1961 (photo and clipping)
11  Presidential inauguration, 1961 (invitation)
12  U.S.S. Grouper submarine cruise, 1962 (photos and clippings)
13  Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, dinner, 1965 (menu, invite, clipping)
14  Portuguese Embassy visit, 1965 (clipping, invite)
15  Portuguese Educational Society, 1965-66 (handbook and clipping)
16  Brazilian Vice consul appointment, 1968 (clipping)
17  Order of Prince Henry the Navigator, 1966, 1969 (photographs) It was honorary for the Diario in 1969, and awarded personally to Mr. Rocha in 1966.
Box 2

Framed items:

Clipping from Diario of White House reception for editors and publishers of foreign newspapers

Framed pen that signed H.R. 2580 An Act to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act, 1965

Clipping from last Diario, October 20, 1973

Plaque commemorating 50th anniversary of the Diario, given to Rocha by his staff, 1969

Large items in folders:

Reproduction of photo depicting WPEP broadcast with Governor Saltonstall

American Museum of Immigration Awards to Diario and Rocha, 1954

Portuguese Continental Union, Peter Francisco Award, 1964

Box 3

Artifacts (mostly medals):

Medal of Honor, Portuguese Continental Union (in small box)

Order of Prince Henry the Navigator silver medal

Order of Prince Henry the Navigator ribbon with cross

Unidentified medallion, 1964

Ordem Cruzeiro do Sul (Brazil), 1946

Unidentified cross medal, n.d.

Round mounted photo of Rocha as a young man, PCU

Press card, American Foreign Language Press, Dept. of State, 1962

There are 3 folders of oversized newspaper clippings in the map case under MC 100