

Collection #
SC 3149

**BENJAMIN D. AND ELIZABETH HITZ HOUSE
IN BRENDONWOOD COMMONS,
RECORDS, CA. 1917–1947, 2005, N.D.**

[Collection Information](#)

[Biographical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Contents](#)

Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 3 manuscript folders, 1 photograph folder

COLLECTION DATES: Ca. 1917–1947, 2005, n.d.

PROVENANCE: Evaline H. Rhodehamel

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: M0997 Hitz Family Papers, 1917–1951; P0351 Brendonwood Common, Inc. collection, ca. 1917–1924.

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2012.0106

NOTES: Biographical sketch comprised from M0997 and P0351

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Benjamin D. Hitz (1890–1949) was born in Indianapolis and attended Indiana University. In September 1917 he married Elizabeth Holliday (1894–1979) and they had two children, Benjamin and Evaline. Hitz served as an officer in World War I with Base Hospital No. 32 and was stationed in France with that unit and dealt with the handling of medical supplies and became adjutant in October, 1918. After the war, he edited a history of Base Hospital No. 32. In addition to the real estate business, Hitz was involved in many intellectual and charitable organizations including his work with the Willa Cather Papers at the Newberry Library in Chicago and serving on the Library Committee of the Indiana Historical Society for 15 years.

The Hitz's home, designed by architect Willard Osler, was located at 5745 Ridge Road in the Brendonwood subdivision. Brendonwood is a residential subdivision located on 350 acres between Fall Creek and East 56th Street in Indianapolis. Charles Sumner Lewis acquired the land in parcels between 1909 and 1915. He developed the site as a private, residential subdivision that was legally protected from commercial development.

Landscape architect George E. Kessler designed Brendonwood beginning in 1914. Civil engineer A. H. Moore supervised land clearance, grading, road construction, and utility installation starting in 1916. According to Kessler's plan more than 115,000 shrubs and rows of oak trees were planted to enhance the natural environment. Landowners became members of Brendonwood Common, Inc., a private, non-profit corporation established by Lewis for the purpose of maintaining the site's original integrity. The regulations of Brendonwood Common, Inc. prohibited the subdivision of original plots and contained provisions to ensure the protection and preservation of the natural features and landscape design. The first homes were completed ca. 1922.

Unfortunately the planted oak trees succumbed to disease and were removed in the 1950s. Up to the present time (2016) the subdivision has remained the private residential area envisioned by Lewis. The original concept of 110 single-family homes in a park-like setting has been maintained by generations of homeowners.

Sources:

Brockman, Paul and Betty Alberty. Collection Guide. M0997 Hitz Family Papers, 1917–1951. Indiana Historical Society. (Guide completed January, 2011)

Tranfield, Pamela. Collection Guide. P0351 Brendonwood Common, Inc. Collection, ca. 1917–1924. (Guide completed March, 1998)

Materials in the collection.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection includes papers related to the home of Benjamin D. and Elizabeth Hitz located at 5745 Ridge Road in the Brendonwood residential subdivision in Indianapolis, Indiana. Folder one contains real estate documents such as contracts, mortgages and warranty deeds, loan agreements, and general specifications for the residence. Folder two includes receipts and invoices for property improvements, contractors, and mortgage payments. Folder three contains two Brendonwood Commons certificates of Charles S. Lewis for plots number 49 and 54, a Brendonwood brochure that contains a map of the subdivision and price list for available plots, a 1930 newspaper clipping detailing the garden at the Hitz home, a history of homeowners up to 2005, and a 1927 bargain and sale deed for a property in Arizona. There are also images of the property, circa 1930s.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Real estate documents, mortgage and warranty deeds, and specifications for 5745 Ridge Road, Indianapolis, Ind., 1918–1947

Receipts and invoices for property improvements, contractors, and mortgage payments for 5745 Ridge Road, Indianapolis, Ind., 1918–1925, n.d.

Brendonwood certificates, brochure, and homeowners' history; newspaper clipping; and warranty deed for Arizona home, 1917–2005, n.d.

5745 Ridge Road, Indianapolis, Ind., Brendonwood Commons, ca. 1930s

CONTAINER

Folder 1

Folder 2

Folder 3

Photographs Folder 1