



BHC-MSS 0226

## Guide to the Celebrate Bridgeport 150<sup>th</sup> Merchandise Collection April 2022

### **Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** Bridgeport 150<sup>th</sup> Celebration

**Title:** Celebrate Bridgeport 150<sup>th</sup> Merchandise Collection

**Dates:** 1985-1986

**Quantity:** 3 linear feet

**Abstract.** In 1986, the City of Bridgeport celebrated 150 years of incorporation. This collection features the merchandise that was created by the committee to commemorate the event, along with some event ephemera including advertising supplements that were included in the New York Times and the Bridgeport Post.

**Language:** English

**Repository:** Bridgeport History Center

### **Biographical History:**

In 1986, the City of Bridgeport celebrated 150 years of incorporation. The city saw this celebration as a means to try and change the perceived image of Bridgeport, which during the 1970s and into the 1980s, had become damaged. The loss of manufacturing jobs in the city from the 1960s into the 1970s, white flight into the Fairfield and New Haven county suburbs, and poor economic condition caused extreme hardships for residents and created unsafe and violent situations for the population, but especially within communities of color. Father Panik village had gained its notorious reputation by this time, and the presence of Mount Trashmore did not help. The year long celebration in 1986 promoted Bridgeport as a city with a bright future and there was an extensive amount of outreach in tourism, as evident in several supplements in this collection that were a part of the Bridgeport Post and the New York Times.

The Bridgeport 150<sup>th</sup> Celebration group, the corporate body in charge of it all, created a logo and merchandise line as a part of the greater event. The logo itself features scrollwork that reads "BRIDGEPORT" with a sailboat to the immediate right that on the left sail reads "CT" and on the right sail reads "1986." The boat passes by the downtown Bridgeport skyline including (from left to right) the Barnum Museum, the People's Bank building, and other spires. The bottom of the logo reads "150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary." Variations of the logo feature the word "CELEBRATE" above the scrollwork and the phrase "A Proud Past...A Bright Future" at the bottom of the logo.

It is unclear how successful the goals of the 150<sup>th</sup> celebration truly were, given that the perception of Bridgeport remained unchanged for years to come.

### **Scope and Content note:**

The collection contains samples of merchandise sold as a part of the Bridgeport 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. It is likely that the library may have been a vendor, and these materials were in a

display case, as well as collected by then-archivist David Palmquist.

According to the gift guide pamphlet, the only item that the collection lacks are the etched tumbler glasses.

**Arrangement note:**

Arranged alphabetically by object name/title.

**Administrative information:**

**Provenance:** Found in collections

**Preferred Citation:**

Celebrate Bridgeport 150<sup>th</sup> Merchandise Collection (BHC-MSS 0226), Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library.

**Names and Subject Tracings**

*Corporate names*

Bridgeport 150<sup>th</sup> Celebration

City of Bridgeport.

*Subject tracings*

Merchandise

T-shirts

Ephemera

Advertisements

**Detailed box/folder listing**

Box 1

1. Gift collection list, 1986
2. Calendar, 1986
3. Community service award blank, 1986
4. Coasters (3) , 1986
5. Frisbees, 1986
6. Harborfest pamphlet, 1986
7. Keychains, 1986
8. Logos, 1986
9. Sign, 1986
10. T-shirts (2) , 1986
11. Tote bags, 1986
12. Pins, 1986
13. Set of Bridgeport advertising supplements, 1985-1986

Box 2

1. Sweatshirt, 1986
2. Baseball hat, 1986
3. Baseball hat, 1986
4. Hat with Winterfest logo, 1986