



TITLE: Cele Peterson Store Collection

DATE RANGE: 1950 – 2002 (bulk 1970s)

CALL NUMBER: MS 1480

LOCATION: Arizona History Museum, 949 E. Second St, Tucson, AZ 85719

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 6 linear ft. (8 boxes)

PROVENANCE: Donated by Cele Peterson on July 4, 1995, and transferred to the archives from the museum in 2015.

RESTRICTIONS ON USE: Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be addressed to the Arizona Historical Society, Library & Archives.

PREFERRED CITATION: Arizona Historical Society, Cele Peterson Collection, MS 1480

PROCESSED BY: Ella Breed, 2025

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: Cele Peterson was born on March 14, 1909, by the name of Cecilia Fruitman in Pensacola, Florida. Her family moved to various parts of the United States until Cele was three, when they made Bisbee, Arizona, their permanent residence. Cele attended the University of Arizona for a year, then Sullivan College, where she started her degree in Political Science and finished her degree at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. While in D.C., she met Thomas Harding Peterson, who later became her husband. With the help of Carl Hayden, Cele translated documents related to Southwest history at the Library of Congress. After traveling to Mexico for work, Cele returned to Arizona, and in 1931, she opened the Co-ed shop in Tucson, eventually changing the name to Cele Peterson Fashion Shop. Cele purchased ready-to-wear women's clothing from places like New York City and Europe and designed her line called the Station Wagon. She married Thomas Harding Peterson in 1934 and had five children: Thomas Harding, Jr., Quinta, Eva Ann, Katya, and Frank Read.

Cele owned a women's fashion store at three locations in Tucson; the downtown office was located at 48 East Pennington, which moved there in 1937 and closed in the 1980s. The other two stores were at El Con Shopping Center and Casas Adobes Shopping Center.

Cele was involved with the Tucson community. She was instrumental in founding the Tucson Opera Company, the Arizona Civic Theater, and the Art Center. She was also one of the founders

of Copper Days and Casa de Los Niños, the Trade Bureau, and had fashion shows for charity. Cele also hosted a five-minute radio show on KTUC called "Star of the Day," where she acknowledged the accomplishments and community work of local Tucson residents. Cele Peterson passed away at the age of 101 on May 6, 2010, in Tucson.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: The Cele Peterson Collection has 8 boxes that include sketches, publications, and photographs. Also included are the proofs and the results before printing in the advertisements. The collection also holds personal and fashion photographs, signage from the Cele Peterson Fashion Shop, and VHS tapes of Cele's commercials, mostly underwriting credits on KUAT-TV, Channel 6, and PBS.

Arrangement and Description:

Original order unknown. A substantial amount of this collection is n.d., but items are arranged chronologically whenever possible.

Series I: Business – Includes her business records for her beauty salon and fashion store. The fashion store records include timecards, rules for employees, inventories, and receipts. This series also includes fashion catalogs that Cele used for either advertising the store or ordering inventory. and various publications of community organizations. This section also includes research for Copper Days and the fashion shows she did for charities.

Series II: Advertisements – Includes hand-drawn sketches of clothing and advertisement proofs from the store. There are also examples of where she advertised, like the Bicentennial and the Tucson Rodeo, as well as publications about Cele Peterson.

Series III: Photographs – Fashion models wearing clothes from Cele Peterson's store.

Series IV: Community -

Series V: Audiovisual Material – VHS commercial tapes about Cele Peterson's store, the majority of the content was often shown on KUAT-TV, Channel 6, and PBS (University of Arizona).

Series VI: Oversized - Two large posters, one of them being Copper Days in 1969. There are also fashion sketches and sketches of her store.

SUBJECT TERMS: Peterson, Cele; Cele Peterson (Retail store); Businesswomen -- Arizona -- Tucson Retail trade -- Arizona -- Tucson; Costume designers -- Arizona -- Tucson Clothing trade -- Arizona -- Tucson; Women in charitable work -- Arizona -- Tucson; Fashion

CONTAINER LIST:

Box	Folder	Description	Dates
1	1	Business: Correspondence - Havervield and Belmont Companies (1 of 2)	1963 – 1966, n.d.
	2	Business: Correspondence - Advertising/Sales and Store (2 of 2)	1966 – 1986, n.d.
	3	Business: Inventories and Receipts	1962– 1976, n.d.
	4	Business: Advertising Contracts and Paperwork	1973-1979
	5	Business: Beauty Salon Building Layout	n.d.
	6	Advertisement: Beauty Salon Proofs (1 of 2)	1973 – 1976, n.d.
	7	Advertisement: Beauty Salon Proofs (2 of 2)	n.d.
	8	Advertisement: Fashion Proofs (1 of 2)	n.d.
	9	Advertisement: Fashion Proofs (2 of 2)	n.d.
2	10	Advertisement: Fashion Show and Benefit Proofs	n.d.
	11	Advertisement: Footwear Proofs	n.d.
	12	Advertisement: Sale Proofs	1973 – 1976, n.d.
	13	Sketches: Sketches – Accessories	n.d.
	14	Sketches: Sketches – Decorative	n.d.
	15	Sketches: Sketches - Furs and Shawls	n.d.
	16	Sketches: Sketches - Sleepwear	n.d.
	17	Sketches: Sketches - Swimwear	n.d.
	18	Sketches: Sketches - Pants, Shorts, Button-Downs	n.d.
3	19	Sketches: Sketches – Coats (1 of 2)	n.d.
	20	Sketches: Sketches – Coats (2 of 2)	n.d.
	21	Sketches: Sketches - Coats and Skirts (1 of 2)	n.d.
	22	Sketches: Sketches - Coats and Skirts (2 of 2)	n.d.
	23	Sketches: Sketches - Coats and Dresses (1 of 2)	n.d.
4	24	Sketches: Sketches - Coats and Dresses (2 of 2)	n.d.
	25	Sketches: Sketches - Dresses (1 of 4)	n.d.
	26	Sketches: Sketches - Dresses (2 of 4)	n.d.
	27	Sketches: Sketches - Dresses (3 of 4)	n.d.
5	28	Sketches: Sketches - Dresses (4 of 4)	n.d.
	29	Sketches: Sketches - Multiple Styles (1 of 2)	n.d.
	30	Sketches: Sketches - Multiple Styles (2 of 2)	n.d.
	31	Advertisement: Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arizona Centennial Edition, 1962 - Tucson Bicentennial Program, 1975 - Tucson Los Invita, 1974 	1962, 1974-75

Box	Folder	Description	Dates
	32	Advertisement: Community Arts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tucson Symphony Orchestra, 1973, 83 - Tucson Opera, 1973 - The Tucson Civic Ballet, 1976 - Arizona Theatre Co., 1995 - UA Presents: 1996-1997 Season - Arizona Summer Arts Festival, 1986 - Junior League of Tucson: The Beat Goes On, 1972 	1972, 1973, 1976, 1986, 1995-97
	33	Advertisement: Tucson Rodeo Programs	1966-67, 1971
6	34	Advertisement: Fashion Show and Benefit Invites	1961-1979
	35	Advertisement: Fashion Publications Commercial Camera Magazine V.3, N.3	1950, 1959, 1965-68, 1970-72, 1982, n.d
	36	Community: City of Hope	1976, 1978
	37	Community: Copper Days	1973, 1975
	38	Community: La Casa de Los Ninos	1973, n.d.
	39	Community: Membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hospital Auxiliary, 1963, 70, 73 - Women's Auxiliary to Pima County Medical Society, 1968 - Tucson Women's Symphony Association, 1970-1975 	1963-1975
	40	Community: Silver and Turquoise Ball	1950, 1975
	41	Photographs: Fashion (1 of 2)	n.d.
	42	Photographs: Fashion (2 of 2)	n.d.
	43	Photographs: Pageants and Gatherings	n.d.
	44	Photographs: Furniture and Buildings	1968, 1972, n.d.
7	AV-1	VHS: KUAT-TV, Channel 6, PBS – Underwriting Credits Cele Peterson – 2 Spots [University of Arizona]	2001
	AV-2	VHS: Cele Peterson's 'Cruise Wear' Commercial: 30	2002
	AV-3	VHS: Cele Peterson's Spring Joan Vass Trunk Show	2002
	AV-4	VHS: KUAT-TV, Channel 6, PBS Underwriting Credits Cele Peterson's [University of Arizona]	2002

Box	Folder	Description	Date
	AV-5	VHS: KUAT-TV, Channel 6, PBS – Cele Peterson’s Jewelry [University of Arizona]	n.d.
	AV-6	VHS: University of Arizona Dance Production and Fashion Show	n.d.
	AV-7	VHS: Commercial to Cele Peterson’s Store	n.d.
	AV-8	VHS: Commercial to Cele Peterson’s Store for the Holidays	n.d.
	AV-9	VHS: Commercial to Cele Peterson’s Store for the Holidays [Duplicate]	n.d.
	AV-10	VHS: Commercial to Cele Peterson’s Store	n.d.
	AV-11	VHS: Commercial to Cele Peterson’s Store Discount Sale	n.d.
	AV-12	VHS: KUAT-TV, Channel 6, PBS Underwriting Credits Cele Peterson’s [University of Arizona]	n.d.
	AV-13	VHS: KUAT-TV, Channel 6, PBS Underwriting Credits Cele Peterson’s [University of Arizona]	n.d.
	AV-14	VHS: KUAT-TV, Channel 6, PBS Underwriting Credits Cele Peterson’s featuring St. John Cruise [University of Arizona]	n.d.
8	45	Oversized: Fashion Sketches	n.d.
	46	Oversized: Sketches	n.d.
	47	Oversized: Posters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Copper Days - Fashion Show (n.d.) 	1969, n.d.