

---

**ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

949 East Second Street  
Tucson, AZ 85719

Library/Archives Department  
(520) 617-1157

[ahsref@azhs.gov](mailto:ahsref@azhs.gov)

---

**MS 1147**  
**Knaus, Charles Lawrence, 1902-1983**  
**Papers, 1933-1982**

**DESCRIPTION**

Daily diaries kept by Charles L. Knaus from 1933 to 1982 and two autobiographies written by Charles L. Knaus entitled *A Kansas Sunflower Seed* and *The Seeker*. The diaries and autobiographies describe Knaus' life in the West, including Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and California.

7 Boxes, 3.5 linear ft.

**ACQUISITION**

Donated by Charles L. Knaus in 1982 and Frank J. Knaus in 1983.

**ACCESS**

There are no restrictions on access to this collection.

**COPYRIGHT**

Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be addressed to the Arizona Historical Society, Tucson, Library/Archives Department.

**PROCESSING**

The collection was processed by Riva Dean in October 1999.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

Charles Lawrence Knaus, engineer and photographer, grew up in Kansas and later lived in many cities throughout the West. He began his career in Boulder, Colorado working as a civil engineer for the city. He moved to Morenci, Arizona in 1925 and began working as a mining engineer. His mining career included work in New Mexico, Arizona, Wyoming, Nevada and California. He also worked in New Mexico for the State Highway Department. In the mid-1950s, he became a professional photographer and worked in that career until his retirement in 1968. He retired to Arizona and lived in Sedona, Green Valley, Roswell, N.M., Helena, Montana and Tucson. He was married twice; to Ruth in 1923 (from whom he divorced in 1942) and then to Irene in 1943. He had two sons with Ruth: Charles Lawrence, Jr. and Frank Joseph.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The bulk of the collection are diaries kept by Charles Knaus from 1933 to 1982. The diaries generally have very brief entries of events. The diaries of the early years when Knaus worked as an engineer may have some interest to those studying the places and mines surveyed. He surveyed roads and other civil engineering jobs around Boulder. He also did mining surveys in New Mexico and Arizona.

The diaries include very little personal information or commentary on events of the outside world. It is difficult to discern any personal interests from the diaries alone.

His two autobiographies cover his entire life. The autobiography *A Kansas Sunflower Seed*, was written in 1978 and covers his childhood from 1902-1921. *The Seeker* covers 1922-1982 and often uses verbatim transcripts from his diaries. *The Seeker* gives more description of the places that Knaus visited, worked and traveled than the diaries. He describes the mines, cities and trips around the West. Included are good descriptions of the mining town of Morenci, Arizona and the Santa Rita Mines in New Mexico. He also does give more personal interests and commentary in the autobiographies.

## **BOX AND FOLDER LIST**

### **Series 1 : Diaries, 1933-1982**

#### **Box 1**

f. 1-7 Diaries, 1933-1943

#### **Box 2**

f. 8-12 Diaries, 1934-1952

#### **Box 3**

f. 13-16 Diaries, 1953-1960

#### **Box 4**

f. 17-20 Diaries, 1961-1968

#### **Box 5**

f. 21-23 Diaries, 1969-1974

#### **Box 6**

f. 24-28 Diaries, 1975-1982

### **Series 2 : Autobiographies**

#### **Box 7**

f. 29 *A Kansas Sunflower Seed*, 1978

f. 30-34 *The Seeker, Vols. 1-2, Autobiography*, 1980