
ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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MS 0568
MURPHEY, JOHN W. 1898-1977
Papers, 1921-1951

DESCRIPTION

Correspondence, records and documents, and business ledgers from construction projects and business dealings of John W. Murphey and the Murphey-Keith Building Company in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas from 1921 to 1951. Highlights include construction projects and general support for the Civilian Conservation Corps, Civil Works Administration, and Defense Transportation during the Depression years and construction projects in three states during World War II.

7 Boxes and 5 ledgers 8.25 linear feet

ACQUISITION

Gift from Mrs. John W. Murphey between 1973 and 1976.

ACCESS

There are no restrictions on access to this collection.

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

PROCESSING

The collection was originally processed after 1977 and reviewed by William D. Tackenberg in December 1998.

ARRANGEMENT

Arranged into 6 series: Correspondence, 1924-1951. Records and Documents, 1921-1944. Catalina Foothills Estates, 1928-1944. Murphey Business Associations, 1928-1942. Murphey-Keith Building Company, 1927-1946. Ledgers, 1924-1931.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

John W. Murphey was a prominent developer and civic leader of Tucson. Born July 20, 1898, Murphey lived all his life in the city and built over 1,000 homes, hotels, and inns. He attended the University of Arizona and graduated in 1920 with a degree in geology. Murphey served in World War I and was promoted to the rank of sergeant. During the 1930s he worked with the state and federal government in providing the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Civil Works Administration with warehouses and other facilities. He purchased over 8,000 acres of ground in the Catalina Foothills area for an estimated \$15 per acre when the only bridge over the Rillito River was at North Campbell Avenue. In World War II Murphey constructed airfields, barracks, warehouses, and other facilities at military bases in Arizona, Texas, and New Mexico.

Murphey's development projects in the Tucson area included both private and public buildings. He built and managed the Catalina Foothills Estates and constructed the first shopping center in Arizona, Broadway Village, in 1939. He helped finance and build the Arizona Historical Society and served on the society's board of directors until his death. Murphey owned and operated two large ranches, one near Silver City, New Mexico and the U Circle Ranch near Oracle (both became guest ranches). After building the first school in the Catalina Foothills District Murphey served on the school board for several years. In 1971 he provided land for sale and donation towards the construction of the Tucson Art Museum.

Murphey was a civic leader and contributed to many organizations and foundations. His philanthropic work included providing half the funds for construction of the Salvation Army Hospitality House and he built and helped operate the Hacienda del Sol School for girls. His business constructed churches including St. Philip's in the Hills Church, the Episcopal Student Center at the University of Arizona, and St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church. Murphey was a founding member of the Tucson Country Club and a member of the Tucson Chamber of Commerce, Old Pueblo Club, and the American Legion. For his numerous community activities the University of Arizona honored Murphey with presentation of the Award of Merit in 1960. He was a member of the University President's Club and the UA Foundation.

He died on December 27, 1977 in Tucson.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Construction plans and projects both for government agencies and private commercial enterprises in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas by John W. Murphey from 1921 to 1951.

Collection reflects John W. Murphey's construction and business activities in Tucson over a 30-year period. Correspondence depicts business communications on construction activities associated with the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), Civil Works Administration, and Defense Transportation programs during the 1930s. During the World War II period Murphey worked on various military installations in New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas constructing facilities. Military contracts and work plans reflect activities in Roswell, New Mexico, Davis-Monthan AFB, Fort Huachuca, Douglas, and Yuma, Arizona. Civic and philanthropic activities involving Murphey are contained in folders including Hacienda del Sol, Tucson Country Club, and the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity at the University of

Arizona. The collection is highlighted by the many construction projects Murphey managed through the Murphey-Keith Building Company including the Catalina Foothills Estates, El Merendero Tea Room, El Conquistador, Broadway Village Shopping Center, and many private dwellings.

Very little personal correspondence or family communications are contained in the collection. Also, the collection contains almost no references regarding the architect, Josias T. Joesler, who worked with Murphy in the design and construction of homes beginning in the 1920s.

BOX AND FOLDER LISTING

Box 1

Series I: Correspondence, 1924-1951

Folder 1:	Carobel Murphey	1925-1932
f.2	General Personal and Business	1926-1944
f.3	Formation of Business	1924-1933
f.4-7	Acquisition of Public Lands	1929-1946
f.8	Real Estate License for Leo. B. Keith	1936
f.9	Political Letters-Bills, Zoning, Elections	1929-1941
f.10-11	Property Rental	1929-1941
f.12	Property Related Questions	1932-1943
f.13	Land from State and Federal Government	1928-1931
f.14	Tucson Real Estate Board	1931-1932
f.15	Service Organizations	1929-1947
f.16	Tucson Golf and Country Club	1929-1930
f.17-18	Insurance On Buildings and Property	1928-1939

Box 2

f.19	Insurance on Buildings and Property	1939-1946
f.20	Formation of Building Company	1934-1935
f.21	Federal/State/County Tax Research	1930-1943
f.22	Company Employees	1928-1937
f.23	Industrial Commission of Arizona	1936-1947
f.24	Business Account's Letters	1930-1941
f.25	Building Transactions – General	1930-1940
f.26	Building Construction Materials	1929-1938
f.27	Building Construction Materials-Lighting, Lumber, Roofing	1934-1941
f.28	Air Conditioning Materials	1930-1936
f.29	Miscellaneous Building Materials	1928-1942
f.30-31	El Conquistador Hotel	1928-1941
f.32-33	Catalina Foothills Estates	1934-1944
f.34	Hacienda del Sol	1933-1937
f.35	Phillips in the Foothills Church	1936-1938
f.36	El Merendero	1938-1939

Box 3

f.37	Real Estate Licensing	1935-1936
f.38	Company Advertisements	1935-1942
f.39	Service Clubs and Organizations	1929-1947
f.40-42	Warehouse Rental for Civilian Conservation Corps	1935-1937
f.43	Trucks Supplied to Civil Works Administration	1934
f.44	Trucks For Defense Transportation	1942
f.45-46	War Department Contracts for Fort Huachuca, Arizona	1942-1944
f.47	War Department Contracts for Roswell, New Mexico	1942-1944
f.48	War Department Contracts for Hobbs, New Mexico	1942
f.49	War Department Contracts for Douglas, Arizona	1942-1951

f.50	War Department Contracts for Davis-Monthan, AFB Tucson, Arizona	1943-1946
f.51	War Department Contracts In New Mexico, Arizona & Texas	1942-1944
f.52	War Department Renegotiated Contracts	1943
f.53	War Department Contract for Work Outside United States	1946-1947
f.54	Internal Revenue On Employees Earnings	1942

Box 4

Series II: Records and Documents, 1921-1944

f.55	Carobel Murphey Records	1924-1931
f.56	Service Pledge of Murphey Company	
f.57	Titles and Land Abstracts	1921-1941
f.58	Homestead Application Papers	1931-1939
f.59	Land Sales-University Heights	1932-1934
f.60	News Clippings – Commercial Activities	1929-1942
f.61	Court Record- State Consolidated Publishing Co.	1933/1941
f.62	Organizational Brochures/Announcements	1929-1940
f.63	Service Organizations Membership Listings	1929-1940
f.64	War Department Contracts – Job #500, Roswell, New Mexico	1942
f.65	War Department Contracts – Job #500, Specifications	1942
f.66	War Department Contracts – Job #501, Douglas, Arizona	1942
f.67	War Department Contracts – Job #502, Hobbs, New Mexico	1943
f.68	War Department Contracts – Job #503, Lubback, Texas	1943
f.69	War Department Contracts – Job #504, Cooledge, Arizona	1943
f.70	War Department Contracts – Job #505, Davis-Monthan, AFB	1943

Box 5

f.71	War Department Contracts – Job #506, Florence, Arizona	1943
f.72	War Department Contracts – Job #507, Marana, Arizona	1943
f.73	War Department Contracts – Job #512, Deming, New Mexico	1943
f.74	War Department Contracts – Job #513, Yuma, Arizona	1943
f.75	Miscellaneous Construction Coordination	1930-1944
f.76	War Department Contract – Job #450, Fort Huachuca, Arizona	1942
f.77	War Department Contract – Job #451, Fort Huachuca, Arizona	1942
f.78	War Department Contract – Job #452, Fort Huachuca, Arizona	1942
f.79	War Department Contract – Job #453, Fort Huachuca, Arizona	1942
f.80	War Department Contract – Job #454, Fort Huachuca, Arizona	1942
f.81-82	War Department Contract – Job #455, Fort Huachuca, Arizona	1942
f.83	Civilian Conservation Corps Projects	1935-1937

Series III: Catalina Foothills Estates, 1928-1944

f.84	Land Deeds, Corporation Papers	1928-1944
f.85	Newsletter	1938-1939
f.86	Private Dwellings	1937-1943

Box 6

f.87	Advertising	1931-1938
f.88	Norman Gable – Private Dwelling	1937-1939
f.89	Hacienda del Sol	1929-1939

Series IV: Murphey Business Associations, 1928-1942

f.90	El Merendero Tea Room	1949
f.91	Tucson City Payroll Records	1928-1933
f.92	Sigma Alpha Epison	1928-1942
f.93	Tucson Country Club	1930-1933
f.94	C. Cliff Amos Motors	1937-1939
f.95	Broadway Village Transactions	1939-1941
f.96	Miscellaneous Homes, Apartments, Warehouses, and People's Market	1932-1941
f.97	Insurance	1928-1941
f.98	El Conquistador	1928-1942
f.99	Organizations and Service Brochures With Reference to Murphy	

Series V: Murphey-Keith Building Company, 1927-1946

f.100	Formation of Company	1932-1934
f.101	Books and Records Examination	1944
f.102	Industrial Commission of Arizona	1938-1941

Box 7

f.103	Industrial Commission of Arizona	1942-1946
f.104	Miscellaneous Accounts/Bills	1927-1946
f.105	Construction Materials Accounts	1927-1940
f.106	Roy Titcomb Company Account	1926-1946
f.107	Building Information Papers	1933-1942
f.108	U-Save Holding Corporation	1931
f.109	Streets and Utilities Information	1935-1940

Series VI: Ledgers, 19 -19

- Ledger #1: Business Expenses, Investments, Loans, Jan.-Dec. 1924
- Ledger #2: Disbursement Expenses, Dec. 1926-Sep. 1927
- Ledger #3: Business Expenses, Job Materials, 1928-1930
- Ledger #4: Business Expenses, Job Materials, Credits, Sep. 1927-Dec. 1930
- Ledger #5: Business Expenses for J.W. Murphey Building Company, Jan. 1929-Jan. 1931