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


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, Archives Department.

PROCESSING

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

ARRANGEMENT

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

John W. Murphey was a prominent developer and civic leader of Tucson. Born July 20, 1898, Murphy 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.

Marphey’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.

Marphey 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 Murphy 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 Epison 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, 1928-1942

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