

**TITLE:** E. F. Sanguinetti Collection

**DATE RANGE:** 1880s - 2007

**CALL NUMBER:** Y-MS 27

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 4 boxes (3 linear feet)

**PROVENANCE:** Multiple donors with the bulk coming from Rose Marie Gwynn, 1960s-1970s

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**RESTRICTIONS:** This collection is unrestricted.

**CREDIT LINE:** E.F. Sanguinetti Collection, Y-MS 27, Arizona Historical Society-Rio Colorado Division

**PROCESSED BY:** John Irwin, 2013

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:**

Eugene Francis Sanguinetti was a prominent Yuma businessman. He was born on May 16, 1867 in Coulterville, California to Antone Sanguinetti and Rosa Camiccione. He came to Yuma at AGE 16, inspired to seek his fortune by the success of his neighbor's eldest son. Soon after his arrival he was hired as a clerk by John Gandolfo, a local merchant and friend of the Sanguinetti family. Sanguinetti quickly rose from clerk to a full partner. Soon thereafter he bought out Gandolfo to become the sole owner of the business. Sanguinetti quickly began expanding his business from a simple general store to a large commercial empire.

Eventually his Yuma businesses included twelve stores, numerous commercial buildings, a contracting firm for site development, a dairy, a creamery, dealerships in automobiles, farm, irrigation and mining equipment and supplies, a freighting service, an ice plant with a cold storage warehouse, a marketing service for agricultural products, mines, mortuaries, a produce packing plant, public utilities, rentals housing, a construction company building roads and leveling thousands of acres for the more than fifty farms he owned. He became the largest employer in Yuma County, and the largest farm employer in Arizona. During the Great Depression, however, he suffered significant financial losses.

Sanguinetti was also very active in promoting Yuma. He was a major influence in lobbying for the Yuma Project of a dam, levees and land reclamation, as well as later the Gila Project. In addition, he sent representatives to Washington to lobby for the transcontinental highway to go through Yuma.

Although he had detractors, he was known in Yuma for his altruism, charity, and social entertaining. He personally managed all of his enterprises without an office, working from a table in the back of a store. He also lived modestly with his family in a small adobe house

constructed in 1871 adjacent to the commercial area in the original town site of Yuma. This building later became the Yuma Arts Center and the Century House Museum.

In 1915 at age 48, Sanguinetti married Lilah Balsz, daughter of early Yuma pioneers David Balsz and Luz Redondo. They had three children, Eugene Francis Sanguinetti Jr. Rose Marie Sanguinetti and Norman Hillary Sanguinetti. His wife died of a heart attack in 1937. In 1939 Sanguinetti, facing declining health, took up residence in a sanatorium in California where he spent the remainder of his life. E.F. Sanguinetti died on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1945 at the age of 78. In 2000 he was named “Citizen of the Century” by the *Yuma Daily Sun*.

#### **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:**

Organized into six series. Highlights are described below.

**Series I – Biographical:** This series contains information about E.F. Sanguinetti taken from a multiple sources including newspaper and magazine articles, book chapters, lectures, and reminiscences. There is also a book written about Sanguinetti’s mother Rosa Camiccione and her sisters.

**Series II – Correspondence:** This series consists of both business and personal letters covering a variety of subjects involving the Sanguinetti family. One folder contains letters sent by Sanguinetti to Mariana Ayala, who ran a branch of Sanguinetti’s store in La Paz. Another has correspondence about the account of W.A. Lawler. Personal correspondence relating to the Sanguinetti marriage captures the celebratory spirit of the community and the couple’s popularity.

**Series III – Financial Records:** The business papers include several Sanguinetti advertisements, invoices, and some financial statements. There are also a large number of checks and check stubs. An interesting item is a Sanguinetti account book bearing the name Gus Livingston on its cover. Its contents involve Livingston as Yuma County Assessor.

**Series IV – Legal Documents:** The legal papers cover a number of court matters involving Sanguinetti’s business ventures. The “4<sup>th</sup> Street Widening” folder involves a case between the city of Yuma, Sanguinetti and the Southern Pacific Railroad over land ownership and usage. The Yuma Valley Bank folder concerns a lawsuit that came with the dissolution of that bank. The court found in favor of E.F. Sanguinetti and his partners.

**Series V – Memorabilia:** This contains examples of Sanguinetti’s letterhead, as well as materials used in his merchant ventures such as mail and seed sample bags, business stationary, and a copper printing plate of Sanguinetti’s letterhead.

**Series VI – Scrapbooks:** This series contains two scrapbooks - one of newspaper clippings and special editions, and the occasional letter or invitation; the other consists of postcards collected by Lilah Sanguinetti in the early 1900s.

**CONTAINER LIST:**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Dates</b>
<b>1</b>	1	<b>Biographical:</b> Notes, News Clippings, and Other Materials	1884-2007
	2	<b>Biographical:</b> Distinguished Civic Service Medal	1939
	3	<b>Biographical:</b> Published Articles about E.F. Sanguinetti	1919-1987
	4	<b>Biographical:</b> Unpublished Articles, Speeches, Oral Histories, Drafts)	n.d.
	5	<b>Biographical:</b> Rosa Camiccione (E.F. Sanguinetti's mother)	1982
	6	<b>Business Correspondence:</b> Ayala, Mariana	1896 – 1908
	7	<b>Business Correspondence:</b> General	1892-1950
	8	<b>Business Correspondence:</b> Lawler, W. A.	1907 – 1914
	9	<b>Personal Correspondence:</b> Marriage	1915
	10	<b>Financial Records:</b> Various	1893 – 1942
	11	<b>Financial Records:</b> Checks	1919-193,
<b>2</b>	1	<b>Financial Records:</b> Checks-Yuma Ice Company	1908-1921
	2	<b>Financial Records:</b> Gus Livingston Account Book	1906
	3	<b>Documents:</b> Legal Documents, 4 <sup>th</sup> Street Widening	1926
	4	<b>Documents:</b> Legal Documents, Various	1930 – 1942
	5	<b>Documents:</b> Legal Documents, Yuma Valley Bank	1930-1934
	6	<b>Memorabilia:</b> Various (includes copper printing plate of business letterhead)	n.d.
<b>3</b>	OV	<b>Scrapbook:</b> Postcards	1906-1909
<b>4</b>	OV	<b>Scrapbook:</b> News Clippings	1908-1951