
ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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**MS 1145
Sells Service Women
Papers, 1962-1996**

DESCRIPTION

The collection includes letters, meeting minutes, fundraising information, newspaper clippings, and photographs produced and collected by the Sells Service Women, relating to their work with the Tohono O'odham from about 1962 until 1996. The collection also consists of membership lists, background information on some members, and various reports and clippings about the Tohono O'odham people and reservation life.

2 boxes, 1 linear ft.

ACQUISITION

The collection was donated by Jessie M. Sorensen in September, 1999. Jessie Sorensen served as Treasurer and then later as President of the Sells Service Women.

RELATED MATERIALS

Muriel K. Sullivan Papers, MS 1146.
Muriel Sullivan oral history interview, AV 0448.

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 processed by Megan D. Mulligan, intern, under the supervision of Kim Frontz, and completed in November 1999.

HISTORICAL NOTE

The Sells Hospital Service Women, based in Tucson, Arizona, organized in 1962 (later changing the name to Sells Service Women) in order to aid the Sells Indian Hospital in Sells, Arizona, by hosting arts and crafts activities, by acquiring necessary medical equipment, and by sponsoring the Sells Candy Strippers. The group quickly expanded its work to provide such items as clothes, shoes and playground equipment. The Sells Service Women often received help from other volunteer (mostly women's) organizations, either through knitting clothes or through aiding the women's fundraising efforts. In the late 1970s federal funding increased for the hospital, but the Sells Service Women continued its work in new ways by providing small scholarships for Tohono O'odham students attending Pima Community College and by donating books and magazines to libraries on the Reservation.

While some members moved away from Tucson, most of the group membership was stable and actively involved in the community. Muriel K. Sullivan, the group's first President, continued to work with the group until her death on October 26, 1995. Sullivan had worked as a real-estate agent as well as an extension economist for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Jessie M. Sorensen was the long-time Treasurer of the group until she took over as President after Sullivan's death. Lucille Juliani, a long-time member, was also a founder of the Tucson Symphony. And Anna Cullinan, another long-time member, was also involved with the Tucson Women's Council, the League of Women Voters and the Retired Military Wives Club. She also worked as a real-estate agent until she was voted into the State Legislature in 1975. Cullinan was an active member of the Sells Service Women until her death in May, 1989.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists mostly of information kept by Jessie M. Sorensen. As treasurer of the Sells Service Women, Sorensen kept up much correspondence and detailed financial records, including dues paid, expenses and check stubs.

There are many letters of thanks addressed to the Sells Service Women for their financial contributions to local community organizations (including the House of Samuel and the Pascua Cultural Center), and for their assistance for Pima Community College scholarships.

The Sells Service Women organized an Annual Card Party as their primary fundraising event, which was made possible through selling raffle tickets and actively seeking donations for the raffle from local businesses. The group was briefly involved with the "Gift Star Program" in the 1960s which enabled them to obtain hospital equipment through the purchase (and donation from others) of trading stamps. The program, however, was quickly phased out in the U.S. Southwest.

The collection contains detailed meeting minutes as well as "Treasurers' reports and notes" in two wire-bound notebooks. There are records of the magazine subscriptions and books purchased for various libraries on the Sells Indian Reservation, beginning in 1979. The group was very interested in the people they were helping and collected a variety of newspaper clippings and reports on the health and living conditions of the Tohono O'odham. There are also a few varied photographs in the collection of the group and of a student they helped financially through scholarships.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box 1

Series 1: Correspondence, 1963-1996

Folder 1: Financial Assistance for Students
1970-1993

Folder 2: Pascua Cultural Center
1982-1994

Folder 3: Thank Yous for Various Donations
1963-1991

Folder 4: Members and Miscellaneous
1970-1996

Series 2: Background and Meeting Minutes, 1962-ca. 1990s

Folder 5: Background, By-laws and Member Information

Folders 6-8: Meeting Minutes
1962-1992

Series 3: Financial Records, 1963-1996

Folder 9: Check Stubs
1964-1996

Folder 10: Treasurers' Reports and Notes
1970-1975

Contents: Two Notebooks

Folder 11: Receipts, Disbursements and IRS Information
1963-1994

Folder 12: Expenses, Donations and Scholarships
1973-1991

Box 2

Series 4: Fundraising and Donations, 1962-1994

Folders 13-15: Annual Card Party
1962-1977

Folder 16: Gift Star Program
1965-1968

Folder 17: Donations and Interests
1962-1994

Folder 18: Library Books and Magazine Subscriptions
1979-1993

Series 5: Photographs and Miscellaneous

Folder 19: Information Collected on the Tohono O'odham

Folder 20: Photographs
ca. 1970s-1980s

Folder 21: Miscellaneous Information