DESCRIPTION

The collection consists of photographs and a scrapbook. The photographs, taken between 1964 and 1968, relate to Muriel Sullivan’s work as an Extension Home Economist for the Bureau of Indian Affairs on the Tohono O’odham reservation. The scrapbook of photos, newspaper clippings and information on the Tohono O’odham was created by Muriel Sullivan to describe the work of the Sells Service Women between 1962 and 1983.

4 boxes, 2.25 linear ft.

ACQUISITION

The collection was donated by Muriel K. Sullivan in 1991 and 1994.

RELATED MATERIALS

Sells Service Women Papers, MS 1145.
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.
Muriel K. Sullivan was born in Brockton, Massachusetts and was educated in the Boston area. Sullivan worked for the Works Progress Administration in the area of early childhood training after graduating from college. She quickly changed jobs and began to work for Boston Edison where she learned to use the latest equipment in order to train others in cooking classes. As Boston Edison shifted all of its attention to war production during World War II, Sullivan was forced to look for another job. She worked briefly for the Farm Security Administration until the federal government dissolved the budget, at which time she taught sewing, cooking and home management in Boston-area junior high schools and senior high schools.

Diagnosed with pleurisy in the mid-1940s, Sullivan moved to Phoenix to clear her lungs. She worked for the Arizona Edison Company (now named Arizona Public Service) in the Home Services Department for about five years, at which time she married and relocated to Tucson. In 1962, with the help of Elizabeth Estrada, Sullivan established the Sells Service Women with a membership of 27 women. Sullivan became president of the group, a position which she retained until her death. Sullivan was responsible for bringing the University of Arizona’s Town and Country Week to the Tohono O’odham reservation. Every year the University would close prior to the start of summer session at which time anyone could participate in the variety of classes offered. Sullivan arranged for two women from each village on the reservation to attend the classes. She hoped that, through this program, the children of these women would be encouraged to attend the University. In 1964, after Sullivan’s husband died, she obtained a job with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and moved to Sells. She worked for the BIA from 1964 to 1968 and, as an Extension Home Economist, her job was to do anything worthwhile that upgraded living conditions on the reservation. Muriel Sullivan died on October 26, 1995.

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 Stripers. The group quickly expanded its work to provide such items as clothes, shoes and playground equipment. Their major fundraising event was their annual card party where they received many donations from local businesses and sold raffle tickets. 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.
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

There are two parts to this collection. The first part consists of photos recording Sullivan’s work for the BIA on the Tohono O’odham reservation from 1964-1968. In this capacity, Muriel Sullivan taught classes in sewing, nutrition, and arts & crafts for the women on the reservation, mostly in Sells, Pisinimo, Gila Bend, San Xavier, Santa Rosa Ranch, Kerwo, Topawa and New Fields. Sullivan labeled many of the photos, indicating the year, the project and sometimes the people. There are photos of the landscape and houses in Gila Bend and New Fields, and there are also several photos relating to the Sells Service Women. Most of the photos are black and white, but there are some color photos, slides and one negative.

The second part of the collection contains a scrapbook of newspaper clippings, photos and programs collected by Sullivan that details the work of the Sells Service Women from 1962-1983. The scrapbook also contains information on the Papago Candy Stripers, the Sells Service Women annual card party, and thank yous for the group’s various contributions.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box 1 of 4 (Black-and-white Photographs)

Folder 1 – Lesson Book
Folder 2 – Picture of Muriel Sullivan
Folder 3 – Home Decoration in Sells, Santa Rosa Ranch and Chu Chu, 1965
Folder 4 – Summer Sewing Session: Kerwo, 1965-1966
Folder 5 – Summer Sewing Session: Pisinimo, 1965-1967
Folder 6 – Summer Sewing Session: San Xavier, 1966-1967
Folder 7 – Summer Sewing Session: Santa Rosa Ranch, 1965-1967
Folder 8 – Summer Sewing Session: Sells, 1965-1967
Folder 9 – Summer Sewing Session: Topawa, 1965
Folder 10 – Summer Sewing Session: Vaya Chin, 1966
Folder 11 – Summer Sewing Session: Miscellaneous, 1965-1967
Folder 12 – Basic Dressmaking: Sells, Santa Rosa, Pisinimo, and Topawa, 1966, 1968
Folder 13 – Basic Dressmaking: Gila Bend and New Fields, 1965-1967
Folder 14 – Basic Dressmaking: Miscellaneous, 1967-1968
Folder 15 – San Xavier Community Hall: Making Drapes and Social Gathering, 1965-1966
Folder 16 – Knitting and Embroidery, 1967
Folder 18 – Foods and Nutrition Classes, 1965-1968
Folder 20 – Town and Country Week, 1966-1967

Box 2 of 4 (Black-and-white Photographs)

Folder 25 – Sells Service Women: Pisinimo Tour, 1966
Folder 26 – Sells Service Women: Sells Hospital, 1967-1968

**BOX AND FOLDER LIST (contd.)**

**Box 2 of 4 (Cont.)**

Folder 27 – Sells Service Women: Activities, 1968
Folder 28 – Gila Bend: People and Houses (interior), 1964-1967
Folder 29 – Gila Bend: Landscape, Houses (exterior) and Curtains, 1966-1967
Folder 30 – New Fields: Landscape
  Dates: 1965-1966
Folder 31 – Miscellaneous
  Dates: 1965-1968

**Box 3 of 4 (Color Photographs)**

Folder 32 – Summer Sewing Session Color Photos: Kerwo, Santa Rosa Ranch, and Sells, 1966-1967
Folder 34 – Papago Fair Color Photos
Folder 35 – Papago Fair Slides, 1966-1967
Folder 36 – Basic Dressmaking Color Photos
Folder 37 – Basic Dressmaking Slides
Folder 38 – San Xavier Community Hall Color Photos, 1965-1966
Folder 39 – Parent/Child Slides and Color Photo
Folder 41 – Foods and Nutrition Slides, 1966-1967
Folder 42 – Town and Country Week Color Photo
Folder 43 – Sells Service Women Slides
Folder 44 – Gila Bend Color Photos
Folder 45 – Gila Bend Slides
Folder 46 – Miscellaneous Slides

**Box 4 of 4**

1 scrapbook of Sells Service Women Activities, 1962-1983