

Accession # 2009.37

Rim Country Museums
Marguerite Noble Library
700 S. Green Valley Pkwy
Payson, AZ 85541
(928) 474-3483

Title

The Doris Sturges Harger Papers aka “Ten for the Tonto”

Dates

1963-1972

Extent

1 Box: 5 linear inches (0.4167 linear feet) textual materials

Creator

Doris Sturges (1911-2002)

Biographical History

The Tonto Apache Indian Reservation near Payson, Arizona was created in 1972 after a 10 year concentrated effort by the Apache Community, led by Melton Campbell, known as “Chief,” and the greater Payson community led by Doris Sturges, then manager of the Payson-Pine Chamber of Commerce.

The group that would become known as the Tonto Apache Tribe had at one time called a vast region of Central Arizona home; but after the Indian Wars most were forced onto the San Carlos Reservation. After they were allowed to leave the San Carlos Reservation many returned to the East Verde and Payson area. During this early period, the Apaches returned to their old way of life, especially those living along the East Verde; they moved camps during summer and winter seasons, gathered food, and hunted. Those returning to the town of Payson took on odd jobs or worked in the sawmill. It is unclear when they returned to Payson, but probably during the 1890s and early 1900s, before the dedication of much forest land to the Tonto National Forest in 1905. The government issued special use permits for permanent camps in the Forest. The first permit was issued in 1909 and the last permit in use was cancelled in 1965 with the death of the holder.

In 1930 Henry Irving bought property just north of Main Street, which became known as Indian Hill. He later moved to be with his daughter, but his relatives remained on the property. He failed to pay the property taxes from 1938-1944, and unknown to the Apache community the land was purchased in 1945 for the back taxes owed. It wasn't until 1954 that some Indian families were evicted and the move to what became known as “the Camp” began.

In 1973 Doris Sturges, having been widowed, focused all of her abundant energy on making contacts with government officials and such groups as Save the Children Foundation and the National Council of Indian Opportunity to improve the living conditions of the Apache community. Henry J. Keneally Jr., Chief, Area Health Education Branch of the Indian Health Service was a steadfast supporter of Mrs. Sturges's efforts.

A note on the spelling of Doris Sturges' name: Doris first husband was Joe Sturgis. He died in an automobile accident in 1962. In 1969 Doris married John Sturges. John died of cancer in 1974 and Doris married Andy Harger in 1978.

Scope and Content

The collection consists of correspondence, notes, House and Senate Bills, news clippings, and other miscellaneous items relating to the effort by Doris Sturges and others who worked towards the establishment of the Tonto Apache Reservation near Payson, Arizona.

The correspondence includes copies of letters Doris Sturges sent to individuals such as Senators Barry Goldwater and Carl Hayden, Representative Sam Steiger, Governor Jack Williams and their original replies. Mrs. Sturges corresponded with Sam Steiger and Henry Keneally frequently.

System of Arrangement

The donor, Doreen Kime, used these materials to create a book about Sturges' work and arranged the collection materials chronologically by year. This system of organization has been kept.

Conditions Governing Access

Collection is open for research.

Physical Access

A digital copy of the materials is also available. Please ask the Archivist for assistance.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

Unpublished and published manuscripts are protected by copyright. Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

Languages and Scripts of the Materials

All materials are in English.

Custodial History

Materials were in the custody of Doreen Kime following Doris Sturges' death.

Immediate Source of Acquisition/Provenance

All materials were donated to the Northern Gila County Historical Society, Inc. by Doreen Kime, the daughter of Doris Sturges.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Publication Note

A website in memory of Doris Sturges, including articles by Sturges and a copy of the dedication to the book written by Doreen Kime, can be viewed at http://www.matrixbookstore.biz/ten_for_tonto.htm. According to this website, Kime's book "Ten Years for the Tonto" was distributed to family members only and never formally published.

Preferred Citation

Bibliographic citations must cite the title of the collection, the box number (or other location) and the Northern Gila County Historical Society, Inc. Please use the following example:

Doris Sturges to Senator Barry Goldwater, Box 1, Folder 1, the Doris Sturges Harger Papers, Marguerite Noble Library, Northern Gila County Historical Society, Inc.

Processing Information

All materials were digitized in June 2009.

Description Control

Finding aid written by Sandra Carson, July 2009.

Revised by Christine Solymossy using *DACS2*, February 2016.

Access Points

Agnew, Spiro, 1918-1996
American Indian Health Service
Aspinall, Wayne, 1896-1983
Campbell, Melton
Fannin, Paul, 1907-2002
Goldwater, Barry M. (Barry Morris), 1909-1998
Hayden, Carl Trumbull, 1877-1972
Houser, Nicholas P.
Keneally, Henry J. Jr.
Nixon, Richard, 1913-1994
Payson, Arizona
Payson Tonto-Apache Reservation, Arizona
Rhodes, John, 1943
Shriver, Sargent, 1915
Steiger, Representative Sam, 1929
Sturges, Doris (1911-2002)
Tonto Apache Tribe of Arizona
Udall, Morris, 1922-1998
United States. Bureau of Indian Affairs.
United States. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Western Apache Indians--Politics and government
Williams, Jack, 1909-1998

Container List

Box 1:

- Folder 1 Brief history of the Tonto Apaches and introductory information
- Folder 2 Correspondence 1963
- Folder 3 Correspondence 1966
- Folder 4 Correspondence and miscellaneous documents 1967
- Folder 5 Correspondence and miscellaneous documents 1968
- Folder 6 Correspondence and miscellaneous documents 1969
- Folder 7 Correspondence January – September 1970
- Folder 8 Correspondence October – December and miscellaneous documents 1970
- Folder 9 Correspondence January – July 1971
- Folder 10 Correspondence August – December 1971
- Folder 11 Miscellaneous documents 1971
- Folder 12 Correspondence and miscellaneous documents 1972