Miscellaneous Landmarks Commission Photographs

The Miscellaneous Departmental Photographs Collection contains images produced by various Kansas City, Missouri city departments during the 1920s through the 1970s. This collection (34-4) is a part of the Landmarks Commission Collection (P34).

**Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** City of Kansas City, Missouri/Kansas City Landmarks Commission  
**Title:** Miscellaneous Landmarks Commission photographs  
**Dates:** 1920s-1970s  
**Size:** 4 boxes  
**Location:** P34-4

**Administrative Information**

**Restrictions on access:** Unrestricted access.

**Additional physical form available:** Photographs digitized.

**Acquisition information:** Gift, June 2005, Accession #2005-30, Kansas City Landmarks Commission.

**Custodial history:** This group of photographs was part of a larger group of photographs donated and placed in a P34 series.

**Citation note:** Miscellaneous Landmarks Commission photographs (P34-4), Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

**Collection Description**

**Scope and content note**

This collection contains 575 photographs, the majority of which are 8" x 10", black and white prints. Some color prints, and prints of smaller or larger sizes than 8" x 10", exist in the collection. The photographs came to the Library organized into 27 categories, some of which included notes or accompanying documentation describing their background. The basic categories of the collection indicated the sources of the photographs, usually corresponding to a specific city department or program (e.g. Department of Public Works, Fire Department, Rat Control Program, etc.). These categories were retained when the collection was processed. In most cases the photographers are unknown. The collection also contains 53 black and white negatives, 4" x 5" (West Bottoms series), and 2 1/4" x 3 1/4" (automobile salvage series) in size.

The collection provides a wide-ranging look at Kansas City, Missouri from the 1920s through the 1970s, as well as a reflection of various city improvement and planning efforts during this time period. Among examples of the latter are a series of 54 “before and after” street shots produced by the Department of Public Works in the 1940s to demonstrate street and lighting improvements at various locations around the city. Another example of photographs in the collection documenting city planning processes are 38 photographs taken in the area just south of Brush Creek in the mid-1920s. These photographs were intended to assist city planners making changes to streets, sidewalks and intersections, and...
many include handwritten notes and drawings of proposed improvements in the Plaza/Brookside area superimposed upon the prints themselves. In addition to providing a window into the planning and design process, these photographs provide a record of the Country Club Plaza area in its early years, and include images of Brush Creek, E.C. White School, streetcar lines, brickworks, and open spaces in the area before development.

A number of historic Kansas City landmarks, neighborhoods, and events also are captured in the collection. Over 100 photographs document the damage and repair efforts associated with the 1951 Flood, and another series shows the week-by-week progression of improvements to Municipal Stadium in preparation for the first game to be played there by the Kansas City Athletics. Additionally, photographs in the collection show the City Market, Hyde Park, Roanoke and Valentine Neighborhoods, Signboard Hill and Pershing Road near Union Station, and Downtown. Also noteworthy are the photographs of the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department, which include publicity stills featuring demonstrations of law enforcement tools just becoming popular in the 1950s, such as radar patrol cars, polygraph and chemical sobriety tests. Several other groups of photos in the collection document rarely photographed aspects of the city’s functioning, such as landfills, rat control efforts, salvage yards, and drainage.

**Collection Inventory**

- Box 1, Folders 1 - 2 - Pershing Road Area
- Box 1, Folders 3 - 10 - Brookside Extension, 1926
- Box 1, Folder 11 - Brush Creek
- Box 1, Folder 12 - Stockyards/West Bottoms
- Box 1, Folder 13 - Valentine Area, 1946-48
- Box 1, Folders 14 - 18 - no discernable category or department of origin
- Box 1, Folders 19 - 24 - Kansas City, Missouri Police Department
- Box 1, Folder 25 - 84th Terrace and Central
- Box 1, Folder 26 - U.S. 169 and Barry Road
- Box 1, Folders 26 - 27 - Hyde Park Area Apartments
- Box 1, Folders 28 - 29 - Southwest Trafficway and Roanoke
- Box 1, Folders 30 - 35 - Street and Lighting
- Box 2, Folders 1 - 4 - Street and Lighting (con’t)
- Box 2, Folders 5 - 6 - Country Club District
- Box 2, Folders 6 - 12 - Municipal Stadium
- Box 2, Folders 13 - 14 - Parks and Recreation
- Box 2, Folders 15 - 16 - Landfills
- Box 2, Folders 16 - 19 - Rat Control
- Box 2, Folders 20 - 22 - Municipal Farm
- Box 2, Folders 23 - 34 - 1951 Flood
- Box 3, Folders 1 - 11 - 1951 Flood (con’t)
- Box 3, Folder 11 - City Market
- Box 3, Folder 12 - 13 - Kansas City, Missouri Fire Department
- Box 3, Folder 14 - 18 - Public Housing
- Box 3, Folder 18 - 22 - Public Works
- Box 3, Folder 22 - 24 - Sewer and Drainage
- Box 3, Folder 25 - 29 - Works Progress Administration (WPA)
- Box 3, Folder 29 - 34 - Auto Wrecking
- Box 4, Negatives
Processed by Special Collections Librarian Daniel Coleman, 2006-2007.