Guide to the Charles E. Arnold Collection MS 160

Finding aid prepared by Lauren Rasmussen
Collection processed as part of grant project supported by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) with generous funding from The Andrew Mellon Foundation.
San Diego History Center Document Collection
1649 El Prado, Suite 3
San Diego, CA, 92101
619-232-6203
March 14, 2012
Title: Charles E. Arnold Collection
Identifier/Call Number: MS 160
Contributing Institution: San Diego History Center Document Collection
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.75 Linear feet (4 boxes)
Date (inclusive): 1869-1982
Abstract: The collection contains personal and business papers of Charles E. Arnold, a prominent San Diego realtor and real estate developer.
creator: Arnold, Charles E. (Charles Elmo)
Conditions Governing Access
This collection is open for research.
Conditions Governing Use
The San Diego History Center (SDHC) holds the copyright to any unpublished materials. SDHC Library regulations do apply.
Processing Information
Collection processed by Lauren Rasmussen on March 14, 2012.
Collection processed as part of grant project supported by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) with generous funding from The Andrew Mellon Foundation.
Preferred Citation
Charles E. Arnold Collection, MS 160, San Diego History Center Document Collection, San Diego, CA.
Biographical / Historical Notes
Charles Elmo Arnold was born in San Francisco on June 11, 1880 to Gilbert C. Arnold and Susan J. (née McConaughy). In October 1880, the family moved to San Diego, where Gilbert joined the prospering real estate firm founded in 1869 by his brother, Cyrus, and his father, Philander. Arnold’s first job was as a paper boy for the San Diego Union newspaper. Between 1898 and 1900, Arnold served in the U.S. National Guard. In 1907, after a number of jobs at local banks, he joined the family business where his father was now the sole proprietor.
During World War I, Arnold served in the U.S. Navy as a supply and disbursement officer. Gilbert died in 1920, at which time Arnold inherited the realty company and changed the firm’s name from G.C. Arnold & Son back to Arnold Realty Co. In 1921, he became a charter member of the San Diego Realty Board. Arnold began to push for legislation to professionalize the real estate industry in 1922. Through his efforts, the initiative became law on April 27, 1923, requiring all real estate brokers pass a qualification exam in order to obtain a license to practice. Arnold became president of the San Diego Realty Board in 1930.
He sold Arnold Realty Co. in 1943 to William McCreary, a banker from Kansas, but continued to consult as a real estate advisor and professional appraiser. He served as foreman for the San Diego Grand Jury in 1932 and again in 1946, and as foreman for the Federal Grand Jury in 1957. He also served as the coxswain of the San Diego Rowing Club and participated in the San Diego Historical Society, both organizations where he was an honorary life member. Arnold was heavily involved in the compilation of “The History of the San Diego Realty Board” and would go on to publish a book entitled *The Birth of a Profession* that provided an in depth overview of the history of the real estate business. Never married, he died on October 30, 1972 at age 92.
Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
Some of the deeds are brittle and fragile. (March 14, 2012)
Scope and Content
The collection contains personal and business papers of Charles Arnold. Personal papers include correspondence, articles and speeches written by Arnold, as well as newspaper clippings related to local real estate development and activities of Arnold’s alma mater. Arnold Realty Co. records include administrative correspondence and property records, including estate deeds for Arnold’s clients. The deeds include mortgage papers, estate wills, and property leases. San Diego Realty Board records contain the constitution and by-laws, annual reports, Board correspondence, and membership lists. There are also property maps, clippings about San Diego oil leases, and an assortment of materials about the development of the Hillcrest community. Legislative papers, such as assembly bills and drafts, related to the professionalization of the real estate industry are also present, as well as information on two professional real estate associations: California Real Estate Association and National Association of Real Estate Boards. Class lists for the original licensing courses and exams are included. Additionally the collection contains drafts and correspondence related to the publication Arnold’s book, “The Birth of a Profession.”
**Arrangement**

The collection is arranged into five series:

Series I: Personal Papers
Series II: Arnold Realty Co.
Series III: San Diego Realty Board
Series IV: Real Estate Legislation, Associations, and Education
Series V: "The Birth of a Profession" (publication)

Items within each series are arranged by subject. Itemized database of deeds in Series II (Box 1 folder 8 thru Box 2 folder 16) can be accessed at the San Diego History Center Library.

**Comments**

Material added to collection from Document Files Collection - Arnold, Jeffrey & Mouser Real Estate file.

Deeds in Series II: These retain original order. For preservation purposes deeds were removed from original housing. Letters from original dividers added to file name in corresponding folders in container list. Itemized database of deeds can be accessed at the San Diego History Center Library.

The San Diego Realty Board is also called the San Diego Real Estate Board and the San Diego Board of Realtors on occasion throughout the collection.

**Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Accession number 820122.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Akin, William H.
Arnold Realty Co..
Arnold, Charles E. (Charles Elmo)
Arnold, Jeffery & Mouser.
California Real Estate Association.
California. Real Estate Commission.
G. C. Arnold & Son.
Hall, Michael Francis
National Association of Real Estate Boards.
Real Estate Association of San Diego.
Real Estate Exchange of San Diego.
San Diego Realty Board.
Administration of estates
Coronado (Calif.)
Hillcrest (San Diego, Calif.)
Real estate agents
Real estate boards
Real property
San Diego (Calif.)

---

**Series I: Personal Papers**

Box-folder 1:1  
Correspondence, 1904 April 22-1970 March 8

Box-folder 1:2  
Articles by Arnold, 1922-1966 and undated

- Includes:
  - Articles on the professionalization of the real estate industry

Box-folder 1:3  
Speeches by Arnold, 1943 August 25-1968 February 16

- Includes:
  - Speeches on grand juries and his speeches to the San Diego Realty Board
Box-folder 1:4  Speech source materials, 1961 June 21 and undated
Box-folder 1:5  Newspaper articles, 1921 April 4-1965 December 27
Box-folder 1:6  Miscellanea, 1870-1970 and undated

Includes:
- Rowing club rules
- National Association of Real Estate Boards decal
- Achievement certificates

Series II: Arnold Realty Co.

Box-folder 1:7  Administration, sales records, and accounts, 1869 December 22-1969 February 2 and undated

Includes:
- Copy of itemized lumber bill from 1869, the year Arnold Realty Co. was founded by Cyrus and Philander
- List from 1911 detailing prices of properties in downtown San Diego

Box-folder 1:8  Deeds (A), 1894-1917
Box-folder 1:9  Deeds (B), 1887-1917
Box-folder 1:10  Deeds (C), 1887-1918
Box-folder 1:11  Deeds (D), 1888-1916
Box-folder 1:12  Deeds (E, F), 1890-1917

Scope and Content
Two (2) Frevert family deeds (in Oversize Collections D4)

Box-folder 1:13  Deeds (G), 1885-1916
Box-folder 1:14  Deeds (H), 1907-1916
Box-folder 1:15  Deeds (H), 1903-1914
Box-folder 1:16  Deeds (H), 1904-1917
Box-folder 1:17  Deeds (H), 1885-1917
Box-folder 2:1  Deeds (I, J), 1898-1916
Box-folder 2:2  Deeds (K, L), 1904-1913
Box-folder 2:3  Deeds (K, L), 1873-1914
Box-folder 2:4  Deeds (M), 1913-1916
Box-folder 2:5  Deeds (M), 1906-1916
Box-folder 2:6  Deeds (N, O), 1891-1918
Box-folder 2:7  Deeds (P, Q), 1888-1918
Box-folder 2:8  Deeds (R), 1885-1916
Box-folder 2:9  Deeds (S), 1908-1918
Box-folder 2:10  Deeds (S), 1910-1914
Box-folder 2:11  Deeds (S), 1907-1915
Box-folder 2:12  Deeds (S), 1886-1906
Box-folder 2:13  Deeds (T-V), 1905-1917
Box-folder 2:14  Deeds (T-V), 1888-1914
Box-folder 2:15  Deeds (W), 1907-1917
Box-folder 2:16  Deeds (W-Z), 1886-1913
Box-folder 3:1  Company notes, 1874-1944 and undated

Includes:
- List of maps on file with Arnold Realty Co.
- List from August 1940 detailing businesses renting in a building on 7th and Broadway.
- Notes the amount of rent paid per month by each business.
- List of downtown property values from 1909 and notes on land already sold

Box-folder 3:2  Company advertisements, 1887 April 22-1926 August 29
Series III: San Diego Realty Board

Box-folder 3:3  Board resolutions, 1922-1935
Box-folder 3:4  Annual reports and meeting minutes, 1929-1970
Box-folder 3:5  Officer and membership lists, 1967-1970
Box-folder 3:6  "History of the San Diego Realty Board" correspondence, 1963 April 22-1966 November 15
  Includes:
  Letters detail efforts to compile a publication of "History of the San Diego Realty Board"
  Letters from past-presidents regarding details of the Board's history

Box-folder 3:7  "History of the San Diego Realty Board" notes, 1930-1967 and undated
  Scope and Content
  "Profession is Born" notes (in oversized collection D4)

Box-folder 3:8  "History of the San Diego Realty Board" drafts and pamphlet, 1965-1969 and undated
  Includes:
  Final published pamphlet

Box-folder 3:9  Board property notes and maps, 1905 April 25-1982 February 10 and undated
  Includes:
  Maps of Marston Hills, Vermont/Cypress Streets, and Downtown Booster Sketch (in Oversize Collections D4)

Box-folder 3:10  Hillcrest, 1922 May 24-1968 February 18 and undated
  Includes:
  Property map of Hillcrest with handwritten notes regarding rental prices for different plots in the neighborhood, May 24, 1922
  Brief history of the Hillcrest neighborhood compiled by Arnold

Box-folder 3:11  Oil and oil leases in San Diego, 1920-1944
  Includes:
  Newspaper clippings compiled by Arnold at request of the San Diego Realty Board regarding oil leases for sale and oil leases sold in San Diego County

Box-folder 3:12  Miscellanea, 1915-1939
  Includes:
  San Diego Realty Board leaflet and stationary
  Newspaper clipping related to board activities
  History of California real estate

Series IV: Real Estate Legislation, Associations, and Education

Box-folder 3:13  History and notes on real estate industry, 1938 June-1963 August and undated
Box-folder 3:14  Legislation, 1924 July 24-1968 September 28 and undated
  Includes:
  Drafts of proposed legislative efforts and proposal for Senate Bill No. 355 (legislation requiring qualifying courses and exam for all California real estate agents/brokers)
  Examiner's Act draft that proposes a "Board of Real Estate Examiners of the State of California"
  Notes from the 1924 California Real Estate Association Legislative Committee meeting
Box-folder 3:15  **Legislation: articles and publicity, 1929 December 23-1963 April and undated**

Includes:
- National Real Estate Journal article that applauds the California legislative efforts, December 23, 1929.
- California Real Estate Bulletin article detailing the history of real estate law from 1917-1963, April 1963.

Box-folder 3:16  **California Real Estate Association, 1923-1970 and undated**

Includes:
- By-laws and constitution
- Program for the California Real Estate Association 18th annual convention (December 1922)
- Letter detailing association history through 1954

Box-folder 3:17  **National Association of Real Estate Boards, 1928-1970 and undated**

Includes:
- Association code of ethics and statement of policy

Box-folder 3:18  **Real estate classes and attendance rosters, 1923 October 4-1968 October 31**

Includes:
- Roster for the first realty qualification course held in November 1924 at the University of Southern California
- Class payment list and roster from the 1925 course
- Publication announcing the University of California, Berkeley’s plan to present a course of study for Real Estate and Urban Land Economics, 1947

Series V: “The Birth of a Profession” (publication)

Box-folder 3:19  **Publication notes and correspondence, 1957 February 5-1967 October 30 and undated**

Includes:
- Correspondence with William Akin and John Griffith, who both assisted Arnold in the compilation of the history of the profession
- List suggesting how the published book should be distributed to local colleges and associations

Box-folder 3:20  “Birth of a Profession” (Pages 1-60) (photostatic copy), undated

Box-folder 3:21  “Birth of a Profession” (Pages 61-125) (photostatic copy), undated

Box-folder 4:1  “Birth of a Profession” (Pages 1-60) (mock-up copy), undated

Box-folder 4:2  “Birth of a Profession” (Pages 61-125) (mock-up copy), undated

Box-folder 4:3  “Birth of a Profession” (bound draft), undated