Guide to the Old San Diego Community Church Records MS 219

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
April 4, 2012
Title: Old San Diego Community Church Records
Identifier/Call Number: MS 219
Contributing Institution: San Diego History Center Document Collection
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 0.75 Linear feet(2 boxes)
Date (inclusive): 1938-1970
Abstract: The collection contains materials related to the development, administration, and activities of the Old San Diego Community Church, as well as the surrounding Old Town San Diego neighborhood.
creator: Old San Diego Community Church.
Immediate Source of Acquisition
Accession number 2001.091.
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The San Diego History Center (SDHC) holds the copyright to any unpublished materials.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
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Preferred Citation
Old San Diego Community Church Records, MS 219, San Diego History Center Document Collection, San Diego, CA.
Biographical / Historical Notes
The Old San Diego Community Church, also called the Old Town Community Church, was an Evangelical Protestant church founded in 1941. The plan for the Church stemmed from the results of the 1941 Old Town census which found that the majority of the area's families identified as Protestant, but there was no community church in the neighborhood. Original Sunday services were held in the Old San Diego Chamber of Commerce building until August 1, 1942 when George Marston, a local philanthropist, helped the Church purchase the Casa de Machado adobe in Old Town. Under Reverend Joseph S. Fox, the adobe was renovated and renamed the Machado Memorial Chapel. Reverend Fox served the church until 1951, when he retired to do field work for the International Council of Community Churches. Reverend Fox was later installed as Pastor Emeritus at the Church's 20th anniversary celebration in 1962.
The Church served as the home to the local Boy Scout Troop and the Old Town Men's Club. The Church had close ties with the San Diego Historical Society, the San Diego Historical Days Association, and the International Council of Community Churches. Between 1963 and 1964, the Church began to feel pressure from the California State Parks Department and the San Diego City Council to vacate the Machado Chapel so that an historical 'Old Town Park' could be established. In 1967, the State offered the congregation $225k to purchase the Church's land. The offer was unanimously rejected by the Church. Despite the efforts of the congregation and the presiding minister, Reverend Robert D. Edwards, the Church was eventually forced out and held its last services in the Machado Memorial Chapel on August 3, 1969. It appears that the Church considered purchasing additional land in Old Town to re-establish themselves, but this plan never came to fruition.
Scope and Content
The collection spans from 1938, during the years of the Church’s development, to 1970, shortly after the building was taken over by the State. The documents primarily consist of Church records, including by-laws, meeting minutes, administrative reports, and correspondence. Several sermons and service programs are also present, as are newspaper articles related to church activities. A small section of miscellaneous items regarding the organizations the Church was involved with are also present. This includes issues of the San Diego Historical Society’s newsletter, ‘The Historic’, pamphlets for the International Council of Community Churches, and bylaws of the San Diego Historical Days Association. Of note are the church’s Negotiating Committee meeting minutes and Church correspondence that includes letters with State and City representatives regarding the dispute over the Old Town Historical Park development. The Church also kept materials related to the Old Town neighborhood that include maps, event flyers, and community newsletters.
Arrangement
The collection is arranged into three series:
Series I: Old San Diego Community Church Records
Series II: Old Town San Diego
Series III: Miscellanea

Items within each series are arranged by subject.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
Some documents are brittle or warped around the edges. (April 4, 2012)

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Bentley, Robert A.
Edwards, Robert D.
Fox, Joseph S.
International Council of Community Churches.
Marston, George White, 1850-1946
Old San Diego Community Church.
Page, Willard A.
San Diego Chamber of Commerce.
San Diego Historical Society.
Sanders, Robert E.
Casa de Machado (San Diego, Calif.)
Christian communities
Christianity
Church
Community churches
Independent churches
Machado de Silvas adobe (San Diego, Calif.)
Machado Memorial Chapel (San Diego, Calif.)
Old Town (San Diego, Calif.)
Old Town San Diego State Historic Park (Calif.)
Pastor
Protestant
Protestant church buildings
Religion
Religious communities
Religious institutions
San Diego (Calif.)

Series I: Old San Diego Community Church Records

Box-folder 1:1  Constitutions, by-laws, and resolutions, 1946-1967
Box-folder 1:2  Officer and member lists, 1959-1970
Box-folder 1:3  Meeting minutes and committee reports, 1965-1969
Box-folder 1:4  Annual reports, 1948-1957
Box-folder 1:5  Annual reports, 1958-1965
Box-folder 1:6  Financial statements and budgets, 1950 August-1969 September
Box-folder 1:7  Correspondence, 1943 November 3-1969 October 6 and undated
Box-folder 1:8  Correspondence: Church development, 1943 August 6-1944 October 11
Box-folder 1:9  Correspondence: 20th Anniversary, 1962 June 6-June 25 and undated
Box-folder 1:10 Correspondence: Old Town State Park development, 1966 April 18-1969 December 11 and undated
Box-folder 1:11 Speeches and statements, 1960-1966 and undated
Box-folder 1:12 Sermons, 1948 September 12 and undated
Box-folder 1:13 Service programs, 1950 June 11-1968 August 4 and undated
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box-folder:</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1:14</td>
<td>Flyers and brochures, 1945 April 24-1969 September 29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1:15</td>
<td>Newsletters, 1948-1960 and undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1:16</td>
<td>Drafts and notes, 1950 April 9-1962 June 21 and undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1:17</td>
<td>Articles, 1946-1968</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1:18</td>
<td>Photograph prints and negatives, undated</td>
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<td><strong>Series II:</strong> Old Town San Diego</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2:5</td>
<td>History of San Diego, 1953</td>
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<td>Box-folder 2:6</td>
<td>Machado House history, 1943 and undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2:7</td>
<td>Tourist and information brochures, undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2:8</td>
<td>Community events, announcements, and programs, 1939 June 14-1950 September 9 and undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2:9</td>
<td>&quot;Elliot Plans&quot; Old San Diego Chamber of Commerce correspondence, 1946 December 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2:10</td>
<td>Newspaper articles, 1960 March 27-1968 December 12 and undated</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Series III:</strong> Miscellanea</td>
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<td>Box-folder 2:11</td>
<td>International Council of Community Churches pamphlets, undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2:12</td>
<td>San Diego Historical Society, 1949 October 15-1952 April 24 and undated</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Includes:</td>
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<td>Issues of the Society's newsletter, the “Historic”</td>
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<td>Announcements regarding SDHC events</td>
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<td>Box-folder 2:13</td>
<td>San Diego Historical Days Association, 1950 April 3 and undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2:14</td>
<td>San Diego Art Society brochures, 1952-1963 and undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box-folder Oversize</td>
<td>Evening Tribune issue celebrating Marston's 60th anniversary, 1938 August 8</td>
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