Finding aid for the Philip Ahn papers 3007

Sarah Cassone
USC Libraries East Asian Library
2018 January
Doheny Memorial Library
3550 Trousdale Parkway
Los Angeles, California 90089-1825
URL: http://libraries.usc.edu/locations/east-asian-library
Finding aid for the Philip Ahn papers 3007

Language of Material: English

Contributing Institution: USC Libraries East Asian Library

Title: Philip Ahn papers

creator: Ahn, Philip, 1905-1978

Identifier/Call Number: 3007

Identifier/Call Number: 947

Physical Description: 4 Linear Feet 4 bankers boxes

Date (inclusive): 1935-2001

Date (bulk): 1935-1978

Abstract: Philip Ahn was a Korean American actor, WWII veteran, and USC alum. This small collection comprises primarily personal and family photographs, film and television stills, and awards and realia documenting Ahn's professional career, personal life, and his numerous involvements within the Korean community. It also contains scripts, teleplays, and some biographical materials.

Organization

The Philip Ahn papers have been organized into the following series: 1. Film and TV stills; 2. Scripts and teleplays; 3. Biographical materials, awards, and realia; 4. Personal and family photographs.

The original arrangement of the film and TV stills was primarily chronological; this organization has been kept intact and applied to the remainder of the series excluding the scripts and teleplays series, which has been arranged alphabetically, as documented in the separated materials note.

Scope and Contents

The Philip Ahn papers, 1935-2001 (bulk 1935-1978), consist of film and television stills, scripts and teleplays, biographical materials, certificates, awards, realia, and photographs created and collected by Philip Ahn as well as by family members after his death. The materials document Ahn's career as a film and television actor, as well as his armed service history and many commitments to the Korean community.

Photographs make up the bulk of the papers, both in the form of film and television stills as well as personal and family related items. There are numerous headshots, portraits, and family events, as well as materials collected after Ahn's death, including photo albums from his funeral and his posthumous induction into Hollywood Walk of Fame. The papers also include certificates of Ahn's achievements, such as his multiple appointments as honorary mayor of Panorama City, receipt of the Heart Service Award, and his acceptance as a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Awards and realia (mainly in the form of plaques) are also prevalent within the collection and largely relate to Ahn's armed service history and contributions, as well as his local involvement in the Korean community. The remainder of the collection consists of scripts and teleplays, articles and clippings, some correspondence, and various publications and programs, including a program and invitation for the 46th Annual Academy Awards.

Biographical

Philip Ahn, born March 29, 1905 in Los Angeles, was a Korean American film and television actor (despite his portrayal as Japanese in many roles) and USC alum. He was discovered for his first film role ("The General Died at Dawn", 1936) while on campus and subsequently dropped out after completion of his second year in order to seriously pursue acting.

Ahn was the son of Dosan Ahn Chang-ho and Helen Lee Ahn; his family was reportedly the first of Korean descent to settle in Los Angeles, emigrating to the United States in 1902. His father was an activist and educator during the colonial period of the Korean Independence movement and returned to Korea in the 1920s to continue his efforts there. Ahn was the oldest of two brothers and two sisters, one of whom was Susan Ahn Cuddy, the first ever Asian-American woman to join the U.S. Navy.

Ahn revealed his desire to be involved in society by the young age of 13, selling war bonds for which he received commendation of his excellence. This drive extended into Ahn's academic career at USC, where he was the member of multiple honor societies, assistant to the Dean of Men, president of the USC Cosmopolitan Club, and chairman of the All University Committee on International Relations.

Despite his active film career during the 1930s and 1940s, wherein he worked with such actors as Bing Crosby, Shirley Temple and Anna May Wong, Ahn found the time to assist during World War II as a member of the U.S. Infantry. Ahn continued his armed services involvement during the Vietnam War, visiting American and Korean soldiers at the invitation of the U.S. Government, for which he received a number of awards and accolades. Ahn was also an instrumental part of establishing the Do San Memorial Park in Seoul, Korea and worked to make Los Angeles a sister city of Pusan, Korea. He helped bring the Korean Bell of Friendship to San Pedro, California and served as honorary mayor of Panorama City.
California for twenty years.

Philip Ahn died on February 28, 1978 due to complications from surgery. He was 72. On November 14, 1984, he posthumously became the first-ever Korean American actor to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Conditions Governing Access
COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE. Advance notice required for access.

Conditions Governing Use
All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the Curator of the Korean Heritage Library. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the Korean Heritage Library as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained.

Preferred Citation
[Box/Folder# or Item name]. Philip Ahn papers, Collection no. 3007, Korean Heritage Library, USC Libraries, University of Southern California.

Immediate Source of Acquisition
Gift of the Ahn family.

Related Archival Materials
Related materials pertaining to Philip Ahn’s father can be found within USC’s Korean-American Digital Archive under An Chang Ho, as part of the Korean American Private Records subcollection. http://libguides.usc.edu/KADA

Separated Materials
This collection includes correspondence between USC and the Ahn family regarding the processing of Philip Ahn’s papers, specifically that the scripts would be housed as part of USC’s Cinematic Arts library. There is an inventory within the collection (compiled by Ahn’s family members) of the scripts that were given to the Cinematic Arts library, as well as a listing of the film and tv stills that were to be kept within this current collection and housed at the Korean Heritage Library. As the Ahn scripts in the Cinematic Arts library have yet to be processed, please consult Box 1, Folder 40 for a complete list of their holdings. It should also be noted that some scripts and teleplays, many incomplete and that were not featured on the inventory, remained loose within Box 1 of this collection; these have now been organized into their own series and arranged alphabetically.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Academy Awards (Motion pictures) -- Archival resources
Actors -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archival resources
Actors -- California -- Los Angeles -- Photographs
Asian American men -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archival resources
Asian Americans in the motion picture industry -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archival resources
Awards -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archival resources
Korean American men -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archival resources
Korean American motion picture actors and actresses -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archival resources
Municipal officials and employees, Honorary -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archival resources
Vietnam War, 1961-1975 -- Archival resources
World War, 1939-1945 -- Archival resources
United States -- Armed Forces -- Asian Americans -- Archival resources
Certificates
Film stills
Realia
Scripts (documents)
Television scripts
Ahn, Philip, 1905-1978 -- Archives
Cuddy, Susan Ahn, 1915-- -- Archives
An, Ch'ang-ho, 1878-1938 -- Archives

Film and television stills
| Box 1, Folder 13 | "Kung Fu" (TV series) undated |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | Make-up series undated |
| Box 1, Folder 15 | Miscellaneous/ unidentified film/TV stills undated |
| Box 1, Folder 1 | "Anything Goes" 1935 |
| Box 1, Folder 2 | "The General Died at Dawn" 1936 |
| Box 1, Folder 3 | "Thank You, Mr. Moto" and "Daughter of Shanghai" 1937 |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | "Something to Sing About", "Let's Get Tough", and Rogue's Regiment" 1937-1948 |
| Box 1, Folder 4 | "King of Chinatown" and "A Yank on the Burma Road" 1938-1941 |
| Box 1, Folder 5 | "Forever Yours" and "The Adventures of Smilin' Jack" 1942 |
| Box 1, Folder 6 | "China" and "The Story of Dr. Wassell" 1943 |
| Box 1, Folder 7 | "China Sky" 1944 |
| Box 1, Folder 8 | "The Cobra Strikes" and "Women in the Night" 1948 |
| Box 1, Folder 9 | "Hell's Half Acre" and "Shanghai Story" 1952-1953 |
| Box 1, Folder 10 | "The Way to the Gold", "Battle Hymn", and "Never So Few" 1957-1959 |
| Box 1, Folder 11 | "Thoroughly Modern Millie" 1967 |

Scripts and teleplays

| Box 1, Folder 16 | "An Almost Perfect Plan" 1959 |
| Box 1, Folder 17 | Chan #12 - one line breakdown 1947-08-18 |
| Box 1, Folder 18 | "Chinese Checkers" 1955 |
| Box 1, Folder 19 | [Commercial teleplays and unidentified/incomplete scripts] 1963-1977 |
| Box 1, Folder 20 | "Daughter of Shanghai" 1937-09 |
| Box 1, Folder 21 | "Dawn Lily" undated |
| Box 1, Folder 22 | "Diamond Sutra" undated |
| Box 1, Folder 23 | "Disputed Passage" undated |
| Box 1, Folder 24 | DLC #464 undated |
| Box 1, Folder 25 | "A Girl Named Tamiko" 1961-12-14 |
| Box 1, Folder 26 | "The Healers" undated |
| Box 1, Folder 27 | "Jackson and Jill in "It's a Deal" undated |
| Box 1, Folder 29 | "Miracles Do Happen" - A Christmas radio program undated |
| Box 1, Folder 28 | "Lillie May" undated |
| Box 1, Folder 30 | Ohanian - "Death Watch" 1976-01-30 |
| Box 1, Folder 31 | "Survival Mechanism" 1955 |
| Box 1, Folder 32 | "The Tokyo Doll" 1960 |
| Box 1, Folder 33 | "Whodunit?" 1941-12-11 |

Biographical materials, awards, and realia

| Box 3, Item 021 | [Clay mold of face (Philip Ahn)] undated |
| Box 3, Item 019 | In Appreciation: 1st Logistical Command Special Services Vietnam [commemorative goblet] undated |
| Box 3, Item 016 | In Recognition of Your Contribution to the Usarhaw Special Services Entertainment Program [plaque] undated |
| Box 1, Folder 34 | [Philip Ahn memorial and bio] undated |
| Box 3, Item 017 | Sgt. Philip Ahn [ nameplate, wood] undated |
| Box 1, Folder 35 | [Casting calls] 1937-1972 |
| Box 1, Folder 36 | [Programs and publications] 1946-1986 |
| Box 1, Folder 37 | [Correspondence] 1948, 1973 |
| Box 1, Folder 38 | [Articles and clippings] 1957-1987 |
| Box 3, Item 018 | With Deep Affection and Gratitude for a Decade of Service as Honorary Mayor, Panorama City [commemorative bowl] 1962-1972 |
| Box 1, Folder 39 | Certificates and awards 1965-1978 |
| Box 2, Item 002 | Young Men's Christian Association [plaque] 1965-1967 |
| Box 2, Item 001 | Honorary Mayor's Award [plaque] 1966 |
| Box 2, Item 003 | [Red standing frame with Korean writing] 1967-05-15 |
| Box 2, Item 005 | [Service related plaque] 1968-07-18 |
| Box 2, Item 004 | To Mr. Philip Ahn presented by Yoo Hak Seong [plaque] 1968-07-19 |
Box 2, Item 006
Presented by Captain Doan-Ngoc-Bich President of the Tae Kwon Do Association of the Vietnam Navy to Philip Ahn [plaque] 1968-07-20

Box 2, Item 007
Republic of Korea Forces, Vietnam [plaque and pins] 1968-07

Box 2, Item 008
To Philip Ahn in appreciation for visit to troops of Nha Trang from Col. LH Lockhart [plaque] [circa 1968]

Box 2, Item 009
Korean Catholic Association of Southern California Korean Night Festival honor [plaque] 1969-04-12

Box 2, Item 010
Panorama City Chamber of Commerce Honorary Mayor appreciation [plaque] 1970

Box 2, Item 011
Newhall-Saugus-Valencia Chamber of Commerce Chun-an Sister City Program honor [plaque] 1970

Box 2, Item 012
Korean Association of Southern California Miss Korea Beauty Contest services recognition [plaque] 1975-04-25

Box 2, Item 013
ANKC All Nations Open Karate Championships Award for appreciation of dedication and service [plaque] 1975

Box 2, Item 014
KWHY-TV Appreciation Award [plaque] 1975

Box 2, Item 015
Soodo Women’s University Appreciation Award [plaque] 1976-06-10

Box 2, Item 016

Box 2, Item 017
Personal and family photographs

Box 4, Item 3
[Banquet photo, enlarged, cardboard] undated

Box 4, Item 2
[Dorothy Jordan, MGM headshot, enlarged] undated

Box 4, Item 4
[Framed b&w photo] undated

Box 4, Folder 2
[Personal and family] undated

Box 4, Folder 1
[Philip Ahn headshots/portraits] undated

Box 4, Item 1
[Philip Ahn in uniform, enlarged b&w print in soft frame] undated

Box 4, Folder 3-4
[Personal and family] 1940s-1970s

Box 4, Folder 5
ROK Navy 1963

Box 4, Item 5
Thanksgiving at Philip’s 1971

Box 4, Item 6-8
[Philip Ahn Funeral (3 photo albums)] 1978

Box 4, Folder 6
[Birthday party, Byung Mo] 1978-1979

Box 4, Folder 7
[Hollywood Walk of Fame Star Ceremony, Ahn Family] 1984