



Montgomery and Diehl Families Papers (R1298)

Collection Number: R1298

Collection Title: Montgomery and Diehl Families Papers

Dates: 1860-1980

Creator: Montgomery, Lee Diehl Montgomery

Abstract: This collection contains the personal papers, postcards, and photographs of the Montgomery and Diehl families of Phelps County. The papers mainly contain family history information and photographs, images of Route 66, family business, and of Phelps County.

Collection Size: 0.75 cubic feet
(19 folders, 2 CDs)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center - Rolla](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at rolla@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: The Donor has given, assigned, and transferred to the Society all copyrights, and associated rights the Donor may possess in the materials.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Montgomery and Diehl Families Papers* (R1298); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Rolla].

Donor Information: The papers were loaned to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Molly Montgomery Griffin on October 20, 2012 (Accession No. RA1571). An addition was donated on July 21, 2014 by Linda Ryan (Accession No. RA1609).

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the Montgomery and Diehl Families Papers can be found in the following collections:

Rolla (Mo.) Photographs (R0913)

Processed by: Processed by LeAnn Arndt, September 8, 2013. Revised by Kathleen Seale, November 21, 2017.

Historical Note:

John Lee Montgomery was born September 1, 1876, in Rolla, Missouri. Lee's family moved to Phelps County, Missouri, from Pulaski County in the 1870s. He married Mary Josephine "Mollie" Diehl in 1907. Mollie served as the Newburg postmistress from 1904 to 1910. Together they had six children. Their first child, Lee Diehl Montgomery was a prominent businessman in Rolla from the 1930s through the 1990s. He was born in Newburg, Missouri, in 1910 to John Lee and Mary Diehl Montgomery. Diehl Montgomery spent his youth there but attended high school in Rolla, graduating in 1928. He was fascinated with aviation and aspired to become a pilot, and, after leaving high school, enrolled in the newly-formed Parks Air College in St. Louis.

After finishing aviation school, Montgomery worked for Parks Air College for two years and did some barnstorming in the region. He then moved to Owensboro, Kentucky, for two years, trying his hand at opening and owning an airport there. Ultimately, he returned to Rolla to marry his long-time sweetheart, Mildred Bowen, in 1935.

Once settled in Rolla, Montgomery abandoned aviation and developed various business ventures. For eight years, from the late 1930s to the mid-1940s, he managed a long-time Route 66 landmark, the Pennant Tavern and Restaurant. About 1946, he opened the Montgomery Café and the Rendezvous Lounge in downtown Rolla at 209 West 8th Street. In the early 1950s, he went to work for Klinefelter Ford, eventually purchasing the car dealership in 1958. He owned and operated Diehl Montgomery Ford for thirty-two years until he sold it in 1990.

Diehl Montgomery was active in many Rolla fraternal civic organizations throughout his life. In 1958, he was able to utilize his knowledge of aviation again through his appointment to the first airport commission that established and developed the Rolla National Airport at Vichy, Missouri. Diehl Montgomery passed away in 1997 at age 86.

Diehl Montgomery's sister, Mary Elizabeth (1917-2002) married Franklin Rehfeld (1918-2004) in 1949 after his return from service in WWII in the 866th Engineer Aviation Battalion.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following 3 series:

CDs
Photographs
Postcards

Scope and Content Note:

CDs

The photographs of Lee Diehl Montgomery in folder 1 consist of 39 images of the Montgomery family, businesses, and buildings in Rolla; and 118 photographs of Parks Air College in St. Louis from 1928-1932. In the early years at the college, students learned by designing, building and test-flying their own aircraft, a process shown in the Montgomery photographs. Other

noteworthy images in the collection show Jimmy Doolittle's airplane at the Parks College airfield, structures around the airfield, and several international students (including Japanese) who attended the College. Also included are images of a 1955 brochure promoting tourism in the Rolla area that includes a photograph of Lee Diehl Montgomery and Stan Musial quail hunting near Rolla. Diehl had become acquainted with Musial during his time at the Pennant and the two maintained that friendship over the years.

The World War II photographs in folder 2 are those of Franklin Rehfeld, the husband of Lee Diehl Montgomery's daughter Mary Elizabeth. Rehfeld served in the U.S. Army from June 1944 until April 1946. He was stationed in the Philippines and Arizona and several of his pictures are images of himself, fellow soldiers, and the military presence in the Philippines, specifically military construction in Manila. There are also images of John Rayl who Rehfeld went to school with at the Missouri School of Mines in Rolla.

Photographs

This series contains images related to Route 66, the railroad, Newburg, Rolla, and the Montgomery and Diehl families. There are several images related to Route 66 including the Pennant Tavern, which Lee Diehl Montgomery co-owned for a few years in the late 1940s. There are several photographs from the 1953 fire at the Pennant showing the blaze and its aftermath. Men from the Montgomery and Diehl families were railroaders. There are several images of the railroad in Missouri including in Rolla, Arlington, and Newburg. Along with the railroad there are several images of early Newburg and Rolla from when the families lived there. These images include homes, business, schools, the Missouri School of Mines, and the Newburg baseball team for which John Lee Montgomery was a manager. Also included in this series are family pictures, mostly for the Montgomery family and photographs of family friends.

Postcards

This series contains postcards sent to Mollie Diehl Montgomery. Mollie served as the Newburg postmistress and several of the postcards were addressed to Mollie asking her to pass them along to friends and family members. The postcards include images from Springfield including Midtown Carnegie Library, James River Club, Route 66, the public square, and Commercial Street. Other notable images include Pippins Place near Waynesville, Clinton, Missouri, and Arlington, Missouri. The non-Missouri images are blank postcards depicting images from Texas, Washington, and abroad.

Container List:

f. 1-2	CDs
Box 1	f. 1 Lee Diehl Montgomery, 1931-1970s
	f. 2 Franklin Rehfeld WWII photographs, 1942-1945
f. 3	Family History, 1888-1990
f. 4	Sketches – WWII, 1944
f. 5-17	Photographs
	f. 5 Newburg, 1904-1920
	f. 6 Rolla, 1896-1953, no date
	f. 7 Family Friends, 1902-1979, no date
	f. 8 Route 66, no date
	f. 9 Montgomery family, 1915, no date

f. 10	Railroad, no date
f. 11	World War II, 1941-1945
f. 12	Unidentified children, no dates
f. 13	Unidentified men, 1860s-1940s
f. 14-15	Unidentified women, no dates
f. 16	Unidentified groups, no dates
f. 17	Miscellaneous, no dates
f. 18-19	Postcards
f. 18	Mollie Diehl Montgomery, 1904-1923, no date
f. 19	Non-Missouri images, no dates

Index:

Index Term	Folder	Image
Arlington (Mo.)	10, 18	Yes
Aviation	1	
Baumgardner Studio (Rolla, Mo.)	7, 9	
Car dealership	1, 6	Yes
Diehl, Ed	5	Yes
Erlitz, Perry	2	Yes
Houston House (Newburg, Mo.)	5	Yes
Missouri School of Mines and Metallurgy (Rolla, Mo.)	3, 6-7, 18	Yes
Montgomery family	3, 5, 9, 18	
Montgomery, Clarence Staughton, 1846-1919	3	
Montgomery, John Lee, 1876-1948	1, 3, 5	Yes
Montgomery, Josephine L., 1914-1994	3, 6, 9	Yes
Montgomery, Lee Diehl, 1910-1997	1, 7, 9, 18	Yes
Montgomery, Mildred Bowen, 1910-1980	1, 18	Yes
Montgomery, Mollie Diehl, 1886-1958	1, 3, 6-7, 18	
Newburg (Mo.)	5, 7, 18	Yes
Newburg Ball Club (Newburg, Mo.)	5	Yes
Parks Air College (St. Louis, Mo.)	1	Yes
Pennant Hotel (Rolla, Mo.)	6	Yes
Pennant Tavern (Rolla, Mo.)	1, 6	Yes
Phelps County (Mo.)	17-18	
Pippin Place (Waynesville, Mo.)	18	Yes
Railroad	5, 10, 18	Yes
Rehfeld, Franklin, 1918-2004	2-4, 11	Yes
Roach, Lillian	7, 18	Yes
Rolla (Mo.)	1, 3, 5-6, 9	Yes
Route 66 (U.S.)	1, 6, 8, 18	Yes

Index Term	Folder	Image
Shaws Garden (St. Louis, Mo.)	18	Yes
Sinclair Tavern (Rolla, Mo)	6	Yes
Springfield (Mo.)	5, 8, 14, 18	Yes
Stumbo, Johnny	11	Yes
United States. Army. 866th Engineer Aviation Battalion	2	Yes
United Telephone Company (Rolla, Mo.)	6	Yes
Weltmer School of Healing (Nevada, Mo.)	18	Yes
West, Norman	11	Yes
World War, 1939 -1945	2, 4, 11	Yes
World War, 1939-1945 - Philippines	2-3	Yes