



BHC-MSS 0130
Guide to the Papers of Arthur Clifford
By Meg Rinn
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Clifford, Arthur

Title: Papers of Arthur Clifford

Dates: 1921-1979, bulk 1959-1967

Quantity: 6 linear feet

Abstract: Arthur Clifford served as the president of the lumber giant A.W. Burritt Company for many years. While that Bridgeport institution was a huge employer in the city for many years, the papers of Arthur Clifford primary focus on his leading role with the Bridgeport Redevelopment Agency in the early 1960s, helping to develop Bridgeport's downtown business district and influencing the visual look of the area to today.

Language: English

Repository: Bridgeport History Center

Biographical History:

Arthur Clifford was born on February 11, 1896 in Bridgeport, Connecticut. He served as a Marine in World War I, although not much is currently known about his service record or early life. He married his wife Mabel, and they had two children together: Arthur C. Clifford and Elizabeth C. Clark.

A lifelong Bridgeport resident, Arthur Clifford worked at the A.W. Burritt Company, a prominent lumber mill and major employer in the city. He would go on to be the company's president until retiring from that role in 1963. As president, he also worked as the president of the Retail Lumbermen's Association *and* served as the group's representative to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

While Arthur Clifford was an active force in many Bridgeport organizations – the Rotary Club, serving a presidential term at the YMCA, Boy Scouts of America – the most important group he was active in was the Bridgeport Redevelopment Agency.

Begun in 1958, the Bridgeport Redevelopment Agency was formed by then Mayor Samuel Tedesco in order to look at the city and plan for urban renewal. Clifford was the first commissioner of the group, and in the first ten years saw through the routing of Routes 8 and 25 traffic from Lafayette Plaza, renewal work on the west side of the city, and a massive overhaul of State Street. This included the construction of the Southern Connecticut Gas Company building, a new parking garage, the building of the new Court House, the shopping plaza that now serves as the home of Housatonic Community College, and much more. Most of these changes endure in the city today and have left a lasting impact on the visual look of the downtown business district of Bridgeport. The documentation of the work is apparent in the papers, but especially in the annual reports.

Arthur Clifford died on January 29, 1986 in Shelton, Connecticut.

Scope and Content note:

Most of the material within the Papers of Arthur W. Clifford balance between the early years of the Bridgeport Redevelopment Agency and the scrapbooks. The former centers on 1960-1967, and helps to highlight the work of downtown urban renewal in Bridgeport, with an emphasis on State Street and Lafayette Plaza. The documentation, especially the annual reports, is key for understanding the changes that took place in Bridgeport in the 1960s and into the 1970s. Scrapbooks mix personal achievements with professional, and highlight Clifford's time at the A.W. Burritt Company, his role in the Bridgeport Redevelopment Agency, but also his participation in groups like the Rotary Club.

Arrangement Note:

Material is arranged in two series. The first is a subject file, arranged alphabetically, the second series consists of scrapbooks.

Administrative information:

Provenance: Acc#1983.08, gift of daughter Elizabeth Clark.

Preferred Citation:

Papers of Arthur W. Clifford (BHC-MSS 0130), Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library.

Names and Subject Tracings

Personal names

Clifford, Arthur

Curran, Hugh

Tedesco, Samuel

Corporate names

A.W. Burritt Company

Bridgeport Redevelopment Agency

Subject tracings

Bridgeport, Conn.

City planning

Urban renewal

Detailed box and folder listing

Series I, Subject files

Box 1

1. Algonquin Sachem award, 1975
2. Clippings, 1973-1979
3. Mayor's Action Committee meetings #30-69, January 1968-Sept 1970
4. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport Annual Report, March 1959
5. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport Annual Report 1960
6. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport Annual Report 1961
7. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport Annual Report 1962
8. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport Annual Report 1963
9. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport Annual Report 1964
10. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport Annual Report 1965

11. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport Annual Report 1966
12. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport audits, 1960-1964
13. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport balance sheets, 1962

Box 2

1. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport balance sheets, 1963
2. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport balance sheets, 1964
3. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport balance sheets, 1965
4. Redevelopment Agency of the City of Bridgeport bylaws, 1961
5. Contract and correspondence between City of Bridgeport and Candeus and Flessig for surveying and planning redevelopment areas
6. Closing documents regarding the development of Lafayette Plaza by the Central Bridgeport Development Corporation et al, November 1, 1965

Box 3

1. Redevelopment correspondence and reports, 1960-1964
2. Decennial report, 1967
3. Edwards and Kelceny surveys regarding traffic, space, and buildings, 1961
4. Maps of project areas
5. Notes and annotations of legal documents, 1965
6. Personnel and salary schedule, petition by employees, 1964-1966
7. Plan and reports, c. 1960
8. Public hearing transcript, July 1960
9. Routes 8 and 25
10. Status of urban renewal projects in Connecticut, 1960
11. Unaccepted proposals for urban renewal work, 1959
12. Urban renewal workshop, April 1958
13. Urban renewal workshop, November 1958
14. Urban renewal workshop, October 1959
15. Additional redevelopment agency material
16. Rotary club song sheets, undated

Series II, Scrapbooks

Box 4

Scrapbook, 1921-1946

Scrapbook, 1946-1951

Box 5

Scrapbook, 1950-1953

Scrapbook, 1953-1957

Box 6

Scrapbook, 1957-1960

Scrapbook, 1960-1961

Box 7

Scrapbook, 1961-1963

Certificate of appreciation from the Northeastern Retail Lumbermen, 1955

Box 8

Scrapbook, April-October 1963

Accrual, January 2024; August 2024

Box 7

Certificates [folder]

Box 9

Trophies

Box 10

Plaques

Box 11

Certificates

Box 12

(1) Oversize plaque

Box 13

Plaques

Box 14

Plaque and desk sign

Box 15

Plaques