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Guide to the Indian Fair Records

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Collection Summary

Title: Indian Fair Records

Dates (inclusive): 1928-1931

Creator: Indian Fair Committee

Abstract: This collection documents the activities of the Indian Fair Committee in Santa Fe, New Mexico when they operated the annual Indian Fair, the precursor to the Santa Fe Indian Market. The original Indian Fair was created to showcase Native art and culture, primarily Pueblo pottery. Although the Fair started in 1922, these records cover the period from 1928 to 1931, when the Indian Fair Committee was formed after the separation from the Museum of New Mexico and the Santa Fe Fiesta. Key committee members included Kenneth Chapman, Margretta Dietrich, and Martha Root. The documents produced by the committee, both handwritten and typed, consist of business correspondence, pamphlets, flyers, and financial records.

Collection number: AC10

Extent: 1 document box, .209 linear feet

Repository: School for Advanced Research, Catherine McElvain Library

Biographical/Historical Note

The Indian Fair began in 1922 as part of the annual Santa Fe Fiesta and continued through the years to become the current Santa Fe Indian Market. The Museum of New Mexico originally sponsored the Southwest Indian Fair, as conceived by director Edgar L. Hewett and organized by museum curator anthropologist Kenneth M. Chapman. First called the Southwest Indian Fair, the event featured the sales and exhibition of Native art. Chapman wanted to promote traditional Indian arts and crafts, with styles distinctive to each pueblo, through a market that would guarantee authenticity, educate buyers, and provide income to the artists. Prizes were awarded to recognize individual artists for their work, ironically at a time when U.S. government policy encouraged cultural assimilation. In 1926, Hewett withdrew the museum's sponsorship, but Kenneth Chapman remained actively involved. The newly formed Indian Fair Committee replaced the museum, chaired by Margretta Deitrich with Chapman acting as treasurer. Martha Root White (sister of Elizabeth White) was a committee member. From 1927 to 1931, the committee operated the Fair: inviting pueblos and Indian schools to participate,

judging and awarding prize money, conducting art sales, distributing profits to the artists, and returning the unsold art. After 1931 and outside the scope of this collection, the Fair changed significantly. The artists sold their own work directly to buyers and the committee traveled to the pueblos to judge and award prizes.

Scope and Content Note

This small collection of business records includes correspondence, pamphlets, flyers, and financial records that were generated by the Indian Fair Committee from 1928 to 1931. This time period represents a distinct phase of the Indian Fair, from the start of the committee that succeeded the museum sponsorship to the point before the Fair left Santa Fe to become a traveling event at the pueblos. The activities of the Indian Fair Committee included publicity, sales, payments to artists, logistics of art transportation, and prizes awarded to artists. Committee treasurer and anthropologist Kenneth Chapman was instrumental in the development of the Fair and his name is prominent among the documents, which suggests that this collection may have originated from his papers. The correspondence appears incomplete and the bulk of the collection is financial records: receipts, bank statements, cancelled checks. Of special note are the Premium Lists for 1929 and 1930, which list the art competition rules and the prize money to be awarded in each category. Aside from the financial records, researchers may find the collection useful to determine the variety of art displayed at the Fair, the tribes or pueblos represented, and brief notes naming buyers and a few of the prize-winning artists.

Restrictions

Access Restrictions: The collection is open to researchers by appointment

Copy Restrictions: Limited duplication of print materials allowed for research purposes. User is responsible for all copyright compliance.

Preferred Citation

Indian Fair Records, School for Advanced Research Library, Santa Fe, NM

Processing Information

Processed by: N/A

Finding aid by: KW

Acquisition Information

N/A

References/Bibliography

Bernstein, Bruce. *Santa Fe Indian Market: A History of Native Arts and the Marketplace*. Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 2012.

Chapman, Janet, and Karen Barrie. *Kenneth Milton Chapman: A Life Dedicated to Indian Arts*

and Artists. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008.
 Lewis, Nancy Owen, and Kay Leigh Hagan. *A Peculiar Alchemy: A Centennial History of SAR*.
 Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007.
 "Santa Fe Indian Market History," Southwestern Association for Indian Arts, accessed April 8,
 2020, <https://swaia.org/who-we-are/history/>.

Related Material

Kenneth M. Chapman Collection; Martha and Amelia Elizabeth White Papers

Access terms:

Chapman, Kenneth Milton, 1875-1968
 Dietrich, Margretta Stewart
 Indian art--History--New Mexico--Santa Fe
 Indian Fair
 Indian Market--History--New Mexico--Santa Fe
 Stewart, Dorothy N. (Dorothy Newkirk), 1891-1955
 Southwest Indian Fair--New Mexico--Santa Fe
 Wallace, C. G. (Charles Garrett Wallace), 1898-1993
 White, Martha Root, 1881-1937

Container List

Description	Container	
Correspondence (payments and logistics), 1928-1931	Box 1	Folder 1
Premium Lists, notices, pamphlets	Box 1	Folder 2
Agenda, fair events, undated	Box 1	Folder 3
Treasurer's reports, Kenneth Chapman, 1929-1932	Box 1	Folder 4
First National Bank statements, Indian Art Competition, 1926-1929	Box 1	Folder 5
First National Bank statements and checks, Indian Fair, 1930-1931	Box 1	Folder 6
First National Bank deposit slips, Indian Fair, 1930	Box 1	Folder 7
Financial accounts, receipts, shipping bills, 1929-1931	Box 1	Folder 8