Richard B. Stevens collection

**Collection Summary**

**Title**
Richard B. Stevens collection

**Date**
1942-2007

**Extent**
1 archival box

**Name and Location of Repository**
Midwest Genealogy Center, Independence (Mo.)
Reference code: MGC 2006-RSC
Processed by: Nicole Schlagel, 2016; finding aid created by Nicole Schlagel, 2016

**Name of Creator**
Stevens, Richard B.

**Biographical History**
Richard B. Stevens was born in Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas in 1899. His father, William Stevens, was a professor at Kansas University, now the University of Kansas. Richard attended and graduated from Kansas University. He became an attorney and served as county attorney and in the Kansas state legislature. Richard married Sarah Jane Griffiths on July 13, 1929 and together they had 3 children. In 1942, Stevens started work at The Sunflower Ordnance Works. This plant was commissioned by the United States War Department as a rocket propellant factory. The factory was built and managed by the Hercules Powder Company. Stevens was hired by Hercules Powder Company and stayed with the company into the 1980s. As a member of the legal department, Stevens worked with construction contracts and labor regulations. Richard died in Lawrence on January 15, 1991.

**Administrative History**
Sunflower Ordnance Works was commissioned by the United States War Department in 1942 as a rocket propellant factory. It was constructed in the northwest section of Johnson County close to the town of De Soto. The factory was built and managed by the Hercules Powder Company. The factory drew large numbers of people to the area and created population booms in De Soto and other surrounding towns. During its operation during World War II, 12,000 employees worked 24 hours to meet the military's demand. After the war, Sunflower Ordnance Works was closed until the Korean War caused it to reopen. It subsequently closed again after that conflict. During the Vietnam War, it reopened again and was renamed Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant in 1963. The plant continued to make ammunition until production was stopped in 1992. The U.S. Army sold the land to private developers in 2005.

**Scope and Content**
This collection consists of items relating to the Sunflower Ordnance Works and then later the Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant. Collected by Richard B. Stevens, the contents include personal correspondence and a scrapbook. Also included are the entire run of The Sunflower Sentinel, the weekly employee newspaper for the Sunflower Ordnance Works and some editions for the Sunflower Planet, newspaper for the Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant. There is also one edition of the Lawrence [KS] Journal –World.
Collection Inventory

System of Arrangement
These records are arranged in 5 series.

Series 1, Correspondence
Series 2, Lawrence Daily Journal-World loose volume
Folder 1, May 3, 1945
Series 3, Scrapbook, 1950-2004
Contains: Obituaries from former Sunflower Ordnance Works employees, articles from area newspapers regarding the sale and future use of the Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant
Series 4, Sunflower Planet [loose]
Folder 1, Volume 24 Number 6, June 23, 1955
Folder 2, Volume 8 Number 31, May 11, 1967
Series 5, Sunflower Sentinel [bound volume]
Contains: Volume 1 Numbers 1-52, July 2, 1942-June 18, 1943
Volume 2 Numbers 1-52, June 25, 1943-March 16, 1945
Volume 3 Numbers 1-31, March 23, 1945-October 19, 1945

Rights and Access

Conditions Governing Access
The collection is open for research use by appointment.

Physical Access
Most records within this collection are housed within oversize file folders.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use
Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the Midwest Genealogy Center.

Languages and Scripts of the Material
Materials in the collection are entirely in English.

Immediate Source of Acquisition
This collection was donated to the Midwest Genealogy Center.

Accruals
No further accruals are expected for this collection.

Existence and Location of Originals
Originals owned by the Midwest Genealogy Center.
Notes
The following sources were consulted during the preparation of the biographical and administrative history:


