

**Archive
Lakeshore Museum Center
Muskegon Boiler Works Finding Aid**

Collection: Muskegon Boiler Works Collection

Object ID Number: X98.035.011

Location: LCM Archive, room 204, GB 1, 2, 3, 4, cabinet S drawers 8 to 12

Dates: 1905 to 1987

Quantity: 10 document boxes, 2 flat storage boxes, and 5 flat storage drawers

Restrictions: No Restrictions

Abstract: The Muskegon Boiler Works manufactured all kinds of boilers, standpipes, refuse burners and various other products. This company was a historically important industry as it provided Muskegon saw mills with boilers, and used modern machinery to serve community residents. The archival materials in this collection provide researchers with information about the development of the industrial era in Muskegon, the daily operations of the Muskegon Boiler Works, and how the industry changed over time.

Historical Information: Luke Turnbull manufactured and repaired boilers for saw mills in Muskegon in 1867 and his business rapidly increased as more and more mills became established. Muskegon sawmills began to focus on how to make production as fast as possible, and were looking for a way to ensure that there were no breakdowns or interruptions in the power supply. The Muskegon Boiler Works produced products to meet this increasing demand and to accommodate the large number of sawmills in the area.

Turnbull built a shop on Western Avenue and Seventh Street which later became the Muskegon Boiler Works. In 1879 Turnbull sold the business and two and a half lots to Joseph Turnbull, Edward Behrens, and Charles E. Woodward. The name of the firm was The Turnbull Boiler Works Company. By 1888, Turnbull Boiler Works manufactured boilers, refuse burners, hot and cold water tanks, heavy sheet iron, and wood burning furnaces. Repairing work was a specialty.

In 1887, G.T. Jones bought the boiler works and took on three partners, C.D. Stevens, and the Johnston brothers. In 1890, Mr. Stevens, in association with Mr. Behrens, took over the boiler manufacturing division of a different company, the Novelty Iron Works, and continued making boilers under the name of Muskegon Boiler Works. The company employed a large force of men working in the shop and installing mills in the south and west. The company made the boiler for the new Muskegon Water Works at Lake Michigan in 1892, and made boilers for three of the new factories located in Muskegon Heights at that time.

In 1893, the Muskegon Boiler Works purchased the most modern boiler shown at the World's Fair in Chicago. The company continued to strive to provide the most modern equipment possible, and worked to constantly improve the industry. The Muskegon Boiler Works manufactured boilers for all types of buildings as well as boilers for locomotives and lake steamers.

In 1905, as the economies changed and technological advancements affected industries, the character of Muskegon Boiler Works changed. Stevens decided that having sole ownership was no longer a good idea, and the company was incorporated by Mr. Stevens, Roy E. Ashley, Samuel C. Eyke, William J. McKinstry, John Callan, and Stella J. Stevens.

In 1925, C.D. Stevens died and his interest in the company was divided between his children and Paul Stevens became the general manager. Changing conditions in the industrial world brought about changes in the products of the boiler company. Special equipment was made for the refineries consisting of storage tanks, furnaces, and vacuum towers. Special equipment was also made for paper, chemical, and electrical industries. Muskegon Boiler Works began advertising its specialty in steel fabrications and remained in business until 1987.

The building on Western was originally 50 by 100 feet and a later 50 by 50 foot addition was built on, and Stevens and Behrens worked out of the old building. In 1905, the Muskegon Boiler Works became incorporated and built a large brick building on Clay Avenue at the rear of the old boiler works building. A fire destroyed the building on July 12, 1948. In 2005, renovation work began on the Muskegon Boiler Works building, located on Clay Avenue and 8th Street, and to divide the building into apartments. The building became known as the Muskegon Art Works.

Scope and Contents: This collection provides researchers with a better understanding of the operations of the Muskegon Boiler Works (MBW). This collection contains materials that provide information on MBW clients, products created, and how many projects MBW worked on. This collection also provides researchers with a better understanding of the operations of local Muskegon companies, their needs and major projects, and which companies existed at the same time as MBW.

This collection is divided into eight major series and numerous sub-series. The collection is divided into the following eight series: administration, war production board, financial, legal, publications, projects, images, and blueprints/drawings.

The Administration series contains general business correspondence divided by year, and reports and information pertaining to projects MBW conducted for various Muskegon County and non-local businesses.

The War Production Board (WPB) series includes amendments, regulations, and directions for the Controlled Materials Plan (CMP) and a general file regarding local companies and information pertaining to the WPB.

The Financial series contains purchase orders and related correspondence from companies in business with MBW. The series also contains ledgers, appraisals and receipts, bills receivable, Stevens & Eyke Realty and investment receipts, appraisal reports, and cash receipts.

The Legal series includes employee affidavits and court documents, project proposals from MBW clients, and general legal information pertaining to project specifications.

The Publication series contains numerous general publications, brochures, reports, and product information from local and non-local companies.

The Projects series includes specifications and diagrams on projects arranged by company. This series includes publications received regarding specifications about the company, and information about mechanical parts such as air compressors, winches, and tubes.

The Images series contains numerous photographic prints on the Muskegon Boiler Works in the early days, pipes on railroads, advertisements on Pere Marquette trains, furnaces, general construction and the construction of National Lumberman's Bank, glass plate negatives of Muskegon Boiler Works operations, construction, and aerial views.

The Blueprint/ Drawing series includes blueprints of numerous local Muskegon buildings as well as some outside locations.

Arrangement: This collection was donated by the last owner of the Muskegon Boiler Works, Leigh Stevens. Archival and curatorial staff viewed the collection at its original location. Due to the size of the original collection, Lakeshore Museum Center staff selected the best representation of the collection and the company. The collection is stored by series and sub-series and stored in archival boxes or large flat storage folders in drawers. In each series the companies are arranged alphabetically and placed into separate file folders and labeled accordingly. The series are arranged into ten archival boxes, two flat storage boxes, and five flat storage drawers. Most of the collection is stored together on one shelving unit and in clearly labeled flat storage drawers. This collection is cataloged on Past Perfect and includes a complete container list for researchers looking for more specific details. There is a finding aid next to the collection.

Contents

Series 1: Administration

Sub-Series: Correspondence

1914-1982

Box 1

Sub-Series: General Business Reports and Information

Companies A to Z

Boxes 1, 2, 3

Series 2: War Production Board

Sub-Series: Controlled Materials Plan Regulations
Box 3, 3A and 3B

Sub-Series: General
1941-1943
Box 3

Series 3: Financial

Sub-Series: Correspondence and Purchase Orders for Companies A to Z
Boxes 4, 5, 6

Sub-Series: Ledgers
1918-1939
Box 6

Sub-Series: Stevens and Eyke Realty and Investment Receipts
1918-1927
Box 6

Sub-Series: Appraisals for Muskegon Boiler Works
August 1, 1930
Box 6

Series 4: Legal

Sub-Series: Employee Affidavits and Court Documents
Box 7

Sub-Series: Specifications and Proposals for Boiler Equipment and General Projects
Companies A to Z
Boxes 7, 8

Sub-Series: National Construction Co.
Box 7

Sub-Series: Naph-Sol Refining Co.
Box 7

Sub-Series: Occidental Hotel
Box 7

Sub-Series: Nugent Sand Co.
Box 7

Sub-Series: Old Dutch Refining Co.
Box 7

Sub-Series: Piston Ring Co.
Box 7

Sub-Series: Reid-Graff Plumbing Co.
Box 7

Sub-Series: Shaw Walker Co.
Box 7

Sub-Series: Strom Construction Co.
Box 7

Sub-Series: Alaska Refrigerator Co.
Box 8

Sub-Series: Amazon Knitting Co.
Box 8

Sub-Series: Brunswick-Balke-Collender Co.
Box 8

Sub-Series: Campbell Wyant & Cannon Co.
Box 8

Sub-Series: Central Paper Co.
Box 8

Sub-Series: Continental Motors Corporation
Box 8

Sub-Series: George Lather & Sons
Box 8

Sub-Series: Lakey Foundry & Machine Co.
Box 8

Series 5: Publications
Box 9

Series 6: Projects- Specifications and Diagrams
Sub-Series: Projects by Company Name A to Z
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Sub-Series: General Information-Mechanical Parts
Box 10

Series 7: Images

Sub-Series: Photographic Prints
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Sub-Series: Glass Plate Negatives
Box 11

Series 8: Blueprints/ Drawings

Sub-Series: Companies A to Z
Archive 204, Flat Storage S, Drawers 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and Shelf V 2 Box U

Sub-Series: Campbell Foundry
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Sub-Series: Continental Motor Corp.
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Sub-Series: Amazon Knitting Co.
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 8

Sub-Series: The Austin Company, Midland, MI
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 8

Sub-Series: BPOE Club House
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 8

Sub-Series: Brunswick-Balke-Collender Co.
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 8

Sub-Series: Campbell-Wyant-Cannon Foundry Co.
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 8

Sub-Series: Central Paper Co.
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 9

Sub-Series: Consumers Power Co.
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Sub-Series: Eagle-Ottawa Leather Co.
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 10

Sub-Series: County of Muskegon Airport Hanger
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 11

Sub-Series: Hooker Electro Chemical Co.
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 11

Sub-Series: Lakey Foundry
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 11

Sub-Series: Morton Manufacturing Co.
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 12

Sub-Series: Muskegon Public Schools- Bunker Junior High
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 12

Sub-Series: Muskegon Boiler Works
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 12

Sub-Series: Muskegon Brewing Co.
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 12

Sub-Series: Muskegon Traction & Lighting Co.
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 12

Sub-Series: Muskegon Water Works
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 12

Sub-Series: Naph-Sol Refining Co.
Archive 204, Flat Storage S 12

Sub-Series: Piston Ring Co.
Archive 204, Shelf V 2, Box U

Sub-Series: Poppen Realty
Archive 204, Shelf V 2, Box U

Sub-Series: Reid Graff Plumbing: Frobel & Angell Elementary Schools
Archive 204, Shelf V 2, Box U

Sub-Series: Shaw Electric Crane Co.
Archive 204, Shelf V 2, Box U

Sub-Series: Shaw Walker
Archive 204, Shelf V 2, Box U

Sub-Series: Steel Fabricating Co. of Muskegon
Archive 204, Shelf V 2, Box U

Sub-Series: Strom Construction Co.
Archive 204, Shelf V 2, Box U

Sub-Series: Sun Chemical Co.
Archive 204, Shelf V 2, Box U