

Union Printers Home album

Union Printer's Home album

C.1931

Title Statement

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Descriptive Summary

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[Archival Resource Key](#)

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Language

English

source

James Arsenault and Co.

Extent

.03 Cubic Feet 1 folder (letter)

Repository

Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

This collection was purchased from James Arsenault & Company by the Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia on December 15, 2023.

Preferred Citation

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Biographical / Historical

The Union Printers Home opened in 1892 in Colorado Springs. It served as a place of rest and recovery for those in the International Typographical Union (ITU), a trade union for printers. The International Typographical Union (ITU) was formed in 1852 by printers frustrated by their working conditions. Printers suffered from lung conditions – like tuberculosis and "printer's lung," a form of black lung stemming from the fumes of the carbon-based inks used in printing. The average life expectancy among printers was approximately 40 years. At the first meeting of ITU, members proposed creating a place to recover from their medical issues; however, it wasn't until 1890 that the concept was approved. It took donations from George W. Childs, a Philadelphia newspaper publisher, and Anthony J. Drexel, a philanthropist, to make the Home a reality. The Home opened in 1892, originally called the Childs-Drexel Home for Union Printers. The building, impressive and known as "the castle," was a monument to printers. The complex was 300 acres and self-sustaining at its height, with a working dairy and its own post office. The Union Printers Home housed 25,000 printers under the direction of the ITU. In 1986, the ITU merged with Communication Workers of America and sold the building where it was used as retirement community. In 2021, local residents, known as the UPH Partners, purchased the property to create a mixed-use neighborhood while restoring and maintaining the building's most significant historic features.

Sources

Beckman, Abigail. "Local Investors Are Hoping to Reinvigorate the Union Printers Home in Colorado Springs, but They've Got a Lot of Work to Do," KRCC Colorado Public Radio, last modified June 30, 2022, accessed July 22, 2023, <https://www.cpr.org/2022/06/30/union-printers-home-redevelopment-colorado-springs/>.

Grief, Jodie, Northern Arizona University. "Childs-Drexel Home for Union Printers (Union Printers Home)." Intermountain Histories. Accessed July 22, 2023. <https://www.intermountainhistories.org/items/show/332>.

Hinkle, Ellie. "A Place of Rest, Healing, and Recovery." Union Printers Home Masterplan, May 15, 2023. <https://unionprintershome.com/a-place-of-rest-healing-and-recovery/>.

Content Description

This collection contains a photo album documenting the Union Printers Home in Colorado Springs, Colorado. This album includes images of patients in bathrobes relaxing on sunny, fresh-air "sleeping porches"; reclining in chairs; in bed; on the grounds of the home's 200-acre complex; and in the company of nurses, staff, and administrators. Pictured extensively is the Union Printer's Home itself (called "The Mountain" by the printers and also referred to as the "the Castle"), which housed a 10,000-volume library, a sunny reading room, a 300-seat auditorium, a pool hall, Steinway grand pianos, and more. Pictured in the album are exterior shots and images of the billiards room, the in-house dairy farm, gardens, etc., and a picture of the arched entrance to the Home, which bears the slogan—"Its bounty unpurchasable." Also included are photographs of the surrounding landscape, including mountains and other natural features. Several shots show the patients dressed up in formal attire. Another image shows a group of patients dressed up, some in cowboy garb and one man in blackface. Other group shots show men standing beside a water-fountain pedestal. Tipped-in is a 1931 Christmas program with numerous signatures of staff and patients, including patient room numbers and home towns.

Keywords

typesetters (people)

Sanatoriums

Colorado

James Arsenault and Co.

International Typographical Union

Content Warning

This material contains racist imagery of a person in blackface. This note aims to allow users to decide whether they need or want to view these materials or, at least, to mentally or emotionally prepare themselves to view the materials.