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Mammoth Cave National Park Association (MSS 296)

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Descriptive Inventory

MSS 296 MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association

19 boxes. 109 folders. 11,039 items. Originals, maps, photographs.

2001.73.1

See also: MSS 329 (1959.2.3); MSS 503 (2001.73.5)

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY

A meeting of Bowling Green citizens interested in the creation of a national park in the Mammoth Cave region of Edmonson County, Kentucky was held on 19 May 1924 at the Helm Hotel. A second meeting, held on 7 October 1924, resulted in the formation of the Mammoth Cave National Park Association. A few key Kentucky businessmen and the Louisville & Nashville Railroad were instrumental in the effort. The Association immediately began soliciting subscriptions and negotiating for purchase options on land to comprise the park. On 16 July 1925, the Mammoth Cave National Park Association was formally incorporated for the purpose of encouraging the U.S. Congress to pass legislation authorizing the park.

On 25 May 1926, President Calvin Coolidge signed legislation enabling the creation of a national park at Mammoth Cave. The law required the acquisition of a minimum acreage, including the major caves, before the federal government would assume responsibility for the park, and it designated the Association as the fundraising agency for land purchases.

The refusal of some landowners to sell to the Association led the Kentucky General Assembly in 1928 to create the Kentucky National Park Commission with the power of eminent domain to acquire lands for the park. Although it received an appropriation from the state, the Commission had no authority to expend funds for any purpose other than land, caves and condemnation expenses; as a result, the Mammoth Cave National Park Association continued to carry other expenses of the park project. Appointments to the Commission were originally made from candidates recommended by the Association, but legislation in 1930 reconstituted the Commission and gave the Governor unqualified power to appoint its members.

In 1941 after acquiring 48,000 acres, the U.S. Congress formally established Mammoth Cave as the country's twenty-sixth national park. It was dedicated in September 1946. In 1961 the park was enlarged by two additional caves, Great Onyx and Floyd Collins Crystal, which were purchased by the National Park Service. The

Association continued to serve as a citizen advocacy group for the cave and to provide local input on the cave's operation and maintenance. For decades it voiced its opposition to the damming of the Green River, claiming it would have a detrimental effect on the cave's ecosystem. It opposed the razing of the Mammoth Cave Hotel in the 1980s. The organization continued to take positions on matters that affected the cave region; it also provided funding for research projects and educational programming related to Mammoth Cave. Historically, the Association has not acted as a fundraising unit for Mammoth Cave since it became a national park; it is a non-profit organization supported by membership dues and gifts.

Cecil Earnest Goode wrote a history of the Association titled *World Wonder Saved: How Mammoth Cave Became a National Park* in 1986; it was funded by the Association. For additional information about the Association, see the collection of Max Brunswick Nahm (MSS 329: 1959.2.3), one of its long-term presidents, and another MCNPA collection more specifically about land acquisition (MSS 503).

COLLECTION NOTES

This collection consists of 18.5 linear feet of the incomplete records of the Mammoth Cave National Park Association. It is organized chronologically. Many of the earlier years required multiple folders, but the later years generally only consist of a single folder. The folders contain correspondence, business records, minutes of small group meetings as well as the minutes of the Association's annual meetings, administrative papers, advertisements, maps, etc. In the years prior to the area's national park status, the collection concentrates on land acquisition, the day-to-day operation of the cave, and construction on the property, such as the erection of the new Mammoth Cave Hotel in the early 1930s. After 1943, the folders sometimes contain the annual report of the Mammoth Cave National Park superintendent. The organization's Articles of Incorporation are filed in Box 14, Folder 4 and an amended version is found in Box 18, Folder 1. A considerable amount of material, chiefly newspaper clippings about the Kentucky cave shrimp, can be found in Boxes 18 and 19. There are no records for the Association in this collection for the years 1991-1992, and 1994-1999.

The chief correspondents include: George E. Zubrod, Max B. Nahm, R. J. Ball, Martin Leo Charlet, Almon A. Demunbrun, John Blakey Helm, William C. Montgomery, Huston Quin, Eugene Stuart, and William W. Thompson. Most of these men served as officers in the organization for extended periods.

BOX 1	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	1925-1926	539 items
Folder 1	Inventory		2 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1925	57 items

Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Jan. - Feb. 1926	56 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Mar. - Apr. 1926	57 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	July - Aug. 1926	107 items
Folder 6	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	May - Jun. 1926	120 items
Folder 7	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Sept. - Oct. 1926	68 items
Folder 8	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Nov. - Dec. 1926	72 items
BOX 2	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	1927	467 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Jan. - Feb. 1927	36 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Mar. - Apr. 1927	25 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	May - Jun. 1927	74 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	July - Aug. 1927	169 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Sept. - Oct. 1927	103 items
Folder 6	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Nov. - Dec. 1927	60 items
BOX 3	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	1928	462 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Jan. - Feb. 1928	59 items

Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Mar. - Apr. 1928	73 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	May - Jun. 1928	111 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	July - Aug. 1928	97 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Sept. - Oct. 1928	66 items
Folder 6	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Nov. - Dec. 1928	56 items
BOX 4	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	1929	655 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Jan. - Mar. 1929	143 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Apr. - July 1929	176 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Aug. - Oct. 1929	179 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Nov. - Dec. 1929	157 items
BOX 5	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	Jan. - June 1930	838 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Jan. - Feb. 1930	177 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	March 1930	129 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	April 1930	181 items

Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	May 1930	168 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	June 1930	183 items
BOX 6	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	July - Dec. 1930	785 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	July 1930	171 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	August 1930	132 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	September 1930	167 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	October 1930	144 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Nov. - Dec. 1930	171 items
BOX 7	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	Jan. - June 1931	778 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Jan. - Feb. 1931	254 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Mar. - Apr. 1931	253 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	May 1931	147 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	June 1931	124 items

BOX 8	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	July - Dec. 1931	622 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	July 1931	145 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	August 1931	110 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Sept. - Oct. 1931	203 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Nov. - Dec. 1931	164 items
BOX 9	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	Jan. - June 1932	499 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Jan. - Feb. 1932	139 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Mar. - Apr. 1932	153 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	May - June 1932	207 items
BOX 10	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	July - Dec. 1932	552 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	July - Aug. 1932	217 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Sept. - Oct. 1932	244 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Nov. - Dec. 1932	91 items

BOX 11	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	1933	631 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Jan. - Feb. 1933	123 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Mar. - Apr. 1933	163 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	May - June 1933	182 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	July - Aug. 1933	117 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Sept. - Dec. 1933	46 items
BOX 12	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	1934-1940	826 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1934	113 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1935	135 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1936	107 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1937	135 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1938	103 items
Folder 6	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1939	104 items
Folder 7	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1940	129 items

BOX 13	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	1941-1945	728 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Jan. - June 1941	87 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	July - Dec. 1941	98 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1942	221 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1943	142 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1944	90 items
Folder 6	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1945	90 items
BOX 14	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	1946-1950	493 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1946	147 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1947	70 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1948	89 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1949	122 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1950	65 items
BOX 15	Mammoth Cave National Park Association	1951-1959	545 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1951	101 items

Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1952	59 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1953	103 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1954	86 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1955	27 items
Folder 6	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1956	54 items
Folder 7	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1957	31 items
Folder 8	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1958	46 items
Folder 9	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1959	38 items
BOX 16	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	1960-1964	186 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1960	46 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1961	50 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1962	21 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1963	19 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1964	50 items

BOX 17	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	1965-1975	588 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1965	26 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1966	18 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1967	37 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1968	58 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1969	40 items
Folder 6	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1970	31 items
Folder 7	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1971	95 items
Folder 8	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1972	77 items
Folder 9	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1973	48 items
Folder 10	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1974	79 items
Folder 11	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1975	79 items
BOX 18	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	1976-1980	541 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1976	129 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1977	51 items

Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1978	134 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	Jan.- Jun. 1979	69 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	July-Dec. 1979	73 items
Folder 6	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1980	85 items
BOX 19	MAMMOTH Cave National Park Association	1981-1988; 1993; 2000-	304 items
Folder 1	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1981	84 items
Folder 2	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1982	29 items
Folder 3	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1983	6 items
Folder 4	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1984	59 items
Folder 5	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1985	48 items
Folder 6	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1986	28 items
Folder 7	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1987	16 items
Folder 8	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1988	19 items
Folder 9	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1989-1990	2 items
Folder 10	Correspondence, reports and meeting minutes	1993; 2000-	13 items

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

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Correspondence, financial papers, administrative papers including minutes of annual meetings, reports, maps and other sundry records of the Mammoth Cave National Park Association. The Association was established to obtain options for land purchases in the region and to oversee the day-to-day operation of the cave prior to its being designated a national park in 1941. Afterwards, it operated in more of an advisory/advocacy capacity.

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Jeffrey 01/21/2011