

Missouri State Archives

Finding Aid RG 6.10

Office of State Auditor

Thomas M. Keyes (1977-1979)

Correspondence, 1977-1978

Abstract: Correspondence (1977-1978) of former state auditor Thomas M. Keyes, 1914-1987.

Extent: 1.2 cubic ft. (3 Hollinger boxes).

Record Description: Paper.

Alternative Formats: None.

Location: Missouri State Archives.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions: No special restrictions.

Publication Restrictions: Copyright is in the public domain. Items reproduced for online or physical publication should carry the credit line: Courtesy of the Missouri State Archives.

Preferred Citation: [Item description], [Date]; [Box and Folder]; [Series]; Thomas Keyes, Office of State Auditor RG 6; Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City.

Acquisition Information: Agency transfer. Accession Number 2012-0108.

Processing Information: Processing completed by Amy C. Nickless on 6/30/2026.

Historical and Biographical Notes

Keyes was born in Kansas City, Missouri on February 4, 1914 to Andrew C. and Rose McDonald Keyes. He graduated from Rockhurst College in 1934 and joined the firm Ernst and Ernst shortly thereafter as a junior accountant. He became a firm partner in

1955. Over the course of his career, he became a certified public accountant in Arkansas, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas. During his time at Ernest and Ernest, Keyes also served on the State Board of Accountancy from 1950-1955, serving his final year as president. Keyes retired as a managing partner of the Ernst and Ernst office in Kansas City in 1974.

Between retirement and appointment as state auditor to replace the outgoing George W. Lehr, Keyes served as a private business and financial consultant. The same article reported that Governor Teasdale selected Keyes because he was a certified public accountant who placed profession over politics. It was likewise reported Keyes was surprised by his selection since he never ran for a political office before. Keyes was inaugurated on January 27, 1977.

Keyes started a campaign for State Auditor in 1978, but backed out. His wife, Audrey (nee Roberts), passed away on July 18, 1977. They had one son, Thomas M. Keyes, Jr. Keyes passed away on April 3, 1987.

Timeline

Year	Event
1914	Keyes was born on February 4.
1934	Keyes graduated from Rockhurst College, then joined the firm Ernst and Ernst.
1950-1955	Keyes served on the State Board of Accountancy.
1955	Keyes became a partner at Ernst and Ernst.
1974	Keyes retired from Ernst and Ernst.
1977	Keyes was appointed to fill the vacancy of State Auditor and was sworn in on January 27. Keyes' wife Audrey unexpectedly passed away on July 18.
1987	Keyes passed away on April 3.

Additional Descriptive Information

Bibliography

Official Manual of the State of Missouri. Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Secretary of State. Volumes 1878 through 1999-2000. Accessed March 13, 2026.
<https://mdh.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/bluebook>.

Related Material

RG 6.01 [Audit Reports](#)

RG 6.02 Office of State Auditor

Correspondence, 1977-1978

Extent: 1.2 cubic ft. (3 Hollinger boxes)

Arrangement: Alphabetical

Scope and Content

This series contains the correspondence of Thomas M. Keyes. While most correspondence was sent or received by Keyes and is labeled by the last name of the correspondent, there is an exception within the "A" folder. There is one folder following the regular pattern and one dedicated to correspondence written by his administrative assistant, Mick Buehler. Buehler's correspondence mainly regarded organizing speaking engagements for Keyes statewide. Outgoing correspondence has been sampled since Keyes mailed the same letter to everyone at events he attended. The correspondence predominantly represents Keyes' social calendar rather than the day-to-day operations of the State Auditor's office.

The "L" folder contains correspondence with Keyes' predecessor, George W. Lehr. "R" contains correspondence with then Speaker of the House Kenneth Rothman. "S" contains correspondence with State Treasurer James I. Spainhower. "W" contains correspondence with then state senator Harriet Woods and Kansas City Major Charles Wheeler, Jr. Both Rothman and Woods were later elected Lieutenant Governor.

There is no correspondence for "I," "Q," or "X."

Container List

Box	Folder	Contents	Date
1	1	A, written by Administrative Assistant Mick Buehler	1977-1978
1	2	A	1977-1978
1	3-4	B	1977-1978
1	5-6	C	1977-1978
1	7	D	1977-1978
1	8	E	1977-1978
1	9	F	1977-1978
2	1	G	1977-1978
2	2-3	H	1977-1978
2	4	J	1977-1978
2	5	K	1977-1978
2	6	L	1977-1978
2	7-8	M (folder 7 includes a photograph)	1977-1978
2	9	N	1977-1978
2	10	O	1977-1978
3	1	P	1977-1978

Box	Folder	Contents	Date
3	2	R	1977-1978
3	3-4	S	1977-1978
3	5	T	1977-1978
3	6	U	1977-1978
3	7	V	1977-1978
3	8	W	1977-1978
3	9	Y and Z	1977-1978