

Missouri State Archives

Finding Aid [998.355]

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

Algoa Prison Photograph Collection

Abstract: Nine photographs of the Algoa Prison Farm, aka Algoa Intermediate Reformatory, on the outskirts of Jefferson City.

Extent: 9 images

Physical Description: Photographs

Location: Missouri State Archives; Stacks

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Alternative Formats: TIFF

Access Restrictions: None

Publication Restrictions: None

Preferred Citation: [item description], [date]; *Algoa Prison Photograph Collection*, Record Group 998.355; Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City.

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HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Algoa Prison Farm opened to young male inmates on March 31, 1932. The mission of Algoa Intermediate Reformatory (as it was also known) was to rehabilitate offenders between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five. It was situated on just under 800 acres of land about eight miles east of Jefferson City in Cole County. The prison quickly filled to capacity and in 1936 the General Assembly authorized the construction of a new administration building, a hospital (which would be part of the administration building), and four additional dormitories to make a total of ten. These structures were complete by February 1937.

Over the years the mission and make-up of the institution has hardly changed. It is now known as Algoa Correctional Center and is a medium-security facility, but its inmate population has stayed roughly the same: young male offenders.

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Related Collections

MS297 Mark Schreiber Collection
RG000.114 Department of Corrections State Documents
RG114 Department of Corrections Employee Photograph Collection
RG114 Department of Corrections Photograph Collection
RG213 Missouri State Penitentiary

Additional External Resources

The Missouri History Museum in St. Louis maintains the following collections:

[#A1073 Missouri Welfare League Records, 1919-1950](#)

[#F9016 Reformatory at Algoa Farm, Jefferson City](#), part of [#P0141 Penal Institutions](#)

The State Historical Society of Missouri in Columbia has one photograph of Algoa:

[#P0076 Missouri National Guard Photographs, Algoa Reformatory Correctional Center](#)

SHSM also maintains the following collections:

[#C2636 Prisoner Advocacy and Education Project Records, 1971-1982](#)

[#C3035 Estella Wilferth Papers, 1912-1962](#)

[#C3475 Missouri Association for Social Welfare Papers, 1908-1971](#)

[#C3911 Missouri Coalition for Correctional Justice Records, 1973-1982](#)

[#R1418 Melvin C. DeWitt Papers](#)

The State Historical Society of Missouri in Kansas City maintains the following collection:

[#K0609 Richard Lawrence Matthis Papers, 1997-2013](#)

SERIES

Photographs, 1934-1938

Scope and Content

Algoa employee George Leland Murphy took a few photographs of the grounds of Algoa during his time there. Murphy started at the institution sometime in 1934. He was employed at first as a dormitory master then the assistant horticulturist. He does not appear on the employee list in the 1939-1940 Blue Book.

These photographs have been digitized and are on the Z Drive. They are also on Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/missouristatearchives/albums/72157627347624221>.

Container List

Location	Box	Folder	Contents	Date
	103	127	This is the main gate leading to Algoa Prison Farms. The metal gate is closed. Either side of the gate is made of stone.	1934-1938
	103	128	View of "The Hill," the building complex for Algoa, as seen from the water tower. There are six dormitory buildings and an administration/all-purpose building situated on three sides of a square lawn. There is a tower in the middle of the square. Men are lined up outside the dorms ready for dinner. A small band plays on the lawn next to a flag.	1934
	103	129	View of the new combination administration building and hospital in front of the water tower. The siren tower and a few dorms are also visible.	1937-1938
	103	130	The old administration/all-purpose building now functions as a dining room, gym, and schoolrooms in the wings.	1937-1938
	103	131	View of the Algoa building complex from the water tower.	1938
	103	132	View of the Algoa building complex from the water tower.	1938
	103	133	An inmate nicknamed "Eight Ball" poses for the camera. In the background is Dormitory #1. The back of the photo says Eight Ball was convicted of stealing 100 pounds of railroad iron and sentenced to two years. It also says he is from Taylor, MO, which is an unincorporated town in Marion County. Attempts to determine his real name have thus far been unsuccessful.	1934-1938
	103	134	The Algoa power plant lies at the foot of a hill and exhales steam into the wintry air. In the distance are the dairy farm and rock quarry.	1934-1938
	103	135	The Missouri River as seen from the Algoa water tower. Bare hills and trees. Winter.	1934-1938

