

Arab American National Museum Archives
13624 Michigan Ave., Dearborn, MI 48126



Title: Michael Koury Collection
Creator: Koury, Edmond
Inclusive dates: 1930s-1961
Bulk dates: 1950-1951
Extent: 0.5 linear feet
Accession number: 2017.23.00

Abstract:

The Michael Koury Collection consists of documents, correspondence and photographs pertaining to the Syrian-Lebanese Federation of the Eastern States in the mid-twentieth century. Michael Koury, father of donor Edmond Koury, served as president of the club from 1939-1940.

Language: Material is in English
Acquisition: Donation from Edmond Koury in 2017
Accruals: Additions to the collection are not expected
Access: No restrictions
Photographs: Folder 3
A-V Material: None
Copyright: Copyright has been transferred to the Arab American National Museum.
Processed: July 2017 by Elyssa Bisoski
Arrangement: Chronologically within topical folders. Original order preserved when possible.
Preferred citation: [item], Folder [#], Michael Koury Collection, Arab American National Museum

Biography

Michael Koury

Born in Kaitouly, Lebanon, in 1900, Michael Rizkallah Koury immigrated to the United States in 1914 to join his brother and cousins. He held a number of jobs in his early years in the U.S., including working at a shipyard and running a small hotel, and later joined a relative in the grocery business. He settled down in Torrington, Connecticut and opened a small chain of liquor stores after the repeal of prohibition. Koury was highly involved in the social and fraternal life of Torrington as well as the larger Arab American community of the northeast, serving as president of the Syrian-Lebanese Federation of the Eastern States from 1939-1940. He married Carmen Saba, niece of J.M. Hagger, an Arab American well known for his national clothing company. The Kourys had three children.

Syrian-Lebanese Federation of the Eastern States

Immigrants from Greater Syria formed many clubs throughout the country in the early years of the 20th century. In 1932, many of the clubs in the northeast banded together to form them Syrian and Lebanese Federation of the Eastern States (the name was changed two years later to the Syrian-Lebanese Federation of the Eastern States). The purpose of the Federation was to unite the disparate clubs under one banner and encourage a large, close friendship among Syrian and Lebanese Americans throughout the region. In 1950, three regional federations (Eastern, Midwest and Southern) joined together to form the National Association of Federations of Syrian and Lebanese American Clubs. That same year the National Association held an Overseas Convention in Syria and Lebanon, where attendees visited historic sites and met with government officials. Although the Federation of the Eastern States has disbanded, the National Association and many individual clubs remain in operation.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of correspondence, documents and photographs relating to the Syrian-Lebanese Federation of the Eastern States from the 1930s through the 1950s. The bulk of the items are from 1950-1951, with a large amount pertaining to the 1950 Overseas Convention of the National Association in Syria and Lebanon. Photographs from this convention can be found in folder three. Of note is a 1940 article in the scrapbook in folder six concerning the potential formation of a national federation of Syrian and Lebanese clubs.

Subjects

- Arab Americans--Ethnic identity.
- Arab Americans--History--20th century
- Arab Americans--United States
- Societies and Clubs

Genre terms

- Correspondence
- Photographs
- Booklets
- Newspaper clippings

Contents

Box 1

Folder 1: Convention Booklets, 1938-1961

Folder 2: 1950 Overseas Convention papers, 1950

Folder 3: 1950 Overseas Convention photographs, 1950

Folder 4: Correspondence, 1932-1951, n.d.

Folder 5: General Federation Documents, 1940-1951, n.d.

Includes meeting minutes, committee lists, speeches, financial statements, federation constitution, resolutions.

Folder 6: Scrapbook