

TITLE: Winnie Ruth Judd Photograph Collection

DATE RANGE: 1930s

CALL NUMBER: FP FPC #4

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 1 linear foot (1 box)

PROVENANCE: Unknown

COPYRIGHT: Unknown

RESTRICTIONS: This collection has no restrictions.

CREDIT LINE: Winnie Ruth Judd Photograph Collection, Arizona Historical Foundation, FP FPC #4

PROCESSED BY: Rebekah Tabah, October, 2007

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:

The murder trial of Winnie Ruth Judd, “the trunk murderess” is still one of the most sensationalized cases in the history of Phoenix. Many conspiracy theories have developed over the years which involve many local celebrities, politicians, and business men. Judd’s relationships with Samuelson, LeRoi, and Jack Halloran have been the topic of various speculations. Regardless, by the time of her release she had served one of the longest sentences in the history of any criminal in the United States; thirty-eight years, eleven months, and twenty-two days.

Winnie Ruth McKinnell Judd was born in 1905, the daughter of Methodist Minister Mr. and Mrs. McKinnell in Darlington, Indiana. In 1924 she married Dr. William C. Judd, a man twenty two years her senior. Her husband found work as a doctor where available and the couple frequently moved, first to Mexico and finally California.

Judd, who suffered from tuberculosis, decided to seek refuge in the dry desert air of Phoenix without her husband in 1930. In his absence Mrs. Judd rented an apartment at 1102 East Brill Street and became close friends with Agnes Anne LeRoi and Hedvig “Sammy” Samuelson. The ladies lived just a short distance from Ruth at 2929 North Second Street and would often have her over for parties.

On Friday, October 16, 1931, during a scuffle Winnie Ruth Judd shot Anne LeRoi and Sammy Samuelson to death in their Second Street home. Wanting to dispose of the bodies, Judd decided to pack them into large trunks and take the bodies by train to Los Angeles. The body of Anne LeRoi fit into one trunk, but Samuelson’s body was too heavy and was dissected into pieces and placed into multiple boxes. Covered by articles of clothing the body filled trunks and Judd boarded a train for Los Angeles.

While in route a horrible smell and liquid began to leak from the trunks. When the train reached the Los Angeles station Judd was asked to open the trunks and reveal what was inside. Claiming that her husband had the keys she fled the scene. The trunks forced open and the contents of the women's bodies were revealed. Judd was apprehended five days later and sent to Phoenix's State Prison to await trial for the murders.

The trial of Winnie Ruth Judd commenced on January 19, 1932, at the Maricopa County Courthouse in downtown Phoenix. The media deemed her "the trunk murderess" even though Judd vehemently claimed self-defense for her actions against the two women. On February 8, 1932 she was pronounced guilty and sentenced to the death penalty by hanging, placed on death row at the Arizona State Prison at Florence. Judd made an appeal which was denied by the Supreme Court, but in a strange turn of events was found to be insane just days before her execution and transferred to the Arizona State Mental Hospital. During her 30-plus years of incarceration Ruth became an escape artist. Between 1939 and 1962, she had escaped seven times, the last for almost seven years. Judd had run off to Northern California and was living and working under the assumed name Marian Lane.

On June 27, 1969 Judd was discovered and again extradited back to the Phoenix asylum. Judd demanded that a sanity hearing be held and her case reviewed by the state parole board. Her case was re-opened in October of 1969, but was denied by the parole board. Building a huge case Judd's attorneys press for another parole hearing and in December of 1971, Governor Jack Williams pardoned the 66 year old Judd. Winnie Ruth Judd upon her release returned to northern California as Marian Lane and died in her sleep at the age of 93 on October 23, 1998.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:

Where the collection was acquired from is unknown. All photographs are originals. The collection is organized by subject and then by date. Majority of the images are from the 1932 murder trail. These include images of the trunks used to transport the dead bodies, attorneys, witnesses, and jurors involved in the case. See also the AHF Ephemera Biography file on Winnie Ruth Judd (Call # FB BIO JUD,WIN) for more information.

CONTAINER LIST:

Box	Folder	Title	Date
1	1	Photographs: Agnes Anne LeRoi (victim)	ND
	2	Photographs: Hedvig "Sammy" Samuelson (victim)	ND
	3	Photographs: Evidence	1931
	4	Photographs: Dr. Judd & Winnie Ruth Judd at Hospital	1931
	5	Photographs: Winnie Ruth Judd being Booked and Charged	1931
	6	Photographs: The McKinnells (Winnie Ruth Judd's Family)	1932
	7	Photographs: The Murder Trial 1 of 2	1932
	8	Photographs: The Murder Trial 2 of 2	1932
	9	Photographs: Winnie Ruth Rudd in Court	1932
	10	Photographs: Insanity Hearing	1933