Metal Mine Workers' Union strike bulletins, 1917

Overview of the Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creator</th>
<th>Metal Mine Workers' Union (Butte, Mont.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Metal Mine Workers' Union strike bulletins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>1917 (inclusive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>1 folder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection Number</td>
<td>Mss 859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>The Metal Mine Workers' Union developed shortly after a mine fire in Butte, Montana that killed 168 miners in June 1917. The destruction of Butte's once powerful mining union in 1914 left miners unable to negotiate with the operating companies for better pay and safer working conditions and the organization of the new union intended to rectify the situation. This collection includes several of the Metal Mine Workers' Union's &quot;Strike Bulletins&quot; that helped to inform union members on developments and gain support for their cause.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repository</td>
<td>University of Montana, Mansfield Library, Archives and Special Collections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collections</td>
<td>Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library</td>
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<td>University of Montana</td>
<td>32 Campus Dr. #9936</td>
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<td>Missoula, MT</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:library.archives@umontana.edu">library.archives@umontana.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Access Restrictions</td>
<td>Researchers must use collection in accordance with the policies of Archives and Special Collections, the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, and The University of Montana-Missoula.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Languages</td>
<td>English.</td>
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Historical Note

The Metal Mine Workers' Union developed from the labor unrest in Butte, Montana in 1917. The copper mines of Butte produced a strong union presence in the city; by 1887, all of the city's mines were unionized. This "closed shop" persisted until 1914 when internal struggles destroyed the once powerful Butte Miners' Union of the Western Federation of Miners and opened the mines to corporate control.

In early June of 1917, a fire in the Granite Mountain and Speculator Mine shafts killed 168 miners. Several days later, miners began to walk off the job at copper mines all over the city in protest of the poor working conditions. A meeting was organized and the Metal Mine Workers' Union, an unaffiliated and independent union, formed less than two weeks after the Speculator Mine fire. The new union...
immediately petitioned the operating companies for recognition of their union, safer working conditions, and wage increases. By the end of June, other trade unions, including the Electricians, Boilermakers, Blacksmiths, and Metal Trades Machinists of Butte, joined the miners in their strike.

The companies resisted the mining union organizers’ efforts and chose to work with the other trade unions, acquiescing to many of their demands in hopes of isolating the miners’ union and forcing and end to the strike. By the end of July, most of the other trade unions had reached a deal and returned to work. The miners’ union continued to strike through 1917, however, many miners returned to work before its official end. The Metal Mine Workers’ Union officially called off the strike on December 18, 1917.

Content Description

This collection includes four Strike Bulletins (numbers 32 through 34 and number 37) published in 1917 by the Metal Mine Workers’ Union to update strikers on developments in mines and the activities of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company and other operating companies.

Use of the Collection

Restrictions on Use

Researchers are responsible for using in accordance with 17 U.S.C. and any other applicable statutes. Copyright not transferred to the University of Montana.

Preferred Citation

[Name of document or photograph number], Metal Mine Workers’ Union Strike Bulletins, Archives and Special Collections, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, The University of Montana-Missoula.

Administrative Information

Arrangement

The bulletins are arranged chronologically.

Acquisition Information

This collection’s custodial history and the details of its acquisition by Archives and Special Collections are unknown.

Future Additions

There are no expected additions to this collection.

Processing Note

The bulletins were previously encapsulated.
Related Materials

The Butte Silver-Bow Archives in Butte, Montana holds additional information on the miners' strike of 1917 and the Metal Mine Workers' Union.

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms:
Labor movement--Montana--Butte--History
Labor unions--Montana--Butte
Miners--Labor unions--Montana
Strikes and lockouts--Miners--Montana--Butte

Corporate Names:
Anaconda Copper Mining Company.

Geographical Names:
Butte (Mont.)--History--20th century

Finding aid prepared by Kellyn Younggren
2015

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