

Du Mont Laboratories Records

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Prepared by Daniel Gilham

Collection Summary

Title: Du Mont Laboratories Records

Span Dates: 1930-1960

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1945-1960)

ID No.: MSS19109

Creator: Du Mont Laboratories

Extent: 41,000 items ; 139 containers ; 56 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Summary: Firm organized by Allen B. Du Mont in 1935 devoted to electronic television and communications engineering; television receiver and manufacturing business sold to Emerson Radio and Phonograph Corporation in 1958; remainder of the firm merged with Fairchild Camera and Instrument Corporation in 1960. General correspondence, administrative files, interoffice correspondence, financial records, sales and advertising files, television and government hearing material, and miscellaneous records relating chiefly to the development and commercial use of the television cathode ray tube. Includes personal papers of founder Allen B. Du Mont.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People

Arnett, Keeton--Correspondence.

Cramer, Leonard Frederick, 1910-1987--Correspondence.

Du Mont, Allen B. (Allen Balcom), 1901-1965. Allen B. Du Mont papers.

Goldsmith, Thomas T. (Thomas Toliver), 1910-2009--Correspondence.

Lescarbours, Austin C. (Austin Celestin), 1891- --Correspondence.

Loewi, Mortimer W. (Mortimer Warren), 1888-1967--Correspondence.

Marx, Ernest A.--Correspondence.

Poppele, Jack--Correspondence.

Roberts, William A. (William Allerton), 1900- --Correspondence.

Sarlin, Irving--Correspondence.

Steadman, Albert--Correspondence.

Taylor, Herbert E., Jr.--Correspondence.

Ware, Paul, 1893-1970--Correspondence.

Wheeler, Elmer, 1903- --Correspondence.

Witting, C. J. (Chris James), 1915-2005--Correspondence.

Organizations

Du Mont Laboratories.

Subjects

Cathode ray tubes.

Electrical engineering.

Electronics.

Engineering laboratories.

Telecommunication.

Television.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The records of the Du Mont Laboratories were given to the Library of Congress by Allen B. Du Mont in 1965.

Processing History

The Du Mont Laboratories Records were processed in 1967. The finding aid was revised in 2012.

Related Material

Related collections in the Manuscript Division include the papers of [Thomas T. Goldsmith](#).

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Allen B. Du Mont in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions

The records of the Du Mont Laboratories are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Du Mont Laboratories Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Organizational History and Biographical Note

Du Mont Laboratories

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1931	Founded by Allen B. Du Mont
1935	Incorporation of Allen B. Du Mont Laboratories
1938	Began manufacturing televisions
1946	Formation of Du Mont Television Network
1946	Du Mont Television Network sold to John Kluge and renamed Metromedia
1949	World's largest television assembly plant, part of Du Mont Laboratories, dedicated in East Patterson, N.J.
1958	Television manufacturing division sold to Emerson Radio and Phonograph Corp.
1960	Research laboratory sold to Fairchild Camera and Instrument Corp.

Allen B. Du Mont

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1901, Jan. 29	Born, Brooklyn, N.Y.
1916-1924	Worked summers as a licensed commercial radio operator on coastal and transatlantic ships
1924	B.A., electrical engineering, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, N.Y.
1924-1928	Engineer, Westinghouse Lamp Co., Bloomfield, N.J.

1928-1931	Employed by DeForest Radio Corp., Passaic, N.J., as chief engineer and director of research and experiment in the field of "sight and sound" broadcasting
1931	Organized a basement laboratory in his home in Upper Montclair, N.J., devoted to the development of a commercially practical cathode ray tube
1935	Incorporated Allen B. Du Mont Laboratories
1937-1938	Built and sold first television receivers
1941	Started experimental telecasting over W2XWV (later WABD), New York, N.Y.
1943	First president of Television Broadcasting Association
1946	Opened Wanamaker studios of station WABD, New York, N.Y. Established Du Mont Television Network with stations WABD, New York, and WTTG, Washington, D.C.
1951	Ranked first among America's most outstanding industrialists in radio and electronics in a poll conducted by <i>Forbes Magazine</i>
1956-1960	Chairman of the board, Allen B. Du Mont Laboratories, Inc.
1960-1961	Group general manager, Fairchild Camera and Instrument Corp.
1961-1965	Senior technical consultant, Fairchild Camera and Instrument Corp.
1965, Nov. 15	Died, New York, N.Y.

Scope and Content Note

The records of the Du Mont Laboratories span years 1930-1960, with the bulk of the material dated between 1945 and 1960. The collection consists of correspondence, administrative files, financial records, sales and advertising material, files relating to television and government hearings, and miscellaneous records focusing on the development and commercial use of the television cathode ray tube. Included throughout are personal papers of the Du Mont firm's founder, Allen B. Du Mont. The collection is organized into nine series: [Administrative Files](#), [General Correspondence](#), [Interoffice Correspondence](#), [Financial Records](#), [Sales and Advertising File](#), [Production and Engineering File](#), [Television File](#), [Government Hearings](#), and [Miscellany](#).

Early records of the laboratories reflect Allen Du Mont's efforts to develop a commercially practical cathode ray tube. Photographs, schematics, and other technical records in the [Production and Engineering](#) series and [Television File](#) document his development of the cathode ray tube from a laboratory curiosity into the practical and indispensable "eye" of television, radar, and oscillographs. Other material in these files reflects the planning and organization by Du Mont and his laboratories to apply the technology used in developing the cathode ray tube to such fields as scientific and industrial measurement and to the transmission and reception of television.

The laboratory's corporate history is documented throughout the collection, but largest in breadth, scope, and significance are the [Production and Engineering File](#), [Television File](#), and [Government Hearings](#) file. Contained in these series are materials documenting the commercial application of cathode ray tubes and the growth of Du Mont's television manufacturing and broadcasting divisions. These larger series also relate to television transmission, reception, and frequency allocation, Federal Communications Commission, color television, educational television, stations, networks, programs, ratings, and profits and losses. In addition, in the Television File are materials pertaining to the 1955 division of

Du Mont's television receiver manufacturing business and the merger of Allen B. Du Mont Laboratories with the Fairchild Camera and Instrument Corporation in 1960.

Prominent correspondents include Keeton Arnett, Leonard Frederick Cramer, Thomas T. Goldsmith, Austin C. Lescarbours, Mortimer W. Loewi, Ernest A. Marx, Jack Poppele, William Allerton Roberts, Irving Sarlin, Albert Steadman, Herbert E. Taylor Jr., Paul Ware, Elmer Wheeler, and C. J. Witting.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in nine series:

- [Administrative File, 1935-1960](#)
- [General Correspondence, circa 1930-1960](#)
- [Interoffice Correspondence, circa 1935-1960](#)
- [Financial Records, 1932-1960](#)
- [Sales and Advertising File, 1936-1960](#)
- [Production and Engineering File, 1932-1960](#)
- [Television File, circa 1935-1960](#)
- [Government Hearings, 1935-1937](#)
- [Miscellany, circa 1937-1960](#)

Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1-9	<p><u>Administrative File, 1935-1960</u></p> <p>Awards, blueprints, charts, correspondence, industrial relations records, memoranda, minutes, newsletters, newspaper clippings, personnel records, photographs, printed matter, reports, surveys, telegrams, union materials, and miscellaneous administrative records.</p> <p>Arranged by subject and therein chronologically.</p>
BOX 10-27	<p><u>General Correspondence, circa 1930-1960</u></p> <p>Letters sent and received.</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically by name of writer and therein chronologically.</p>
BOX 28-36	<p><u>Interoffice Correspondence, circa 1935-1960</u></p> <p>Letters and memoranda.</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically by name of writer and therein chronologically.</p>
BOX 37-44	<p><u>Financial Records, 1932-1960</u></p> <p>Audits, balance sheets, budgets, correspondence, cost statements, financial reports, loan papers, price lists, product sheets, profit and loss statements, stock registration lists, tax records, telegrams, and miscellaneous financial records.</p> <p>Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 45-49	<p><u>Sales and Advertising File, 1936-1960</u></p> <p>Advertisements, budgets, catalogs, conference materials, correspondence, lists, memoranda, newsletters, photographs, price lists, printed matter, proposals, reports, surveys, and miscellaneous material.</p> <p>Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 50-67	<p><u>Production and Engineering File, 1932-1960</u></p> <p>Articles, awards, blueprints, charts, contracts, correspondence, diagrams, inventory lists, mechanical drawings, memoranda, notes, orders, patents, photographs, printed matter, product information sheets, proposals, reports, schedules, schematics, and specification sheets.</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically by subject and therein chronologically.</p>
BOX 68-104	<p><u>Television File, circa 1935-1960</u></p> <p>Articles, block diagrams, blueprints, briefs, brochures, catalogs, contracts, correspondence, exhibits, legal papers, licenses, maps, memoranda, minutes, newspaper clippings, organization charts, pamphlets, photographs, printed matter, program ratings, reports, schedules, schematics, statements, surveys, testimony, subject and miscellaneous materials.</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically by subject and therein chronologically.</p>
BOX 105-125	<p><u>Government Hearings, 1935-1937</u></p> <p>Correspondence, testimony, and hearings material.</p> <p>Arranged according to the hearing's sponsor, mainly the Federal Communications Commission and the House of Representatives and Senate.</p>

BOX 126-139

Miscellany, circa 1937-1960

Addresses, articles, biographical material, company publications, magazines, news releases, photographs, printed matter, speeches, writings, and miscellaneous material.
Arranged by type of material.

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1-9	Administrative File, 1935-1960 Awards, blueprints, charts, correspondence, industrial relations records, memoranda, minutes, newsletters, newspaper clippings, personnel records, photographs, printed matter, reports, surveys, telegrams, union materials, and miscellaneous administrative records. Arranged by subject and therein chronologically.
BOX 1	Annual reports, 1938-1958
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BOX 5	Industrial relations, 1950-1954
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BOX 10-27	General Correspondence, circa 1930-1960 Letters sent and received. Arranged alphabetically by name of writer and therein chronologically.
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BOX 30	Geyelin-Goldsmith (1 folder)

Interoffice Correspondence, circa 1935-1960

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BOX 37-44	Financial Records, 1932-1960 Audits, balance sheets, budgets, correspondence, cost statements, financial reports, loan papers, price lists, product sheets, profit and loss statements, stock registration lists, tax records, telegrams, and miscellaneous financial records. Arranged chronologically.
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Production and Engineering File, 1932-1960

Container

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Production and Engineering File, 1932-1960

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Government Hearings, 1935-1937

Container

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Arranged according to the hearing's sponsor, mainly the Federal Communications Commission and the House of Representatives and Senate.

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	Addresses, articles, biographical material, company publications, magazines, news releases, photographs, printed matter, speeches, writings, and miscellaneous material.
	Arranged by type of material.
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