

Guide to the Monroe County League of Women Voters Records 2014.006

Finding aid prepared by Maria Socia

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February 12, 2015

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Local History & Genealogy Division

3/2014

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Summary Information

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Repository | Local History & Genealogy Division |
| Creator | League of Women Voters (U.S.). |
| Creator | League of Women Voters of New York State. |
| Creator | League of Women Voters of the Rochester Metropolitan Area (N.Y.). |
| Title | Monroe County League of Women Voters Records |
| Date [bulk] | Bulk, 1932-1943 |
| Date [inclusive] | 1920-2013 |
| Extent | 3.5 Cubic feet 4 boxes |
| Language | English |
| Abstract | The Monroe County League of Women Voters records document a local organization established in 1924 to promote informed and active participation in government. The collection includes photographs, reports, study outlines, lists, financial records, correspondence, newspaper clippings, pamphlets, and other papers, documenting the League's membership activities, voter services, programs of study, and actions taken primarily during 1932-1943. |

Citation

Monroe County League of Women Voters Records, [Box#, Folder#], Local History & Genealogy Division, Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County N.Y.

Historical Note

The League of Women Voters (LWV) is a civic organization founded in 1920 by prominent suffragist Carrie Chapman Catt shortly before women won the right to vote. Although the League initially began for the purpose of educating women on carrying out their new responsibility as voters, it was quickly revised to provide service to all citizens. The LWV is a non-partisan organization and does not endorse candidates for office; however, it does provide information on candidates as well as take stands on political issues. The two main ways the LMV accomplishes its goals are through voter services activities and programs. Voter services promote informed and active participation in government by assisting with voter registration, publications, and providing information on election laws and procedures. Program committees, composed of League members select political issues for study, such as education, housing, or voter rights. Findings are discussed at monthly meetings called “League Days,” and action is taken through an array of activities including writing letters, communicating with legislators, and through public statements. The structure of the LWV operates on three levels: a national league, a state league, and a local league.

The local Monroe County league, which remains active today, was established in 1924. Initially known as the League of Women Voters of Monroe County, it was renamed the League of Women Voters of the Rochester Metropolitan Area in 1968. Since its inception, the League has researched and taken action on several social and political concerns in Monroe County including employment, education, housing, and government. In the late 1940s, the League revealed slum conditions in Rochester, previously thought to be nonexistent, and petitioned the City Council for the creation of a housing authority, later established in 1955. During the 1930s, New York State law prohibited women from serving on juries. The League took on this fight by staging a mock trial, which demonstrated women's capabilities as jurors and led to a 1937 amendment to the law. Following this change, the League established jury schools, performed a state-wide skit called “The Woman Juror Goes to Court,” and published the “Blue Book for Jurors” The League’s interest in education led to the 1950s formation of a non-partisan organization called the Rochester Area Educational Television Association (RAETA) that would acquire and run an educational television channel. Additionally, the league strongly advocated the need for a central library, built in 1936, and was instrumental in the replacement of a 43-member Board of Supervisors to a 29-member county legislature.

Scope and Content Note

The Monroe County League of Women Voters records, 1920-2013, are composed of photographs, reports, study outlines, lists, financial records, correspondence, newspaper clippings, pamphlets, and other papers, documenting the League’s membership activities, voter services, programs of study, and actions

taken primarily during 1932-1943. The work of the League operates on all three branches; therefore, records also include documentation on the state and national Leagues.

Series 1: Administrative and financial records is comprised chiefly of membership information, including membership lists and meeting minutes; financial documents, mostly the sales of war bonds; and a history of the league and commemoration of its fiftieth anniversary. Series 2: Correspondence, arranged chronologically, ranges in topics from League announcements, convention planning to proposed legislations. Series 3: Rochester Public Library contains documents that cover League advocacy for a central library, planning and location, and commemorative materials. Series 4: Social welfare is composed of study groups and actions taken on issues such as a federal food stamp plan, child labor laws, and affordable healthcare. Series 5: Schools and education contains proposals and projects for an array of educational concerns, including improved vocational school programs, reorganization of school districts, federal aid, and board of education elections. Series 6: Civil Service concerns League efforts for improvements to the Civil Service law, as well as a campaign advocating a woman for the position of Civil Service Commissioner. Series 7: Government and public administration covers research, proposed projects, and support for various local, state, and national political policies. Also included in this series are documents concerning the fight for women jurors, and the League's support of the "Battle of Production" campaign. Series 8: Elections is composed of an array of election material including voter's guides, reports, voting instructions, and election calendars. Series 9: Photographs, assembled by Claire Tuttle in November 2006, document a range of League activities such as voter information booths, voting machine demonstrations, interviews with candidates, discussion groups, ceremonies and events.

Arrangement

The collection is organized into nine series: Series 1: Financial and business records, 1920-2006; Series 2: Correspondence, 1920-1996 (bulk: 1934-1937); Series 3: Rochester Public Library, 1927-1943; Series 4: Social welfare, 1931-1974 (bulk: 1935-1941); Series 5: Schools and education, 1929-1962 (bulk: 1935-1940); Series 6: Civil Service, 1936-1941; Series 7: Government and public administration, 1932-1951 (bulk: 1932-1943); Series 8: Elections, 1935-2013; Series 9: Photographs, 1950s-1980s.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Local History & Genealogy Division 3/2014

Access

There are no restrictions regarding access to this collection.

Use

Permission to publish, reproduce, distribute, or use in any current or future manifestations must be obtained in writing from the Rochester Public Library Local History & Genealogy Division.

Custodial History

The collection was donated in 1944. All materials after this date were not part of the original collection.

Processing Information

Processed in March 2014 by consulting archivist Maria Soscia. This project was made possible by a grant from the Documentary Heritage Program of the New York State Archives, a program of the State Education Department.

The League of Women Voters Rochester - Photo Album, formerly cataloged as Rfr324.623, has been integrated into the collection.

Controlled Access Headings

Geographic Name(s)

- Monroe County (N.Y.)--Politics and government
- Rochester (N.Y.)--Politics and government
- United States--Politics and government--20th century

Personal Name(s)

- Bloomer, Margaret S., 1897-1982
- Ellingson, Marcia, 1911-1993
- Gay, Agnes T., 1890-1987
- Harris, Emma Louise Hall, 1838-1905
- Jones, Helen Stone, 1886-1947
- Warren, Viola Lockhart, 1896-1968
- Werner, Lillian Boller

Subject(s)

- Elections--New York (State)--New York
- Equal rights amendments--United States--History--20th century
- Feminism--United States--History
- Voter registration--United States
- Women--Economic conditions--20th century.
- Women--Legal status, laws, etc.--New York (State)--History.
- Women--Political activity--New York (State)--History.
- Women--Social conditions--20th century.
- Women--Suffrage--New York (State)--History.
- Women's rights--New York (State)--History.

Bibliography

League of Women Voters of the Metropolitan Area. *How It Has Grown!: A History of the League of Women Voters of the Metropolitan Area, 1924-1969*. Rochester, N.Y.: League of Women Voters of the Rochester Metropolitan Area, 1969.

League of Women Voters of the Rochester Metropolitan Area. "The League of Women Voters in Rochester New York." Accessed February 17, 2014. <http://www.lwv-rma.org/about.php>.

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The Voter. Rochester, N.Y.: League of Women Voters/Rochester Metro, 1969-2005. Periodical.

League of Women Voters of Monroe County (N.Y.). *Your County, Monroe and the Government Within It*. [Rochester, N.Y.?] 1963. Rqr352 M7532L 1963

Monroe County League of Women Voters scrapbooks. [1931-1943]. Rqr320.9747 M753m v. 1 Rqr320.9747 M753m v. 2 Rqr320.9747 M753m v. 3 Rqr320.9747 M753m v. 4 Rqr320.9747 M753m v. 5 Rqr320.9747 M753m v. 6 Rqr320.9747 M753m v. 8 Rqr320.9747 M753m v. 9 Rqr320.9747 M753m v. 9A Rqr320.9747 M753m v. 10 Rqr320.9747 M753m v. 10A Rqr320.9747 M753m v. 11

Financial and business records

Collection Inventory

| Financial and business records 1920-2006 | | |
|---|------------|---------------|
| | Box | Folder |
| Yearly record of war stamps, bonds sold by volunteer 1942-1943 | 1 | 1-3 |
| [Policies and by-laws] 1953, 1965 | 2 | 1 |
| [Meeting minutes] May 16, 1930-May 14, 1934; February 15, 1937; June 13, 1961 | 2 | 2 |
| Board of Management minutes, agendas, and lists 1936-1940 | 2 | 3 |
| [Annual meetings] 1938, 1955, 1991-2006 | 2 | 4 |
| [Annual report to members] 1950-1952 | 2 | 5 |
| Membership lists 1942-1949, 1996-1997 | 2 | 6 |
| [Membership drive] undated | 2 | 7 |
| [Membership and dues ledger] 1934-1940 | 2 | 8 |
| [Proposed budget] 1954-1957 | 2 | 9 |

Correspondence

| | | |
|---|------------|---------------|
| [Program for convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association and first national congress of the League of Women Voters] February 12-18, 1920 | 2 | 10 |
| Invitations to New York State League of Women Voters from Rochester, New York 1941 | 2 | 11 |
| [Sixteenth state convention of the New York League of Women Voters and proposed program of work] 1935-1937 | 2 | 12 |
| [“Impact on Issues: Program and Action”] 1981-1985 | 2 | 13 |
| [Rochester civic calendars compiled by the Monroe County League of Women Voters] 1935-1940, undated | 2 | 14 |
| [Walking tours] 1977, 1979 | 2 | 15 |
| [Fiftieth anniversary and League history] 1925-1974 | 2 | 16 |
| Newspaper clippings and Photostats 1968-1969, undated | 2 | 17 |
| [Flyers, pamphlets, and handbooks] 1920, 1936-1942, 1976-1989 | 2 | 18 |
| Correspondence 1920-1996 (Bulk, 1934-1937) | | |
| | Box | Folder |
| League correspondence to members 1920-1959, 1977, 1996 | 2 | 19 |

Rochester Public Library

| | | |
|--|------------|---------------|
| Correspondence April-September 1934 | 2 | 20 |
| Correspondence October-December 1934 | 2 | 21 |
| Correspondence January 1935-March 1936 | 2 | 22 |
| Correspondence April 1936-April 1937 | 2 | 23 |
| Rochester Public Library 1927-1943 | | |
| | Box | Folder |
| Rochester Public Library appropriations site 1927-1936 | 2 | 24 |
| Rochester Public Library statements and printed materials 1928-1937 | 2 | 25 |
| Rochester Public Library scrapbook: "Library for Public Service" 1927 | 2 | 26 |
| Rochester Public Library scrapbook 1927-1931 | 2 | 27 |
| Rochester Public Library [clippings] 1931-1933 | 2 | 28 |
| ["War Information Services," bulletin of the Rochester Public Library] November 1943 | 2 | 29 |
| Social welfare 1931-1974 (Bulk, 1935-1941) | | |
| | Box | Folder |

Social welfare

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| Social Service Review September 1940 | 2 | 30 |
| Social welfare 1939-1941 | 2 | 31 |
| [Social welfare miscellaneous papers] 1950, undated | 2 | 32 |
| Social welfare: Rochester and Monroe County June 1939-June 1941 | 2 | 33 |
| Social welfare: non-local [newspaper clippings] June 1939-September 1942 | 2 | 34 |
| Social welfare: CCC Camps, N.Y.A; P.W.A.; W.P.A. (non-local) [newspaper clippings] June 1939-April 1940 | 2 | 35 |
| Social welfare: CCC Camps, N.Y.A; P.W.A.; W.P.A. (local) [newspaper clippings] June 1939-June 1941 | 2 | 36 |
| Social welfare: Employment April 1939-May 1941 | 2 | 37 |
| Food Stamp Plan May-December 1939 | 2 | 38 |
| Social welfare: Food stamp plan clippings June 1939-August 1940 | 2 | 39 |
| Social welfare: Relief; employment; taxation; defense employment; and social security 1937-1944 | 3 | 1 |
| Social security [newspaper clippings] June 1939-August 1940 | 3 | 2 |

Schools and education

| | | |
|--|------------|---------------|
| Social and economic conditions (Group of miscellaneous clippings: business conditions, insurance, budgets, youth, etc.) March –July 1939 | 3 | 3 |
| Housing 1939-1947, 1974 | 3 | 4 |
| [Healthcare] 1936-1940 | 3 | 5 |
| [Healthcare] February 1938 | 3 | 6 |
| [Healthcare] 1939-1940 | 3 | 7 |
| [Child Labor Committee reports and correspondence] 1931-1939 | 3 | 8 |
| Child Labor, New York Child Labor Committee 1935-1940 | 3 | 9-10 |
| Schools and education 1929-1962 (Bulk, 1935-1940) | | |
| | Box | Folder |
| Nursery schools 1935-1936 | 3 | 11 |
| Vocational education 1929-1935 | 3 | 12 |
| Schools 1935-1940 | 3 | 13 |
| Schools, Rochester, New York 1938-1940 | 3 | 14 |
| Federal aid to education packet 1935-1938 | 3 | 15 |

Civil service

| | | |
|--|------------|---------------|
| School administration in relation to city administration 1935-1936, undated | 3 | 16 |
| Mrs. M. Ellingson Education Committee 1936-1942 | 3 | 17 |
| [Board of Education and miscellaneous papers on education] 1934-1943, 1962 | 3 | 18 |
| Schools: Rochester, New York Board of Education 1937-1939 | 3 | 19 |
| Civil service 1936-1941 | | |
| | Box | Folder |
| Civil Service: Rochester and Monroe County 1936-1941 | 3 | |
| Civil Service: General 1936-1940 | 3 | 21 |
| [Civil Service reports and correspondence] 1936-1941 | 3 | 22 |
| Civil Service study group correspondence 1938-1940 | 3 | 23 |
| [Civil Service law: Reports, correspondence, and booklets] 1940-1941 | 3 | 24 |
| Government and public administration 1939-1940 | 3 | 25 |
| [Government and public administration: Reports, guides, and miscellaneous papers] 1938-1951 | 3 | 26 |

Government and public administration

| Government and public administration 1932-1951 (Bulk, 1932-1943) | | |
|--|------------|---------------|
| | Box | Folder |
| [Grade crossing elimination projects in New York State] December 17, 1940 | 4 | 1 |
| Committee on government and public administration 1932-1943 | 4 | 2-3 |
| Government and public administration: Amendments submitted to New York State Constitutional Convention November 1938 | 4 | 4 |
| Town Government Committee 1936-1940 | 4 | 5 |
| [Monthly News (published by New York League of Women Voters)] September 1940, February 1943 | 4 | 6 |
| [Municipal Research] September–November 1940, January 1944 | 4 | 7 |
| [Newspaper clippings] 1939-1940 | 4 | 8 |
| Taxation [newspaper clippings] June 1930-February 1940 | 4 | 9 |
| Taxation [newspaper clippings] 1935-1936 | 4 | 10 |
| Jury service for women 1936-1950 | 4 | 11 |
| Jury service for women scrapbook September 30, 1934-May 17, 1935 | 4 | 12 |

Elections

| | | |
|--|------------|---------------|
| Battle of Production campaign 1938-1943 | 4 | 13 |
| [Battle of Production campaign] May-July 1941 | 4 | 14 |
| Elections 1935-2013 | | |
| | Box | Folder |
| [Election material] 1941-1943 | 4 | 15 |
| [Election material and miscellaneous political papers] 1943-1954, 1973 | 4 | 16 |
| Vote 1938-1943 | 4 | 17 |
| Vote undated | 4 | 18 |
| [Vote] 1936-1943 | 4 | 19 |
| Local campaign, New York State, Monroe County, Rochester [newspaper clippings] January-September, 1940 | 4 | 20 |
| Campaign issues February-November 1940 | 4 | 21 |
| Women in the 1940s campaign [newspaper clippings] 1940-1941 | 4 | 22 |
| Conventions December 1939-July 1940 | 4 | 23 |
| Democratic Party 1939-1940 | 4 | 24 |

Photographs

| | | |
|--|------------|---------------|
| [Election and foreign policy] 1939-1953 | 4 | 25 |
| [Candidate biographies] 1938-1963 | 4 | 26 |
| Election board materials 1940-1941 | 4 | 27 |
| [Election pamphlets and flyers] 1938-1952, 2006-2010 | 4 | 28 |
| [Voter's guides – "Facts for Voters"] 1951-1974, 1989, 2000 | 4 | 29 |
| [Voter's guides – "Who Represents You"] 1974-1977, 1993-2013 | 4 | 30 |
| [Voter's guides and handbooks] 1935-1947 | 4 | 31 |
| [Voter's guides and handbooks] 1948-1958, 1970, 2004 | 4 | 32 |
| [Pamphlets and publications] 1939-1943, 1976 | 4 | 33 |
| [Newspaper clippings] 1940-1959 | 4 | 34 |
| [Poster of candidates] 1943 | 4 | 35 |
| Photographs 1950s-1980s | | |
| | Box | Folder |
| Photographs 1950s-1980s | 4 | 36-37 |