A Guide to the Alice Sufit Papers, 1920-2009

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1920-2009

A Collection in Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History RG 194

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Title Statement

A Guide to the Alice Sufit Papers, 1920-2009

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Collection number
RG 194

Language
English

Creator
Sufit, Alice Elizabeth, 1918-2012

Extent
6 boxes.

Repository
Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions
The collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions
There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information
Gift of Elizabeth Sufit, daughter of Alice Sufit, on April 27, 2012.

Preferred Citation
Alice Sufit Papers, Collection # RG 194, Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Researchers should consult RG 44, League of Women Voters of Arlington, due to Sufit's long involvement with the League of Women Voters in Arlington. Other collections related to Sufit's career and civic activism may be of use as well, including RG 7, Arlington County Public Schools, RG 33, American Association of University Women of Arlington, and RG 35, Commission on the Status of Women, Arlington County.

Historical Information

Alice Sufit (1918-2012) was a local activist and teacher. Active in several local civic and political affairs, Sufit played integral roles on many councils, committees, and boards for Arlington County. Additionally, she completed much of her work as a longstanding member of the local chapter of the League of Women Voters. Sufit most often fought to improve education, voting rights, and women's rights in Arlington and Virginia.

Sufit was born Alice Rotzch in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, on September 28, 1918. She attended the University of Pittsburgh and moved to Washington, D.C. in 1939. She enlisted in the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) in the United States Naval Reserve as a lieutenant during World War II and served from 1943-1948 and worked in the Naval Research Laboratory. During this time, she met her husband Herb Sufit. The two married in 1948 and moved to Arlington.

A few years after moving to Arlington, Sufit joined the Arlington League of Women Voters. She chaired several local and state-level study committees, lobbied politicians, and held board positions. She filled many leadership roles, including Vice President in 1958, President from 1960-1961, and Co-President from 1997-1999. She also became part of the League of Women Voters of Virginia State Board in the 1970s and worked hard to revise the "Your Virginia Government" publication. Her additional civic work included membership with the American Association of University Women, including acting as President from 1989-1992. She served on the Arlington County Planning Commission in 1962 and the Commission on the Status of Women. During her tenure on the Commission on the Status of Women, she helped conduct an exhaustive study on discrimination practices against women in Arlington in schools, government, business, and banking. This report led to the permanent establishment of the Commission on the Status of Women in the county. She was award Arlington County's "Person of Vision" award in 1998 to commemorate her outstanding civic career.

Sufit earned two graduate degrees (M.A. and M. Phil) from George Washington University in political science and education. In 1961, she began a twenty-year career as a social studies teacher in the Arlington County Public Schools, where she taught at Wakefield High School. After retirement, Sufit served on the school system's social studies advisory committee and the six-year planning committee.

Sufit passed away on August 23, 2012.

Scope and Content

This collection spans just over two linear feet. Though materials date from 1920-2009, only one item dates from 1920. All other materials span from the 1950s to 2009, with the bulk of materials from the 1990s and 2000s. The materials largely constitute the records Sufit accrued during her career with the League of Women Voters, especially during the 1980s-2000s. Most of these materials are from research she conducted into various issues the League tackled (i.e. campaign reform, redistricting, etc.), though there are also bulletins, speeches Sufit gave, and other League of Women Voters operational materials. The collection contains some documents and publications Sufit acquired serving on county boards and commissions, such as the Planning Commission and the Commission on the Status of Women. There are a few materials from classes Sufit taught and took and some publications from Rock Spring Congregational Church.

Index Terms

Subjects:

League of Women Voters of Arlington
Women -- United States -- Societies and clubs.
Women in community organization
Arlington County (Va.) -- Politics and government.
Voting -- United States.
Arlington (Va.)
Arlington County (Va.)

Arrangement

This collection is divided into six series based on subject manner. When possible, original file names have been preserved in quotes (" ") and additions to titles from the archivist have been included in brackets ([ ]) where clarification was needed.

Series 1 contains the materials Sufit accrued as part of the League of Women Voters. Most appear to be from her involvement with the local Arlington branch, but there are other materials from the Virginia state chapter. This series is divided into several subseries, including Bulletins and Newsletters; League of Women Voters of Arlington Operations; Personal Materials (developed around a file Sufit labeled as "Personal Materials"); and Studies and Initiatives.

Series 2 houses the materials Sufit acquired from Arlington County. Most of these are related to city planning and research Sufit completed on the history and demographics of Arlington. *Series 3* contains Sufit's materials related to teaching and education, including a few classes she took and her papers from the Social Studies Advisory Committee. *Series 4* holds her papers related to various women's rights and women's history initiatives. *Series 5* contains assorted papers and research materials related to politics. Finally, *Series 6* has various publications from the Rock Spring Congregational Church.

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