

CHARLOTTE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS RECORDS, 1920-2004

50 cu. ft.

ABSTRACT

Carrie Chapman Catt founded the League of Women Voters in 1920 during the National American Woman Suffrage Association's annual convention. It was designed to be a nonpartisan, grassroots organization that would assist the 20 million new female voters in understanding and executing their new civic duties. The League was, and continues to be, a strong advocate of politically educated citizens and government and social reform legislation.

Formed in 1922, the Charlotte League of Women Voters had a somewhat rocky beginning. After an initial wave of interest during the early 1920s, membership fell across North Carolina, and in 1936, the Charlotte group, among others, was disbanded when state numbers dropped below National League requirements. Charlotte's women rebounded in 1947, and formed a provisional League. They were granted full status in 1948, and have continued active participation since that time. The League "is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government." Members study topics of interest to voters in their communities, present factual evidence, advocate for or against policies, and present unbiased information to voters regarding elections, candidates, and the voting process.

This collection contains artifacts, audio/visual materials, clippings, documents, negatives, oversized items, photographs, scrapbooks, and slides.

ACCESS

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PREFERRED CITATION

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ACQUISITION

Presented by the League of Women Voters, 1993-2010.

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HISTORICAL NOTE

Carrie Chapman Catt founded the League of Women Voters in 1920 during the National American Woman Suffrage Association's annual convention. Maud Wood Park was elected as the first president. It was designed to be a nonpartisan, grassroots organization that would assist the 20 million new female voters in understanding and executing their new civic duties. The League was, and continues to be, a strong advocate of politically educated citizens and government and social reform legislation. League members are encouraged to be political, while remaining nonpartisan. The League has been involved in many important issues since its inception, and continues to do so today.

Suzanne Bynum and Anna Forbes Liddell organized the North Carolina Suffrage League at a state meeting in Charlotte, in November 1913. This became the North Carolina League of Women Voters in October 1920. Women in Charlotte held informal League meetings from 1920 to 1922, and formed the Mecklenburg County League of Women Voters in February 1922. Mrs. W.C. Shore was the first president, and was shortly succeeded by Gladys Tillett. Unfortunately, this first attempt at League organization in North Carolina did not succeed, and the group was disbanded in 1936 when the number of cities in the state with local units, dropped below National League requirements.

In 1947, Charlotte women made another endeavor at organizing, and formed a provisional League of Women Voters. Fifty women met at the Y.W.C.A., and elected Isabel Peterson president. Annual dues were set at two dollars. The Charlotte League was granted full status in the spring of 1948, and has had active participation ever since. The League "is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government." Members study topics of interest to voters in their communities, present factual evidence, advocate for or against policies, and present unbiased information to voters regarding elections, candidates, and the voting process.

REFERENCES

League of Women Voters. *History*. <http://lwv.org/history>

League of Women Voters of Charlotte-Mecklenburg. *About the League*.
<http://www.goleaguego.org/about.html>

RELATED MATERIALS

Associations—League of Women Voters. (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

Carter, Deborah Brown. *The League of Women Voters, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, 1920-2000*. Charlotte, NC: Urban Research Group, Johnson C. Smith University, 2003.
(CALL NUMBER: NCR 324.62309 OVERSIZE)

The Tensions of Their Times: The Story of the League of Women Voters of Charlotte-Mecklenburg. Charlotte, NC: WTVI Charlotte Public Television, 2004. (CALL NUMBER: NCR DVD324.62309)

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The League of Women Voters Records consists of items primarily related to the Charlotte Chapter of the League, but also includes some information regarding the North Carolina State and National Chapters. The bulk of the collection is from 1950-2000. Overarching series are the Charlotte League, North Carolina State League, and the National League. Each is represented separately, and are broken into the following series: administrative, anniversaries, Charlotte Women's Political Caucus, committees, financial information, histories, publications, public relations, and voter service. Other series are clippings, photographs, negatives, slides, audio/visual, oversize, artifacts, and scrapbooks.

Administrative, 1920-2001, includes all administrative records of the Charlotte League of Women Voters. Found here are annual reports; board of directors meeting minutes, correspondence, and rosters; various membership information; and policies and procedures.

Anniversaries, 1968-2000, consists of information relating to the 50th, 75th, 76th, 77th, and 80th Galas.

Charlotte Women's Political Caucus, 1969-1999, comprises information relating to this organization, such as reports, correspondence, financials, histories, membership, programs and publications. **Note:** each League level includes information on its corresponding Caucus level.

Committees, 1950-2000, contains information such as correspondence, membership, publications, and reports for the Education, Naturalization, Nominating, Observer Corps, and Voter Service Committees.

Financial Information, 1950-2001, involves bank statements, budgets, deposit slips, Finance Drive information, grants, ledgers, and reports, including Treasurer's reports.

Histories, 1920-2004, encompasses histories of the organization, proclamations, a thesis, and a video script.

Publications, 1950-2001, covers general publications and newsletters such as the *Voter*, and *Voter Guides*.

Public Relations, 1973-2001, holds Metrolina Viewpoints, press releases, public service announcements, speeches, and TV/radio/newspaper spots.

Voter Service, 1925-2003, includes information on the Civics 101 classes, elections, league action and advocacy (which consists of study topics and League positions), and special projects. Study topics are listed by year within each topic.

Clippings, various, consists of newspaper clippings concerning a wide variety of topics, most of which have corresponding study topics in the Voter Service series.

Photographs, 1966-2000, comprises photographs taken during an assortment of League events. Some are identified, while others are not.

Negatives, undated, contains negatives of some of the photographs included in the collection.

Slides, 1988, involves a single slide of a League event.

Audio/Visual, 1984-2000, encompasses cassettes, diskettes, and VHS tapes of such items as League oral histories, public service announcements, and meeting and gala information.

Oversize, various, covers drawings, certificates, and a variety of framed pieces.

Artifacts, undated, holds three-dimensional items.

Scrapbooks, various, includes over twenty scrapbooks of League history. Some consist of primarily newspaper clippings, and others are focused on League events.

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Lawyers Road at McMannus Store		
1938	36	4
1812 Lyndhurst Avenue—Power Service		
1941	36	5
Mallard Creek Section Near Garrison		
1940	36	6

Mineral Springs		
1938	36	7
Morris Field		
1946	36	8
Mount Holly-Huntersville Road Off Beatty Ford Road to W.G. Craven and L.J. Stillwell		
1934	36	9
Near H.M Dulin—Beyond Hickory Grove		
1939	36	10
Newell-Hickory Grove Road Near Newell to Canup		
1942	36	11
New Hope		
1939	36	12
New Hope Prospect Line to Tom Doster		
1940	36	13
New Pineville Road		
1940	36	14
North of Flowes Store		
1940	36	15
Oakview Terrace off Mount Holly Road		
1941	36	16
Off 151 Beyond Clontz-Purser Extension		
1940	36	17
Off Dixie Road Southwest of Browhill Store		
1941	36	18
Off Hemphill Heights Road		
1940	36	19
Off Mallard Creek Road—Across Creek from R.H. Cooper		
1937	36	20
Off Mint Hill Matthews Road		
1940	36	21

Off Moore's Chapel Line Near Dabb's Place		
1937	36	22
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1940	36	23
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1938	36	24
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Old Salisbury Road to Fred Cochrane Ten Houses		
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1988	37	18
1990	37	19
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1998		
1	38	3
2	38	4
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1999	39	2
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1994	41	10
1995	41	11
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2	41	13
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1	41	14
2	42	1
1998	42	2
1999	42	3
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