Woman's National Democratic Club Records

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

Prepared by Kaitlyn Griffith, in consultation with Margaret McAleer



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

2016

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Finding aid URL: http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms016062

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Collection Summary

Title: Woman's National Democratic Club Records

Span Dates: 1912-2014

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1922-1998) ID No. MSS85950: MSS85950

Creator: Woman's National Democratic Club

Extent: 45,000 items; 126 containers plus 5 oversize; 50 linear feet; 625 digital files (71.91MB)

Language: Collection material in English

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

Summary: Organization founded in 1922 in Washington, D.C., focusing on public policy and serving as a forum for Democratic leaders. Correspondence, minutes, reports, financial records, by-laws, notes, newsletters, membership files, oral history transcripts, photographs, presidential campaign ephemera, newspaper clippings, and other printed matter documenting the founding of the Woman's National Democratic Club and its principal activities as a meeting place for Democrats, a forum for national public policy debate, and an outlet for engagement in local community affairs.

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.

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	Arranged by digital identification number. Each number represents the contents of a separate piece of media from which access copies were made.		
BOX DF	Digital ID: mss85950_ 118_01		

Container	Contents
	Correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, oral history interviews, articles of incorporation, financial and tax records, policies and procedures, strategic plan, grant applications, and printed matter documenting the work of the Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation, including its historical preservation and community outreach activities. The series
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James Madison Memorial Building
Map showing location
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Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation Addendum, 1950-2011

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Scope and Content Note

The records of the Woman's National Democratic Club span from the years 1912-2014, with the bulk of the material dating from 1922 to 1998. The collection contains correspondence, financial and administrative records, legal records, notes, newsletters, membership directories and card files, oral history transcriptions, photographs, Democratic presidential campaign memorabilia and ephemera, newspaper clippings, and other printed matter. The records are in English and are organized in nineteen series: Administrative File, Building and Grounds, Special Collections, History of the Club, Photographic File, Membership File, Public Policy Committee, Woman's National Democratic Club Political Action Committee, Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation, Program Committee, Events, Public Relations, Fund-Raising, Newsletters and Bulletins, Election Memorabilia, Democratic Party Subject File, Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation Addendum, Oversize, and Digital Files.

The records of the Woman's National Democratic Club trace nine decades of the club's political outreach to women. The club was founded in 1922, a few years after passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, to provide a social setting in which women could engage in political discussion and organize on behalf of the Democratic Party. The club recruited members nationally, offering its club house as a Washington base for visiting women who were active in the Democratic Party in other parts of the country. The club was also a local Washington institution and one of the earliest efforts to organize Democratic women in the capital. In a membership-recruitment letter dated July 5, 1922, located in the Special Collections series, Florence Jaffray ("Daisy") Harriman noted that "Washington is becoming more and more the centre of political activity, and therefore it seems the natural place to have a rallying point." The club's committee records, in particular, provide insight into the web of local associations, friendships, and face-to-face relationships that were fostered by the club and which influenced national politics. Place is also important in terms of the organization's club house. Designed by architect Harvey L. Page in 1892, the Whittemore House was purchased by the Woman's National Democratic Club in 1927. The collection documents this historically significant building's use as a club house, as well as its architectural expansions and renovations.

Another prominent feature of the collection is the role played by the Woman's National Democratic Club as a forum for national policy debate. Soon after its founding, the club began hosting speakers and organizing forums covering a wide array of national policy issues. The club house became an important venue for national leaders to present current legislative, policy, and program initiatives ranging from New Deal and Great Society domestic programs to international affairs. The full scope of this programming is documented in the Program Committee series. Further evident in the collection are the club's efforts to document and chronicle its own history. Chief among these endeavors was an oral history project overseen by Jewell Fenzi and published by the Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation in 2000. The collection contains member profiles and interview transcripts generated by the project that not only document the role generations of prominent women played in running the club, but also the trajectory of their working careers, political activism, and civic leadership outside the club. Finally, the collection includes ephemera from presidential elections spanning John Davis's campaign in 1924 to Barack Obama's in 2008. Also included are early brochures, flyers, and other printed ephemera produced by the Women's Division of the Democratic National Committee. The contents of the collection's nineteen series are described in more detail in the Description of Series section of the finding aid.

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Contact Information

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Fax: (202) 707-7791

Reading Room Location

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BOX 121-126

Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation Addendum, 1950-2011

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Photographic File, 1920s-2014

Membership File, 1912-2010

Public Policy Committee, 1927-2008

Woman's National Democratic Club Political Action Committee, 2003-2008

Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation, 1973-2014

Program Committee, 1924-2006

Events, 1924-2014

Public Relations, 1926-2003

Fund-Raising, 1926-2002

Newsletters and Bulletins, 1922-2012

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Administrative Information

Provenance

The records of the Woman's National Democratic Club were given to the Library of Congress by the organization in 2014.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of the Woman's National Democratic Club Records in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress is reserved. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division for further information.

Access and Restrictions

The Woman's National Democratic Club Records 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.

Digital Format

Digital files were received as part of the records of the Woman's National Democratic Club. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division for more information.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Woman's National Democratic Club Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Organizational History

Date	Event
1922	Founded the Woman's National Democratic Club (WNDC) in Washington, D.C.
1923	Elected Florence Jaffray ("Daisy") Harriman as president
1924	Elected Edith Bolling Galt Wilson as head of the Board of Governors Launched twice-weekly programs
1927	Purchased the Whittemore House, 1526 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C., as a club house
1928	Elected Emily Newell Blair as president
1939	Broadcast of Eleanor Roosevelt's Democratic Women's Day radio address from the club house
1943	Leased the club house to the British Service Club for two years, retaining partial use of the dining room
1972	Dedicated the club's garden to Lady Bird Johnson
1975	Presented its first Woman of the Year Award to Barbara Jordan
1988	Voted to admit men as members
1991	Established the Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation
1998	Presented its first Eleanor Award to Hillary Rodham Clinton
2004	Established the Woman's National Democratic Club Political Action Committee

Scope and Content Note

The records of the Woman's National Democratic Club span from the years 1912-2014, with the bulk of the material dating from 1922 to 1998. The collection contains correspondence, financial and administrative records, legal records, notes, newsletters, membership directories and card files, oral history transcriptions, photographs, Democratic presidential campaign memorabilia and ephemera, newspaper clippings, and other printed matter. The records are in English and are organized in nineteen series: Administrative File, Building and Grounds, Special Collections, History of the Club, Photographic File, Membership File, Public Policy Committee, Woman's National Democratic Club Political Action Committee, Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation, Program Committee, Events, Public Relations, Fund-Raising, Newsletters and Bulletins, Election Memorabilia, Democratic Party, Subject File, Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation Addendum, Oversize, and Digital Files.

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Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in nineteen series:

- Administrative File, 1922-2009
- Building and Grounds, 1923-2008
- Special Collections, 1912-2006
- History of the Club, 1913-2003
- Photographic File, 1920s-2014
- Membership File, 1912-2010
- Public Policy Committee, 1927-2008
- Woman's National Democratic Club Political Action Committee, 2003-2008
- Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation, 1973-2014
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- Democratic Party Subject File, 1912-2004
- Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation Addendum, 1950-2011
- Oversize, 1940-2008
- Digital Files, 1996-2005

http://lecn.loc.gov/mm2014085950

Description of Series

Container

Series

BOX 1-13

Administrative File, 1922-2009

Correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, legal files, articles of incorporation, by-laws, guest books, lists, and printed matter documenting the club's annual meetings and the work of its board of governors and committees, including the Administration Committee, Executive Committee, Hospitality Committee, Nominating Committee, and Planning Committee. Also included are letters to and from the corresponding secretary, annual election records, information on past club presidents, records related to affiliated clubs, and various topical files.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

BOX 13-25

Building and Grounds, 1923-2008

Series

Correspondence, memoranda, minutes, real estate records, financial and tax records, lists and inventories, insurance records, and printed matter focused largely on the use and maintenance of the organization's historic club house, the Whittemore House, 1526 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. The series documents the work of the Building and Grounds Committee, Garden Committee, and House Committee; the expansion and renovation of the Whittemore House; its inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places; and the contents of club house's fine arts collection. Also included are records pertaining to the club's other properties, as well as general financial and tax information about the club.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

Special Collections, **1912-2006**

Correspondence, biographical material, photographs, printed ephemera, and other printed matter relating to club's founders, early presidents, and prominent members, among them Clara M. Beyer, Emily Newell Blair, Lindy Boggs, India Edwards, Huybertie Pruyn ("Bertie") Hamlin, and Florence Jaffray ("Daisy") Harriman. The series also contains correspondence from and material concerning United States presidents, first ladies, and presidential candidates, including Franklin D. Roosevelt, Eleanor Roosevelt, Lyndon B. Johnson, Lady Bird Johnson, Bill Clinton, and Hillary Rodham Clinton. Correspondence at the end of the series features letters from Democratic members of Congress, public officials, and other prominent members of the party.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

BOX 28-32 <u>History of the Club, 1913-2003</u>

Correspondence, minutes, draft chronologies and histories, political cartoons, political memorabilia, and printed matter documenting the club's history. Included are the records of the History Committee; collections of documents from different periods of the club's history, including the records of the Armed Services Hospitality Committee from 1950 to 1962; and draft chronologies and histories, among these a draft manuscript prepared for the club's fortieth anniversary in 1961. Other files document more broadly the history of women's political engagement, including the history of Seneca Falls, the women's suffrage movement, and women in politics.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

BOX 32-34 Photographic File, 1920s-2014

Photographic prints and negatives, the bulk of which date from the 1940s to 2000. Featured are club members, officers, and events, as well as members of Congress, United States presidents and first ladies, and other prominent political leaders.

Series

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

Membership File, **1912-2010**

Correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, biographies and obituaries of club members, ballots with the names of proposed members, membership directories, attendance records, membership surveys, and two membership card files. The series also contains numerous member profiles and interviews produced as part of an oral history project in the 1990s under the guidance of Jewell Fenzi. Membership Committee records date from 1922 to 1987 and chronicle the club's founding and growth over seven decades.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

BOX 52-59 Public Policy Committee, 1927-2008

Correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, by-laws, resolutions, newsletters, and other printed matter, largely dating from the 1970s to early 2000s. Featured are the records of the Public Policy Committee which was called the Political Action Committee prior to 1982. Also included are files from task forces focused on the economy, education, environment, campaign financing, foreign policy, health, social security, housing, human rights, and women's global issues. Copies of the Public Policy Committee's newsletter *Political Action Dispatch* are also available.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

Woman's National Democratic Club Political Action Committee, 2003-2008

Correspondence, articles of incorporation and by-laws, minutes, reports, financial records, and newsletters documenting the founding and early years of the club's political action committee.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation, 1973-2014

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Series

Correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, financial records, articles of incorporation, by-laws, policies and procedures, event files, membership directories, brochures, fact sheets, biographical material, programs, invitations, schedules, newsletters, calendars, and printed matter relating to the founding and activities of the educational foundation, a cadet branch of the Woman's National Democratic Club with its own board of governors, committees, and subcommittees. Documented in the series are the foundation's historic preservation efforts concentrated on the organization's historic club house, fine arts collections, archives, and oral history project. Another significant feature are records from the foundation's community outreach activities, in particular its work with school children. Other files relate to the Woman of the Year Award and Eleanor Award, both given by the foundation. Additional foundation records are available in the Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation Addendum series.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

BOX 71-81 Program Committee, 1924-2006

Correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, programs, speeches, speaker biographies, and printed matter documenting the work of the Program Committee in coordinating programs including lunch presentations, seminars, forums, and other events. Also in the series are records from programming committees on education, international programs, legislative programs, liberal arts, seminars and special programs, and national affairs. Records from some of these committee can also be found in the Events series. Biographies and speeches of those who spoke at the club are also contained in the series.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

BOX 82-95 Events, 1924-2014

Correspondence, minutes, reports, event summaries, financial records, lists, and a large photographic file documenting numerous events hosted at or by the club. The series also includes the records of the Seminar and Special Studies Committee, Special Events Committee, and Trips and Tours Committee. Files from large events including the club's Diamond Jubilee commemorations, Woman of the Year award ceremonies, the Historic Preservation Gala in 2004, and Democratic Women's Day are also featured.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

BOX 95-98 Public Relations, 1926-2003

Correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, calendars, and printed matter representing the work of the Publications Committee, Newsletter Committee, and Public Relations Committee in creating and printing the club's monthly newsletter, public press releases, and related flyers and bulletins.

Series

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

BOX 98-102 Fund-Raising, 1926-2002

Correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, financial records, and printed matter documenting auctions, bazaars, book sales, fashion shows, holiday dinners, performances, and theater parties hosted by the club in an effort to raise money for the organization and its many programs. Other sources of income came from the Boutique Committee that sold club and Democratic memorabilia in the club house. The fund-raising projects were overseen by the Ways and Means Committee whose records are included in the series.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

Newsletters and Bulletins, 1922-2012 BOX 102-112

Newsletters, bulletins, and flyers published by the Woman's National Democratic Club and other organizations. One of the earliest publications is the Fortnightly Bulletin, published by the Democratic National Committee for Democratic women's clubs. The Woman's National Democratic Club assumed its publication under the title Democratic Bulletin from 1926 to 1935, when the Democratic National Committee took over its publication once again. Also included are reports from the club's Bulletin Committee from 1928 to 1939.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

BOX 112-118 Election Memorabilia, 1920-2009

Pamphlets, flyers, and other printed matter from Democratic presidential campaigns, including those of John W. Davis, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, Adlai E. Stevenson, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Jimmy Carter, Walter F. Mondale, John Kerry, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama. Also included are newspaper clippings, photographs, printed inauguration materials, correspondence, and invitations to the White House. Other printed ephemera includes pamphlets and flyers produced by the Women's Division of the National Democratic Committee between 1920 and 1924.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

BOX 118-121 Democratic Party Subject File, 1912-2004

Publications by the Democratic National Committee and Democratic National Convention, photographs, newspaper clippings, speeches given by Adlai E. Stevenson, presidential inaugural ephemera, and other presidential memorabilia.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

Series

BOX 121-126

Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation Addendum, 1950-2011

Correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, oral history interviews, articles of incorporation, financial and tax records, policies and procedures, strategic plan, grant applications, and printed matter documenting the work of the Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation, including its historical preservation and community outreach activities. The series complements records found in the Woman's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation series.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

BOX OV 1-OV 5

Oversize, 1940-2008

Membership card files and presidential election memorabilia.

Arranged according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.

DF DF

Digital Files, 1996-2005

Photographs showing the restoration of the club's elliptical ceiling and working files from the club's oral history project, including interview transcripts, member profiles, book proposals, draft writings, and notes on archival and other sources.

Arranged by digital identification number. Each number represents the contents of a separate piece of media from which access copies were made.

Container List

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Contents

BOX 1-13

Administrative File, 1922-2009

Correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, legal files, articles of incorporation, by-laws, guest books, lists, and printed matter documenting the club's annual meetings and the work of its board of governors and committees, including the Administration Committee, Executive Committee, Hospitality Committee, Nominating Committee, and Planning Committee. Also included are letters to and from the corresponding secretary, annual election records, information on past club presidents, records related to affiliated clubs, and various topical files.

Arranged as received from the Woman's National Democratic Club.

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вох 2	Board of governors, 1976-2006 (7 folders)
вох 3	By-laws, 1982-1988 (4 folders)
вох 3	Board of governors, 1926-1929, 1950 (2 folders)
вох 3	By-laws, 1994-2004 (3 folders)
вох 4	By-laws, 1928-2001 (12 folders)
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вох 5	Committee reports and structure, 1946-2004 (2 folders)
BOX 5	Committee chairs, 1948-1959
BOX 5	Certificate of occupancy, 1948-1950
BOX 5	Civil defense, 1951-1961
BOX 5	Committee reports and structure, 1925-1996

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	Correspondence, minutes, draft chronologies and histories, political cartoons, political memorabilia, and printed matter documenting the club's history. Included are the records of the History Committee; collections of documents from different periods of the club's history, including the records of the Armed Services Hospitality Committee from 1950 to 1962; and draft
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Correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, by-laws, resolutions, newsletters, and other printed matter, largely dating from the 1970s to early 2000s. Featured are the records of the Public Policy Committee which was called the Political Action Committee prior to 1982. Also included are files from task forces focused on the economy, education, environment, campaign financing, foreign policy, health, social security, housing, human rights, and women's global issues. Copies of the Public Policy Committee's newsletter

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