
Guide to the Lillian M. Potts Papers

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Guide to the Lillian M. Potts Papers

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Lillian M. Potts papers

Dates: 1937-1998

Collection number: MS 88

Creator: Potts, Lillian M.

Collection Size: .75 linear feet(2 boxes + 1 oversized box)

Repository: African American Museum & Library at Oakland (Oakland, Calif.)
Oakland, CA 94612

Abstract: The Lillian M. Potts papers include correspondence, programs, newspaper clippings, photographs, ephemera, reports, and brochures documenting her involvement in California politics and civic and civil rights organizations. The collection is organized into four series: Political activities, Photographs, Educational activities, Religious activities, and Publications.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access

No access restrictions. Collection is open to the public.

Access Restrictions

Materials are for use in-library only, non-circulating.

Publication Rights

Permission to publish from the Lillian M. Potts papers must be obtained from the African American Museum & Library at Oakland.

Preferred Citation

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Processing Information

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Biography / Administrative History

Lillian M. Potts (1917-2010) was born on November 16, 1917 in Eudora, Arkansas. In 1943, she met and married Weilan Potts and the couple moved to Berkeley, California. After working as a primary school teacher in Arkansas and California, she worked for the California Equal Employment Opportunity Commission until her retirement in 1980. Both Weilan and Lillian Potts were active in advocating for civil rights issues and were active in the N.A.A.C.P., with Weilan chairing the G.I. Assistance Committee in 1951 and Lillian acting as an advisor to the Berkeley Youth Council for five years during the 1960s. Lillian was also active in a number of civic and political organizations serving as president of the 20th Century Democratic Club and the Berkeley Victory Democratic Club, and treasurer of the FEPC Employment Commission. She was also an active member of Church Women United serving ten years on the organization's board.

Scope and Content of Collection

The Lillian M. Potts papers include correspondence, programs, newspaper clippings, photographs, ephemera, reports, and brochures documenting her involvement in California politics and civic and civil rights organizations. The collection is

organized into four series: Political activities, Photographs, Educational activities, Religious activities, and Publications. The bulk of the collection document Potts' political activities and includes a short narrative history, rally ticket stub, press release, newspaper clippings, and photographs related to the G.I. Assistance Committee. The political activities series also includes general correspondence and thank you letters for her support and volunteering with various California political campaigns.

The 54 photographs in the collection are arranged into four subseries by subject: N.A.A.C.P., politics, E Pluribus Unum Civic Club, and assorted. The N.A.A.C.P. photographs include images of the member of the G.I. Assistance Committee and Potts family members attending a G.I. Assistance Committee rally. The political subseries include photographs of Potts' attending a California Democratic Council in 1957. The education activities series includes a freshman orientation program and Roland Haynes concert program at Arkansas State College, Pine Bluff and Lincoln School PTA programs. The religious activities program includes a handwritten play script for a dramatic presentation and South Berkeley Community Congregational church programs. The publication series includes assorted performing arts and political pamphlets and brochures and newspaper clippings documenting Weilan and Lillian Potts' political and civic activities.

Arrangement

Series I. Political activities Series II. Photographs Series III. Educational activities Series IV. Religious activities Series V. Publications

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog. Potts, Lillian M.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People--Branches, chapters, etc.--California--Berkeley.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. G.I. Assistance Committee.

African Americans -- California -- East Bay -- History.

Civil rights movements -- California -- History -- 20th century.

Political activities

Physical Description: 9 folders + 1 oversized folder

Series Scope and Content Summary

Includes correspondence, press releases, narrative history, newspaper clippings, and a rally ticket documenting Potts' activities with the NAACP's G.I. Assistance Committee. Also includes general NAACP publications, Potts' report to the California Council of Negro Women, Inc. and thank you letters and general correspondence related to her support of various California political campaigns in the 1960s.

Arrangement

Arranged into subseries and thereafter by format.

N.A.A.C.P.

G.I. Assistance Committee

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|---------|--|
| Box 1:1 | History of the G.I. Assistance Committee circa 1950s |
| Box 1:1 | Press release circa 1950 |
| Box 1:1 | Correspondence 1950-1951 |
| Box 1:1 | Reserved section ticket to hear Thurgood Marshall "Report from Tokio" on treatment of Negro GIs [2 copies] 1951 |
| Box 1:2 | Newspaper clippings 1951 |
| Box 1:3 | Berkeley Branch Youth Council correspondence 1965 |
| Box 1:4 | Oakland Branch report from the 69th annual convention 1978 |
| Box 1:5 | Membership 1956-1981 |
| | Programs |
| Box 1:6 | Santa Clara Branch special public meeting on the Tennessee race violence program 1946 |
| Box 1:6 | 47th annual convention program, San Francisco, California 1956 |
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Box 1:6	Negro History Week program [2 copies] 1956
Box 1:6	Alameda Adult Branch and Youth Council reception and installation service invitation 1956
Box 1:6	1963 AFSC Asilomar High School Conference on Human Rights program 1963
Box 1:6	Bay Area Life Membership Club fifth annual banquet program 1963
	Publications
Box 1:7	Medgar Evers "You can kill a man but you can't kill an idea" flyer circa 1960s
Box 1:7	In memoriam Medgar W. Evers memorial fund flyer 1963
Box 1:7	Berkeley Branch annual awards dinner program 1965
Box 1:7	Highlights of NAACP History, 1909-1980 1980
Box 1:7	BEAM Berkeley Branch newsletter February 1964
Box OM11	NAACP freedom journal dedicated to the hearts and minds of children 1964
Box 1:7	Herrick Hospitaler newsletter April 1972
Box 1:7	El Cerrito Branchline newsletter, vol. III, no. 6 1979
Box 1:7	Founders Day newsletter, September 18, 1981 1981

California Council of Negro Women, Inc.

Box 1:8	Report, Berkeley, California 1950-12-02
Box 1:8	Report, Stockton, California 1951-05-18
Box 1:8	Invitation to eleventh annual tea introducing state officers 1951
Box 1:8	Musical tea program 1957
Box 1:9	

General correspondence and thank you letters 1955-1957

Photographs

Physical Description: 2 folders

Series Scope and Content Summary

Includes photographs documenting Lillian Potts' political activities and participation in various N.A.A.C.P. committees and events.

Arrangement

Arranged by subject and thereafter by photograph identification number.

N.A.A.C.P.

G.I. Assistance Committee

Box 1:18	Members of the NAACP G.I. Assistance Committee (back row, left-right): F. Taylor, R. Keith, Charles Williams Jr., Franklin Williams, James Scott, Jack Spann, Dr. W. L. Anderson (2nd row, left-right): Eugene Walker, Weilan Potts, Anna M. Mayfield, Alberta Guess (1st row, left-right): Faye Mitchell, Kathryn Huggins, Gwendolyn Green, Lillian Potts [008 A/B] [w/negative] 1951
Box 1:18	Members of the NAACP G.I. Assistance Committee (back row, left-right): F. Taylor, R. Keith, Charles Williams Jr., Franklin Williams, James Scott, Jack Spann, Dr. W. L. Anderson (2nd row, left-right): Eugene Walker, Weilan Potts, Anna M. Mayfield, Alberta Guess (1st row, left-right): Faye Mitchell, Kathryn Huggins, Gwendolyn Green, Lillian Potts [009] 1951
Box 1:18	Members of the Potts family attending G.I. assistance rally (left-right): brother-in-law J. Anderson, Lunell, Lillian Potts, J. Anderson, Weilan Potts, J.P. Anderson, sister Z. Robinson, daughter Aileen, sister W. Anderson [010] 1951
Box 1:18	Attorney Thurgood Marshall and NAACP G.I. Assistance Committee chairman Weilan Potts looking at 8 foot scroll with names of 3000 names of contributors to assistance fund [011] 1951
Box 1:18	G.I. Assistance Committee chairman Weilan Potts presents check to Thurgood Marshall [011] 1951

Berkeley Youth Council

- Box 1:18 **Members of the NAACP Berkeley Branch Youth Council (right-left): Mike Torrence, Val O'Neal, James Butler, Gwen Edmonds, and unidentified woman [001] circa 1966**
- Box 1:18 **Members of the NAACP Berkeley Branch Youth Council looking at Freedom Fund check (right-left): Lillian Potts, Mike Terrence, Brenda Byes, Debbie Green, L. Green, Val O'Neal, James Butler [002] 1966**
- Box 1:18 **Six members of the NAACP Berkeley Branch Youth Council [003] circa 1966**
- Box 1:18 **Members of the Berkeley Branch Youth Council waving from cabin porch at West Coast Regional Conference Asilomar, California [004] 1965**
- Box 1:18 **Faricita Wyatt, Eugenia Hall Greene, Lillian Potts, and other youth leaders clapping at NAACP West Coast Regional Conference, Asilomar, California [005 A/B] 1965**
- Box 1:18 **Members of the Berkeley Branch Youth Banquet Committee (left-right): President Debbie Green, Brenda Byes, Carolyn Franklin, Gwen Edmond, Advisor Lillian Potts [006 A/B] circa 1960s**
- Box 1:18 **Lillian Potts and other youth leaders looking at pamphlet at NAACP West Coast Regional Conference Asilomar, California [007] 1965**
- Presentations**
- Box 1:18 **Man presenting NAACP achievement award to Frankie Jones [013] 1973**
- Box 1:18 **Weilan Potts presenting NAACP lifetime membership to Geraldine Johnson at the Fairmont Hotel, Mr. and Mrs. Rhodes seated at banquet table [014] circa 1970s**
- Box 1:18 **Benjamin Hooks speaking at NAACP podium [015] circa 1980s**
- Box 2:1 **NAACP President Benjamin Hooks presenting envelope to Lillian Potts [016 A/B] circa 1980s**
- Box 2:1 **NAACP President Benjamin Hooks presenting envelope to Lillian Potts [017 A/B] circa 1980s**
- Box 2:1 **Lillian Potts and man and woman holding check in NAACP office [019] 1977**
- Box 2:1 **Lillian Potts and five men holding check in NAACP office [020] 1977**
- Box 2:1 **Man and woman holding check [021] 1977**
- Assorted**
- Box 2:1 **Lillian Potts and woman standing next to NAACP Life Membership Invest in Freedom' banner [018] circa 1970s**
- Box 2:3 **Portrait of Frankie Jones [052] 1958**
- Box 2:3 **Frankie Jones standing in front of house [053] 1970**
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Politics

- Bay Area Democratic Minority Conference**
- Box 2:1 **Lillian Potts, Leo Brown, James Sharpe, Leona Brown, Dr. Paul Sanazaro [024] circa 1960S**
- Box 2:1 **Group photograph (standing back row, left-right): Merle Gaddles, Shalimar Brown, Howard Jeter (middle row) Del Williams (front row, left-right): Gwen Greene, Frances Albrier, Leo Brown, Dr. Paul Sanazaro, Leona Brown, Lillian Potts, Bo Moore [025] circa 1960s**
- Box 2:1 **Unidentified woman, Lillian Potts, Merle Gaddles, Gwen Green, Leo Brown, and M. Brown [026] circa 1960s**
- California Democratic Council**
- Box 2:1 **D.G. Gibson, Alan Cranston, Lillian Potts, and Edmund G. "Pat" Brown in San Francisco Airport terminal before leaving for the Democratic Convention in Fresno, California [028] 1957**
- Box 2:1 **Alan Crantston, D.G. Gibson, Pat Brown, Betty Whitkins, unidentified woman, Leo Brown, Lillian Potts, unidentified man, and T. Sanders in San Francisco Airport terminal before leaving for the Democratic Convention in Fresno, California [029 A/B] 1957**
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- Box 2:1 **Alan Crantston, D.G. Gibson, Pat Brown, Betty Whitkins, unidentified woman, Leo Brown, Lillian Potts, unidentified man, and T. Sanders in San Francisco Airport terminal before leaving for the Democratic Convention in Fresno, California [030] 1957**
- Box 2:2 **Pat Brown, Alan Cranston, unidentified woman, unidentified man, unidentified woman, T. Sanders, D.G. Gibson, Leo Brown, and Lillian Potts standing on Western Airlines staircase ready to board plane for Democratic Convention in Fresno, California [031 A/B] 1957**
- Assorted**
- Box 2:1 **Dee Howard, Lillian Potts, Pete Lee, Mrs. Lee, and Leo Brown standing in front of Brown and Howard Bail Bonds [022] circa 1960s**
- Box 2:1 **Dee Howard, Hank Edwards, unidentified woman, Leo Brown, unidentified woman, Lillian Potts [023] 1961**
- Box 2:1 **D.G. Gibson, Lillian Potts, Fred Stripp, G. Simpson, Roy Nichols, and Frances Albrier standing in front of Dr. Fred Stripp for Mayor sign [027] circa 1963**
- Box 2:2 **Dr. Bolivar Moore, unidentified woman, Congressman Charles Diggs, John Holmdahl, unidentified woman [032] circa 1960s**
- Box 2:2 **Lillian Potts shaking hands with John Holmdahl [033] circa 1960s**
- Box 2:2 **Fannie Brown, unidentified woman, Leo Brown, John Holmdahl, Lillian Potts, Dr. Bolivar Moore [034] circa 1960s**
- Box 2:2 **Lillian Potts standing next to Congressman Charles Diggs [035] circa 1960s**
- Box 2:2 **Associate press secretary Andrew Hatcher and Congressman Charles Diggs [036] circa 1960s**
- Box 2:2 **Lillian Potts next to Robert Kennedy at re-elect Jeffrey Cohelan banquet [037] circa 1960s**
- Box 2:2 **(seated, left-right): Lillian Potts, Pat Putnam, Fannie Brown, Dick Diamet, Ruby Brown, Mrs. Holmdahl, Angie Washington (standing left-right): E. Putnam, John Holmdahl, Jack Gibbons, Bolivar Moore, Leo Brown, A. Diamet, Judge Tolbert, Robert Moehead [038 A/B] circa 1960s**
- Box 2:2 **Luncheon for Governor Pat Brown at the Leamington Hotel Oakland, California (left-right): Martin Huff, Don Cunningham, Lillian Potts, Leo Brown, and Maudelle [039] circa 1960s**
- Box 2:2 **Lillian Potts speaking with Governor Pat Brown at inaugural ball [040] circa 1960s**
- Box 2:2 **Group photograph of Democratic women (left-right): M. Pitts, Mrs. N. Colley, Vickey Taylor, Lillian Potts, Bernice Layne Brown, Elsie Rumford, unidentified woman, Fannie Beaver, unidentified woman, Faye Mitchell, unidentified woman [041] 1958**
- Box 2:2 **Lillian Potts with group of men and women [042] circa 1970s**
- Box 2:2 **Lillian Potts standing with group of men and women on stage [043] circa 1970s**
- Box 2:2 **Lillian Potts with group of men and women [044] circa 1970s**
- Box 2:2 **Pat Brown publicity still, inscribed: 'To Lillian Potts - with all good wishes Edmund G Brown Governor of California' [045] circa 1960s**
- Box 2:2 **Unidentified man, Art Fletcher, Lillian Potts, unidentified man, unidentified woman [046] circa 1960s**
- Box 2:2 **Lillian Potts and group of men and women standing on steps [047] circa 1960s**

E Pluribus Unum Civic Club

- Box 2:2 **Group photograph of members of the International Hospitality Center of San Francisco with the Ambassador of Ceylon [048 A/B] 1956**
- Box 2:3 **Lillian Potts in group photograph with women on stage at Slim Jenkins night club [049] circa 1950s**
- Box 2:3 **Lillian Potts in group photograph with members of the Civic Club on stage at night club [050] circa 1950s**
- Box 2:3 **Members of Civic Club on stage at night club [051] circa 1950s**

subseries

Box 2:3

Man and two women leaning against ferry railing [054] circa 1950s

Educational activities

Physical Description: 2 folders

Series Scope and Content Summary

Includes Potts freshman week orientation program and Roland Haynes musical program documenting her attendance at Arkansas State College in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Also includes Lincoln School Parent-Teacher and Founders' Day programs.

Arrangement

Arranged by format.

Education

- Box 1:10 **Freshman orientation week program, Arkansas State College, Pine Bluff, Arkansas 1937**
Box 1:10 **Roland Hayes concert program, A.M. and N. College, Pine Bluff, Arkansas 1939**
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Teaching

- Box 1:11 **National Congress of Parent Teachers, Lincoln School P.T.A. Founders Day program 1949**
Box 1:11 **Lincoln P.T.A. homecoming and founders' day program 1950**
Box 1:11 **Summer plans 1951 Lincoln playground program 1951**
Box 1:11 **Berkeley-Albany Council of Parent-Teacher Associations conference memoranda 1953**

Religious activities

Physical Description: 4 folders

Series Scope and Content Summary

Includes a handwritten script of a church play, South Berkeley Community Congregational church programs, assorted correspondence related to Potts' religious activities, and a meeting program of the Golden Gate Association.

Arrangement

Arranged by format.

- Box 1:12 **Play script undated**
Box 1:13 **South Berkeley Community Congregational church programs 1952-1987**
Box 1:14 **Correspondence 1971-1977**
Box 1:15 **Golden Gate Association meeting agenda**

Publications

Physical Description: 2 folders

Series Scope and Content Summary

Includes assorted performing arts and political pamphlets and brochures and newspaper clippings documenting Weilan and Lillian Potts' political and civic activities.

Arrangement

Arranged by format.

Pamphlets and programs

Box 1:16	Ellison-White Bureau presents Marian Anderson program, Portland Public Auditorium 1965
Box 1:16	The associated students of Stanford University present Marian Anderson program 1944
Box 1:16	Organ recital, Memorial Church Stanford University 1944-12-10
Box 1:16	Paul Robeson in Othello program, Geary Theatre, San Francisco, California 1945
Box 1:16	E Pluribus Unum Civic Club first anniversary dance program, De Fremery Recreation Center [2 copies] 1945
Box 1:16	First annual George Washington Carver Day celebration program, Oakland Auditorium Theatre 1948
Box 1:16	Second annual George Washington Carver Day celebration program, Oakland Auditorium Theatre 1949
Box 1:16	<i>Marian Anderson circa 1940s</i>
Box 1:16	International Hospitality Center invitation circa 1950s
Box 1:16	<i>We: a monthly calendar of Bay Area events July 1958</i>
Box 1:16	<i>Democratic Minority Conference of Southern California news, vol. 1, no. 1 February 1958</i>
Box 1:16	<i>Monroe, North Carolina ... turning point in American history: two speeches by Conrad J. Lynn 1962</i>
Box 1:16	<i>The Pacific, vol. 118, no. 7 1969</i>
Box 1:16	<i>The fight for fair housing: a report by the Friends Committee on Legislation circa 1960s</i>
Box 1:16	<i>"Which is your Berkeley?," Berkeley Committee for Fair Housing circa 1960s</i>
Box 1:16	Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett birthday celebration program 1998
Box 1:16	"The house by the side of the road" undated

Box 1:17	Newspaper clippings 1955-1971
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