Guide to the Goldie Byrd Ruffin Collection

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Oakland, California

Processed by:
Jennifer Pickens

Date Completed:
2015-03-11

Encoded by:
Jennifer Pickens

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Goldie Byrd Ruffin collection
Collection number: MS 146
Dates: circa 1940s-1980s
Bulk Dates: 1956-1958
Collector: Ruffin, Goldie Byrd
Creator: Vaughns, William E.
Collection Size: 1.25 linear feet 1 box + 1 oversized box
Repository: African American Museum & Library at Oakland (Oakland, Calif.)

Abstract: The Goldie Byrd Ruffin Collection includes photographs, ephemera, and newspaper clippings collected by her about her uncle, George R. Vaughns, and correspondence, photographs, and clippings of his brother, William E. Vaughns. This collection shows an era of political activity of African Americans in Alameda County in the 1950s-60s and highlights the achievements of two prominent African American professionals, and their endeavors to further civil rights legislation and litigation.

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 Goldie Byrd Ruffin Collection must be obtained from the African American Museum & Library at Oakland.

Preferred Citation
Goldie Byrd Ruffin collection, African American Museum & Library at Oakland, Oakland Public Library. Oakland, California.

Acquisition Information
The collection was donated to the African American Museum & Library at Oakland by Goldie Byrd Ruffin on May 16, 2003.

Processing Information
Processed by Jennifer Pickens, March 11, 2015.

Biography / Administrative History
Goldie Byrd Ruffin was a long-time resident of Oakland California with connections to African American political organizations and relatives that were active in civil rights and politics, including her uncles, George R. Vaughns and William E. Vaughns. George R. Vaughns was a renowned attorney in northern California who ran for Superior Court Judge of Alameda County in 1962. He was a founding member of the Charles Houston Law Club, later to become the Charles Houston Bar Association, an organization dedicated to supporting African American lawyers and civil rights litigation. William E. Vaughns was president of the Alameda County Republican League, active in the 1956 presidential election, and worked with the Republican National Committee Director of Minorities Val J. Washington and his Assistant Thalia D. Thomas.
toward the election of Republican congressmen in the 17th Assembly District precinct. He was also active in local elections of city council members. He retired from his job at the Pacific Fire Rating Bureau in 1966 after 48 years of service.

**Scope and Content of Collection**

The Goldie Byrd Ruffin Collection includes photographs, ephemera, and newspaper clippings about her uncle, George R. Vaughns, and correspondence, photographs, and clippings of his brother, William E. Vaughns. She collected photographs and newspaper clippings about George R. Vaughns and his wife, and ephemera from his 1962 campaign for Superior Court Judge of Alameda County. She also collected correspondence and papers of his brother William E. Vaughns from his time as President of the Alameda County Republican League in the 1950s, as well as newspaper clippings about him and his political colleagues. The collection is arranged into three series: George R Vaughns; William E. Vaughns; and the scrapbook that held the correspondence, photographs, and clippings. This collection shows an era of political activity of African Americans in Alameda County in the 1950s-60s and highlights the achievements of two prominent African American professionals, and their endeavors to further civil rights legislation and litigation.

**Arrangement**

Series I. George R. Vaughns Series II. William E. Vaughns Series III. Scrapbook

**Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog. African American politicians--Alameda County (Calif.) African American lawyers--Alameda County (Calif.) Alameda County (Calif.)--History. African Americans--California--Alameda County--History. Alameda County (Calif.) Photographs Correspondence Clippings

**Goldie Byrd Ruffin, Nadine Wilmot, Rosie the Riveter World War II American Homefront Oral History Project, Bancroft Library. Regional Oral History Office.**

**Smiley, C. (n.d.). History of the Charles Houston Bar Association.**

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**George R. Vaughns**

**Series Scope and Content Summary**

Series includes photographs, ephemera, and newspaper clippings about George R. Vaughns.

**Arrangement**

Arranged by format.

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**Photographs**

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically.

- **Box 1:1** George Vaughns with numerous leis around his neck, standing at a party speaking with a young man [001] circa 1940s
- **Box 1:1** George Vaughns standing at a meeting table with two unidentified women and one unidentified man [002] circa 1950s
- **Box 1:1** George Vaughns at a meeting table with an unidentified woman and three unidentified men in suits [003] circa 1950s
- **Box 1:1** George Vaughns in Santa Cruz, California standing outdoors with an unidentified man [004] circa 1950s
- **Box 1:1** George Vaughns in Santa Cruz, California standing outdoors with an unidentified man [005] circa 1950s
- **Box 1:1** George Vaughns standing with an unidentified man in front of a waterfall [006] circa 1950s
George R. Vaughns
Photographs

Box 1:1
George Vaughns standing in front of Brewers Cottage in Santa Cruz, California, distant view, with unidentified person nearby [007] circa 1950s

Box 1:1
George Vaughns standing in front of Brewers Cottage in Santa Cruz, California [008] circa 1950s

Box 1:1
George Vaughns seated with three members of an unidentified ladies' group with two men in background [009] 1963

Box 1:1
George Vaughns with unidentified woman in front of a house [010] circa 1960s

Box 1:1

Box 1:1
Color portrait of an unidentified young man [012] circa 1970s

Box 1:1
Man and woman at a picnic table; handwritten on reverse: “George Vaughns and Lady?” [013] circa 1980s

Ephemera
Arrangement
Arranged chronologically.

Box 2
Election poster for George R. Vaughns for Alameda County Superior Court Judge 1962

Box 1:2
Membership card for the Dumas Political League signed by George R. Vaughns, President undated

Box 1:2
Piece of paper labeled "Election June 5, 1962" with three items affixed: a newsprint clipping from California Voice, April 1962, about campaign headquarters opening; two election flyers for George R. Vaughns, one showing front side with photo and election information, and the other showing the back side with his credentials 1962

Box 1:2
Typewritten excerpt from the Official California Negro Directory, 1942-43 edition undated

Box 1:2
Election flyer with photograph of George R. Vaughns and a list of his credentials 1962

Box 1:2
Funeral service program for George Robert Vaughns March 10, 1976

Box 1:3
Newspaper clippings about George R. Vaughns and his wife 1953-1976

William E. Vaughns
Series Scope and Content Summary
Series includes correspondence and papers, photographs, and newspaper clippings about William E. Vaughns.
Arrangement
Arranged by format.

Correspondence and papers
Arrangement
Arranged chronologically.

Box 1:4
Letter from John J. Allen Jr. to the Alameda County Republican League on US Congress House of Representatives letterhead regarding a resolution July 23, 1956

Box 1:4

Box 1:4
Letter from Robert Bruce Kennon about staffing the party headquarters August 11, 1956

Box 1:4
Letter from Robert Bruce Kennon referring to his letter of August 11th and tendering his resignation as precinct chairman August 27, 1956
Box 1:4 Letter from Hugh S. Koford, Director of the Alameda County United Republican Precinct Organization about registration of voters for an upcoming election [two copies] August 29, 1956

Box 1:4 Letter to the Republican Headquarters of Alameda County about the resignation of Robert Kennon August 30, 1956

Box 1:4 Carbon copy of letter from Merritt Holman, Coordinator of the United Republican Precinct of Alameda County to Hugh S. Koford about Robert Kennon’s resignation, with a handwritten note to Bill from Merritt referring Jerome B. Combs to be of assistance August 31, 1956

Box 1:4 Letter from Thalia D. Thomas, Assistant to Val J. Washington on Republican National Committee letterhead thanking William Vaughns for assisting her during her visit September 13, 1956

Box 1:4 Letter from Thalia D. Thomas regarding the assignment of Samuel Pierce, Minority Counsel for the House Sub-Committee on Anti-Trust, to speak at a meeting in northern California September 25, 1956

Box 1:4 Letter from Merritt Holman to George suggesting two volunteers, with a handwritten note to Bill suggesting he would like a copy of the letter October 3, 1956

Box 1:4 Letter from Thalia D. Thomas about changing the speaker from Sam Pierce to Grant Reynolds October 8, 1956

Box 1:4 Letter to Hon. J. Ernest Wilkins referring to a group of photographs and clippings from a news conference being mailed October 22, 1956

Box 1:4 Index to the Voters' Register as they registered for the election of June 5th, 1956 covering 13 precincts in West Oakland campaigned by J.B. Combs prior to the General Election of November 5th, 1956 circa 1956

Box 1:4 Flowchart of the Republican Precinct Organization of Alameda County covering the 7th and 8th Congressional Districts circa 1956

Box 1:4 Letter from Ruth Watson and Peter Howard on Eisenhower-Nixon Alameda County Campaign Committee letterhead expressing their gratitude for efforts toward victory of the Republican Party in the 1956 election November 14, 1956

Box 1:4 Letter from Thalia D. Thomas checking in with William Vaughns about President Eisenhower’s victory and keeping momentum in the Republican Party November 15, 1956

Box 1:4 Letter from Cyril W. McClean, Chairman of the Alameda County Republican Central Committee thanking William Vaughns for his efforts on behalf of the 17th Assembly District December 10, 1956

Box 1:4 Letter from Cyril W. McClean thanking Bill for his letter of December 7th and suggesting a meeting about capturing the Negro vote December 10, 1956

Box 1:4 Letter to William Flaherty about the appointment of Sol Terry as precinct Coordinator June 19, 1957

Box 1:4 Letter from Marjorie H.E. Benedict of the Republican National Committee about her inability to attend a meeting in their new headquarters July 1, 1957

Box 1:4 Letter from Thalia D. Thomas about a civil rights battle in the Senate and referring to a copy of an enclosed letter to Senator Lyndon B. Johnson [not enclosed] August 7, 1957

Box 1:4 Letter to Senator William F. Knowland about civil rights legislation and requesting that he speak at a meeting of the Alameda County Republican League August 9, 1957

Box 1:4 Letter from Paul G. Manolis, Executive Secretary to Senator Knowland, referring Robert S. Barkell for arrangement of Senator Knowland’s speaking schedule August 15, 1957

Box 1:4 Letter from Thalia D. Thomas about the possibility of Senator Knowland speaking in California August 19, 1957

Box 1:4 Letter to Congressman Gubser thanking him for speaking at a recent meeting October 11, 1957

Box 1:4 Letter to Senator William F. Knowland thanking him for his appearance on October 18th and appreciation for his work on civil rights legislation October 25, 1957
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1:4</th>
<th>Letter to Thalia Thomas about the meeting held for Senator Knowland October 30, 1957</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 1:4</td>
<td>Printed copy of the speech of US Senator William F. Knowland, Candidate for Governor of California delivered in Santa Barbara, California November 9, 1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1:4</td>
<td>Letter from John J. Allen Jr. thanking William Vaughns for acting as a Republican sponsor of his candidacy for congressional representative March 28, 1958</td>
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<td>Box 1:4</td>
<td>Letter from Governor Goodwin J. Knight thanking William Vaughns for his help in the campaign May 26, 1958</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 1:4</td>
<td>Letter from Governor Goodwin J. Knight thanking William Vaughns for his help in the primary election and expressing his plan to run for US Senator June 27, 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1:4</td>
<td>Response to Goodwin J. Knight’s letter of June 27th, and an endorsement for attorney George R. Vaughns as a prospect for Municipal Judge July 9, 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1:4</td>
<td>Letter from Governor Goodwin J. Knight thanking William Vaughns for his help in the primary election and reiterating his plan to run for US Senator July 16, 1958</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 1:4</td>
<td>Letter from Governor Goodwin J. Knight acknowledging the recommendation of George R. Vaughns for appointment to the municipal court July 18, 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1:4</td>
<td>Letter from Governor Goodwin J. Knight regarding the possibility of a speaking engagement August 11, 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1:4</td>
<td>Letter to Weldon Richards, Berkeley City Councilman, requesting that Vivian Osborne Marsh be appointed in an open vacancy on city council circa 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1:4</td>
<td>Press release from the Alameda County Republican Central Committee commenting on the selection of a new city councilman to Oakland, requesting that consideration be given to the appointment of qualified negroes to city councils in Alameda County September 11, 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1:4</td>
<td>Letter from Marjorie H.E. Benedict referring to an enclosed item on civil rights sent out by the National Committee October 13, 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1:4</td>
<td>Letter from Senator William F. Knowland acknowledging his letter of June 24th and relating the forwarding of the letter to Francis A. Nichols and Peter Howard June 30, 1959</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Box 1:5                  | Photograph of William E. Vaughns and an unidentified man, with a portrait of Dwight D. Eisenhower in the background [014] 1957 |

| Box 1:6                  | Newspaper clippings collected by and/or about William (Bill) E. Vaughns 1966-1984 |

**Scrapbook**

**Series Scope and Content Summary**

A scrapbook used by Goldie Byrd Ruffin to collect correspondence, photographs, and newspaper clippings about George R. Vaughns and William E. Vaughns. The scrapbook contents were not affixed to the pages, and there is evidence that many previously glued items had been pulled off of the pages. There are a few of pieces of correspondence still affixed to some pages; six of the pages have letters from the Pacific Fire Rating Bureau to member and subscribing companies, signed by Al W. Gilbert, General Manager or F.H. Hawkins, Executive Secretary. Inscription on the front of the scrapbook reads: "George Vaughns - Family associates". Inside front cover reads: "11/21/02 Gift of Mrs. Goldie Byrd Ruffin. Niece of Mr. George Vaughn [sic] Esq. Brought by Mrs. Alice Royals 11/21/02."