Descriptive Summary

Title: Wayne Friday collection

Dates: 1941 - 2014

Collection Number: 2017-06

Creator/Collector: Friday, Wayne

Extent: 1 Carton; 3 Manuscript Boxes; 2 Oversize Boxes; 1 Artifact [painting] (4 linear feet)

Repository: GLBT Historical Society
San Francisco, California 94103

Abstract: The Wayne Friday collection documents San Francisco-based columnist, district attorney investigator, and police commissioner Wayne Friday. The bulk of the collection ranges from the late 1960s to the mid-2010s and arranged in two series: photographic and manuscript materials, and personal artifacts.

Language of Material: English

Access
Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights
Copyright has been transferred to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Historical Society.

Preferred Citation
Wayne Friday collection. GLBT Historical Society

Acquisition Information

Biography/Administrative History
Wayne Friday (1936-2016) was a gay rights pioneer and active in the San Francisco gay and political communities from the 1970s until his death in 2016. He was a political organizer, columnist, city investigator, and police commissioner. He served a term as vice-president and two terms as president for the Tavern Guild, a San Francisco business association of gay bars and liquor wholesalers. Friday was also a columnist for the Bay Area Reporter (B.A.R.) newspaper for over 26 years and was inducted into the Cable Car Awards Hall of Honor. He was close friends with both Harvey Milk and Bob Ross, co-founder of the B.A.R. Friday also worked as a San Francisco District Attorney’s Office Criminal Investigator for over a decade and served on the San Francisco Police Commission under both Mayors Jordan and Brown. Friday was a self-described “political junkie” and key figure during the LGBT community’s rise to political power in San Francisco. Friday was born November 26, 1936 in Flint, Michigan. At 18 he enlisted in the Navy, and at age 21 moved to New York and began working for a Wall Street brokerage firm. He was transferred to the firm’s San Francisco office in 1970. It was during this time that Friday came out as a gay man and became active in San Francisco’s emerging gay community. Around 1972, Friday began bartending at gay bars on Polk Street allowing him to devote his days to political efforts. The next year, Friday became friends with Harvey Milk, going on to serve as his advisor and work for his campaigns. It was also during this time that Friday became involved with the Tavern Guild and, in 1978, became the first bartender to be elected as president of the association. He used his position in the Tavern Guild to increase its influence and the overall political power of the San Francisco gay community. During the mid-1970s, Friday became friends with Bob Ross, co-founder and then publisher of the B.A.R., a free weekly San Francisco Bay area newspaper that is today one of the longest continually running LGBT newspapers in the United States. Friday was a contributor to the B.A.R. from 1977 to 2004. He wrote weekly columns, including “Our Man Friday” and “Politics and Poker”, and served as the paper’s political editor. Friday also served the city of San Francisco in his work as a criminal investigator and police commissioner. Friday became a criminal investigator for the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office in 1985, retiring in 1998. Friday was appointed to the San Francisco Police Commission in August 1993 by Mayor Frank Jordon. He resigned in January 1996 at the end of Jordon’s term only to be re-appointed to the commission by Mayor Willie Brown in January 1997. He served as a commissioner until April 2004. Friday was a member of the Golden State Peace Officers Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, and the San Francisco District Attorney Investigators Association. He was honored by Mayor Feinstein, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, and the California State Senate. In 1986 Friday won the Community Service Award from the Bay Area Non-Partisan Alliance, and in 2006 was given the Alice B. Toklas Democratic Club Lifetime Achievement Award. After suffering from Parkinson’s disease for over a year and in declining health, Friday committed suicide on October 12, 2016 at age 79. In honor of his life and contributions to San Francisco, Mayor Ed Lee ordered flags flown at half-mast at City Hall, SFPD Headquarters, and 10 San Francisco police stations on the Friday following Friday’s death.

Scope and Content of Collection
The Wayne Friday collection documents San Francisco-based columnist, district attorney investigator, and police commissioner Wayne Friday. The bulk of the collection ranges from the late 1960s to the mid-2010s. The collection is arranged in two series: photographic and manuscript materials, and personal artifacts. The first series, photographic and manuscript materials, includes clippings, correspondence, a handwritten speech, a scrapbook, programs, cards, and photographs documenting Friday’s personal interests as well as his involvement in the San Francisco gay and political communities from the late 1960s through 2014. This series includes clippings, cards, and photographs that were pulled from the signed books that are in the personal artifacts series (see container list below). The items are filed in separate folders labelled with the book’s title from which they were pulled. Correspondence folders include personal letters, letters from politicians such as Dianne Feinstein and Mark Leno, and letters praising Friday’s work as a district attorney investigator. There are also photographs and ephemera involving Friday’s friendship with Harvey Milk including various photographs, a handwritten speech, and ephemera from the 2008 premier of the movie Milk. The series also includes photographs of Friday, his friends, and public figures, some of which are autographed. There is a photograph from Friday’s childhood, but the bulk of the photographs range from the late 1960s to the mid-2010s. The second series is personal artifacts. This series makes up the bulk of the collection and includes awards, work items, signed books, political buttons, a large painting that hung in Friday’s bedroom of a nude male by S. Miller, and 49er football tickets given to Friday by Milk the night before Milk’s assignation. This series also includes personal memorabilia relating to Friday’s interests and careers including various apparel pins as well as personal San Francisco district attorney and police department items. The following signed books are also included in this series: 1. Detour: A Hollywood Story by Cheryl Crane with Cliff Jahr, 1988 [signed by Cheryl] 2. The Harvey Milk Interviews in His Own Words editor Vince Emery, 2012 [signed by Vince Emery, 4/11/12] 3. Maria, Marlene, and Me: Intimate Recollections of a Life in Theater and Film by Dean Goodman, 1983 [signed by author, 5/9/94] 4. Henry Kissinger: White House Years by Henry Kissinger, 1979 [signed by Nancy K] 5. The Almanac of Women and Minorities in American Politics by Mart Martin, 1999 [signed by author] 6. The Almanac of Women and Minorities in World Politics by Mart Martin, 2000 [signed by author] 7. The Masters Way to Beauty by George Masters and Norma Lee Browning, 1977 [outer jacket signed by Ann Margaret and inside signed by George, 5/18/77] 8. ... And Autumn Came by Rod McKuen, 1954 [signed by author, 04/11/64] 9. Listen to the Warm by Rod McKuen, 1967 [inside signed by Tony (see Book Insert folder for note), 10/23/69] 10. Fields of Wonder by Rod McKuen, 1971 [signed by author, 1978] 11. Finding My Father: One Man’s Search for Identity by Rod McKuen, 1976 [signed by author, 8/76] 12. The Sound of Solitude by Rod McKuen, 1983 [signed by author, 11/4/83] 13. We, the Dangerous by Janice Mirikitani, 1995 [signed by author] 14. Six Crises by Richard M. Nixon, 1962 [signed by Richard Nixon, 04/18/64] 15. The Donor by Frank M. Robinson, 2004 [unsigned but presented with The Great Divide and includes note from author (see Book Insert folder)] 16. The Great Divide by Frank M. Robinson and John F. Levine, 2004 [unsigned but presented with The Donor and includes note from author (see Book Insert The Donor folder)] 17. The Morning People by Robert Sexton, 1970 [1 of 200 signed editions, book dedication “for Wayne Friday”] 18. The Mayor of Castro Street: The Life and Times of Harvey Milk by Randy Shilts, 1982 [signed by author, 8/11/82] 19. The Rose Tattoo by Tennessee Williams, 1950 [signed by author] 20. Grand by Tennessee Williams, 1964 [limited signed edition and personally signed by author] 21. King James Bible from Bob Ross, 1960, given 12/88

Indexing Terms
Gay men
Journalism
Nightlife
Politics and elections

Wayne Friday collection Container List