
Collection number: MSS 076

Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research

Los Angeles, California

Contact Information:
Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research
6120 South Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA, 90044
Phone: (323) 759-6063
Fax: (323) 759-2252
Email: archives@socallib.org
URL: http://www.socallib.org/

Processed by:
Jane Glicksman

Date Completed:
July 31, 2003

Encoded by:
Jane Glicksman

© 2003 Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research. All rights reserved.

Descriptive Summary

Title: Register of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Los Angeles Chapter Records,

Date (inclusive): 1931-2002

Collection number: MSS 076

Creator: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Extant: 9 letter boxes, one legal half box

Repository: Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research

Los Angeles, CA 90044

Abstract: These are the records of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Los Angeles Chapter. The collection contains materials relating to the activities of the local membership and the administration of the Los Angeles executive board. The bulk of the collection contains the correspondence, agendas, meeting minutes and publicity materials generated during the 1970s and 1980s, during which time the Los Angeles branch was particularly active.

Language: English.

Provenance

Donated to the Library by the Yablon Center

Access

The collection is available for research only at the Library's facility in Los Angeles. The Library is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. Researchers are encouraged to call or email the Library indicating the nature of their research query prior to making a visit.

Publication Rights

Copyright has not been assigned to the Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research. Researchers may make single copies of any portion of the collection, but publication from the collection will be allowed only with the express written permission of the Library's director. It is not necessary to obtain written permission to quote from a collection. When the Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research gives permission for publication, it is as the owner of the
The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) was founded in 1915 at the First International Congress, held in The Hague, Netherlands. The delegates, representing more than 1,000 women from Europe and the United States, assembled to protest the First World War and to chart a course toward permanent world peace. The United States delegates were led by Jane Addams, a social reformer and the founder of Chicago's Hull House and the Women's Peace Party, an American peace organization. Addams would later become WILPF's first president as well as the first woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is one of the oldest and largest international women's peace and justice organizations in the world. It was founded on the principle that peace is achieved through economic and social justice, and it has continued to work for measures to remove the economic causes of war, for universal disarmament and for equal rights. In a policy statement delivered at its Third International Congress of 1921, WILPF declared its mission to "transform the economic system in the direction of social justice." [WILPF website: Principles and Policies: http://www.wilpf.org/history/about3.htm]

Throughout its history, WILPF took stands on nuclear disarmament and the Vietnam War and sponsored or participated in the International Year of the Child, the U.N. Seminar on World Disarmament, the International Women's Year and Stop the Arms Race (STAR).

The WILPF International Office is based in Geneva, Switzerland, and is composed of 37 countries from Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. The United States Section, WILPF's national organization, is based in Philadelphia. The Jane Addams Peace Association, or JAPA, promotes WILPF educational programs and is also located in Philadelphia. WILPF's Legislative Office, based in Washington, DC, monitors national legislation, political activities and participates in lobbying efforts. The United Nations Bureau in New York City conducts programs and seminars in its capacity as a non-governmental organization, or NGO.

The United States Section is further composed of local branches and chapters, currently about 100. At the branch level, members elect local and national officers, hold monthly executive meetings and chapter meetings and choose their own action priorities. The National Board, comprised of branch officers, elects committee chairs and appoints members to the Executive Committee. Although the basic structure of WILPF has remained constant since its inception, the composition and naming conventions of its various national divisions have changed over the years, reflecting the nature and number of its membership. At one time, the California branch was formally subdivided into two state branches: the Northern and Southern California Branches. The California state branch was part of the Western Region, which was represented by Washington State, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, Oregon and California. Currently, California consists of the following local chapters: Berkeley-East Bay, Fresno, Los Angeles, Sacramento, Monterey County, Peninsula-Palo Alto, San Francisco, San Jose and Santa Barbara. Each branch has a branch president, a secretary and a treasurer who represent their branch at regional and national board meetings.

Scope and Content

Vivien Myerson, member of the National Board and past president (1973-75) of the Los Angeles branch, donated the files from the Los Angeles office, which constitute most of the material in the collection. Myerson was among a corps of women in the Los Angeles chapter who were most active in the organization and who served as committee chairs and officers at both the local and national levels. The bulk of the materials emanating from the offices of the president of the Los Angeles Chapter were created or collected by Dorothy Hampton and Lois Hamer, branch presidents during the 1960s; Miriam Goldsmith, Vivien Myerson and Sarah Shuldiner who held the office in the 1970s; and Pearl Letz, Blanche Spindel and Carol Cutler, active in that capacity during the 1980s. In addition to meeting minutes, correspondence, pamphlets and flyers generated by the Los Angeles branch, the local office also accumulated papers generated by Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) national office and Western Region. Materials collected by other activists in the organization have also been integrated into the WILPF collection. Many of these materials consist of policy statements and action alerts issued through the national newsletter, Peace and Freedom, as well as the Legislative Bulletin and Legislative Alert, which emanated from the WILPF Legislative office in Washington, DC.

Arrangement

The collection is divided into four series: 1. LOS ANGELES CHAPTER RECORDS, 2. UNITED STATES SECTION, 3.WESTERN REGION, 4.PHOTOGRAPHS AND MEMORABILIA.
Series 1 is further subdivided into three subseries: Office Files; Programs and Seminars; Newsletters. Series 2 is also subdivided into three subseries: Executive Board Office Files; Conferences and Programs; Legislative Office.

**Arrangement**

The records have been arranged chronologically, with the earliest dates leading. Undated material, if any, can be found at the end of each folder.

**Separated Material**

Issues of *Peace and Freedom*, WILPF’s national publication, have been added to the Library’s periodicals collection.

**Title:** Winfield (Orilla) Papers,
**Date:** 1948-1953,
**Physical Description:** 1 legal folder

**Title:** Women for Legislative Action,
**Date:** 1952-1977,
**Physical Description:** 6 linear feet

**Title:** Women Strike for Peace Records,
**Date:** 1960s-1970s,
**Physical Description:** 5 linear feet

**Title:** Women Strike for Peace - Newsletters,
**Date:** 1967-1989,
**Physical Description:** .5 linear feet

---

**Series 1. Los Angeles Chapter Records, 1931-2001**

**Physical Description:** 4 letter boxes

**Scope and Content Note**

This series contains all the materials generated or distributed by the Los Angeles office, including literature collected from other organizations. Most of the records in this series document the activities stemming from monthly chapter meetings, which formed the heart of the local organization. Chapter meetings were structured around a featured speaker or presentation to rally support for national initiatives as well as to raise funds for the local branch. The series also contains printed flyers and brochures created to raise awareness of particular issues and to publicize local events.

This series is further subdivided into three subseries: A. Office Files, B. Programs and Seminars and C. Newsletters.
Subseries A. **Office Files, 1932-2000**

**Physical Description:** 20 folders

**Scope and Content Note**

This subseries contains meeting minutes documenting the activities of the Los Angeles board. Minutes were recorded for executive board meetings and for general meetings, which were held separately.

Correspondence files chronicle the local chapter’s involvement in local and national political and social issues. Of note is a letter dated 1950 that reveals the branch’s actions in support of a proposed constitutional amendment giving equal rights to women. Interestingly, the national organization did not consider this issue a priority at that time.

Files containing the branch by-laws, position papers and rosters show the development and structure of the local organization in the state of California and its links to the national organization. Dorothy Hampton, Lois Hamer, Vivien Myerson and Sarah Shuldiner held the offices of branch president in 1964, 1969, 1973 and 1977, respectively; Hampton, Hamer and Myerson also served as executive board members at the national level. The writings files contain reports and essays about a variety of issues, some of which appear to have been created as submissions for publication in the chapter newsletter. Of note is the testimony of California state branch president Sylvia Saiger at the Vietnam Hearings, which were conducted by congressmen George E. Brown Jr. and Edward R. Roybal in 1967.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box-folder 1/1-1/10</th>
<th>Meeting minutes, 1950-1986</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/1-1/8</td>
<td>Executive Board, 1951-1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/1</td>
<td>1951-1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/2</td>
<td>1969-1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/3</td>
<td>1973-1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/4</td>
<td>1976-1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/5</td>
<td>1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/6</td>
<td>1979-1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/7</td>
<td>1981-1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/8</td>
<td>1984-1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/9-1/10</td>
<td>General meetings 1950-1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/9</td>
<td>1950-1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 1/10</td>
<td>1982-1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2/1-2/5</td>
<td>Correspondence 1931-1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2/1</td>
<td>1931, 1950, 1968, 1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2/2</td>
<td>1973-1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2/3</td>
<td>1976-1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2/4</td>
<td>1980-1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2/5</td>
<td>Circular letters, 1967-1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2/7</td>
<td>Position statements and petitions, 1973-2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box-folder 2/8</td>
<td>Jane Addams fact sheet, biography by Orilla Winfield, 1960 and n.d.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Physical Description: 14 folders

Scope and Content Note

The Los Angeles chapter held monthly meetings and organized activities in response to national calls to action as well as to other social and political issues germane to local community and state issues. This series contains a variety of materials generated in support of these monthly events and special programs, such as press releases, photographs, clippings, study guides and other literature, demonstrating most vividly the processes involved in developing grassroots organizations.

Folder 11 includes records created in conjunction with appearances by: David Roberti, California state senator, 27th district; Paul Schrade, director, Western Region 6, United Auto Workers Union; Joseph Friedman, chairman, Southern California American Civil Liberties Union Committee for Amnesty; and others. Materials include correspondence, photographs, press releases and clippings. Course materials created to support education and outreach programs include role-playing exercises, bibliographies, handouts and other printed materials. The Los Angeles office collected pamphlets and additional printed materials from other organizations, including the "American Experiments in Disarmament and the London Conference of 1930," by William I. Hull.

Box-folder 2/11
Chapter meetings, 1971-1974, 1979

Box-folder 2/12-2/14
Course materials, ca. 1960 and 1977

Box-folder 2/12

Box-folder 2/13
Role-playing script, "Operation Living Room, Economic Conversion," ca. 1960

Box-folder 2/14
Role-playing script, "Operation Living Room, Nuclear Disarmament," ca. 1960

Box-folder 2/15

Box-folder 3/1-3/4
Clippings 1961-1985

Box-folder 3/1

Box-folder 3/2
1973-1975

Box-folder 3/3
1976-1979

Box-folder 3/4
1981-1985

Box-folder 3/5-3/6
Literature 1960-1992

Box-folder 3/5

Box-folder 3/6
Event programs, 1960-1992

Box-folder 3/7
Leaflets, n.d.

Box-folder 3/8-3/9
Other organizations, 1969-1990

Box-folder 3/8
Reprints and pamphlets, 1969-1979

Box-folder 3/9

Subseries C. Newsletters, 1936-2001

Physical Description: 1 letter box (6 folders)

Scope and Content Note

This subseries contains the Bulletin, the newsletter published monthly by the Los Angeles chapter. The Bulletin was one of the branch's most powerful organizing tools and, except for monthly meetings and special programs, was the primary outlet for raising awareness of issues and action campaigns. Articles, reports and fact sheets provided direction as well as clarification on specific issues and campaigns.

In addition to news items about various chapter members, upcoming meetings and events, the Bulletin also featured submissions from other small WILPF groups in and around Southern California, as well as Action Alert and Legislative Update, memos of legislative and congressional activities both at the local and national levels.

Of note is an early Los Angeles branch publication, Peace Brevities, which was issued in 1936. This can be found in Folder 4/1.

Box-folder 4/1-4/7
Los Angeles Branch Bulletin, 1936-1969

Box-folder 4/1
1936, (Peace Brevities), 1960-1969 (incomplete)
Series 1. Los Angeles Chapter Records, 1931-2001
Subseries C. Newsletters, 1936-2001

Box-folder 4/2  1970-1979 (incomplete)
Box-folder 4/3  1980-1984
Box-folder 4/4  1985-1989
Box-folder 4/5  1990-1994
Box-folder 4/6  1995-1999
Box-folder 4/7  2000-2001

Series 2. United States Section, 1931-2002

Physical Description: 3 letter boxes

Scope and Content Note

The material in this series primarily contains literature generated by the national organization and circulated to the local branches through the efforts of its various committees and offices. The Policy Committee generated statements and resolutions for approval by the United States Section National Board. WILPF "Principles and Policies" and its constitution were updated at national meetings. The Program and Action Committee spearheaded initiatives and coordinated national and international campaigns, special events and seminars and scheduled national demonstrations in support of WILPF initiatives. These in particular reveal the evolution of the peace, disarmament and social action movement in this country. The Program and Action Letter documented the activities deriving from various WILPF initiatives and contained suggestions for implementation at the local level in the organization. The Literature Committee issued leaflets, fact sheets, discussion papers and study guides to encourage participation in WILPF political and social programs. Membership brochures and branch education packets, which were distributed to branches throughout the country, contained sample press releases, WILPF position statements and meeting agendas, enabling local branches to plug into national campaigns through community outreach. Brochures, such as "Principles and Policies" and "About WILPF," dating from the 1950s, provide valuable insight on the history, philosophies and organizing principles of the League.

The Legislative Office, located in Washington, DC, published a variety of materials and advisories, including Legislative Bulletin and Legislative Alert. These memos served to introduce members to national legislative activity, raise awareness of WILPF-sponsored initiatives and to provide governmental points of contact at the national and local levels.

This series also contains files created in conjunction with national conferences, board meetings and internationally sponsored programs, including the United Nations Seminar on Soviet-American Women and International Women’s Year.

The series is divided into 4 subseries: Subseries A. Executive Board Office Files, Subseries B. Conferences and Programs, Subseries C. Legislative Office, Subseries D. Jane Addams Association.

Subseries A. Executive Board Office Files, 1930-2002

Physical Description: 21 folders

Scope and Content Note

This subseries contains the organization’s constitution and by-laws, minutes and resolutions from national board meetings and membership directories. In addition, the series contains position statements, pamphlets, brochures and educational materials that would be distributed to the branches as well as for fundraising and membership drives. Of note in Folder 5/5 is a circular sent to members during the Herbert Hoover presidency proposing drastic reductions in naval warships.

Box-folder 5/1-1/5  Administrative files, 1963-2000
Box-folder 5/1  Constitution, by-laws, annual reports, 1965-2000
Box-folder 5/2  National Board meeting minutes and reports, 1973, 1974-1976, 1982
Box-folder 5/4  Directories, 1977-1984
Box-folder 5/6-5/7  National policies and resolutions, 1930-1980

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Los Angeles Chapter Records, 1931-2002
Box-folder 5/6  "Principles and Policies," 1930-1973
Box-folder 5/8-5/9  Branch outreach and education, 1963-1976
Box-folder 5/10-6/2  Literature and publications, 1930-2002
Box-folder 5/10  Reports and reprints, ca. 1930-1981, n.d.
Box-folder 5/12  Histories and fact sheets, 1960-1985, n.d.
Box-folder 6/2  Literature and publications, 1930-2002
Box-folder 6/4  Jane Addams Centennial, 1960
Box-folder 6/5  15th International Congress at Asilomar, California, 1962
Box-folder 6/6  UN Seminar on Disarmament, International Women's Year, 1975
Box-folder 6/7  US Section Biennial Meeting and Conference, Santa Cruz, California, 1979
Box-folder 6/8  21st International Triennial Congress, Quinnipiac College, Hamden, Connecticut, 1980
Box-folder 6/10  US Section Biennial Meeting and Conference, Ypsilanti, Michigan, 1981
Box-folder 6/11  Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), 1978-1979; Stop the Arms Race (STAR), 1982-1983
Box-folder 6/12  Women's Encampment for Peace and Justice, Seneca Army Depot, 1983
Box-folder 7/2  16th International Congress Program, The Hague, 1966; 18th International Congress Program, New Delhi, 1971
Box-folder 7/3  International Women's Day, Brussels, 1983
Box-folder 7/4  Jane Addams Peace Association (JAPA), n.d.
Subseries C. Legislative Office, 1964-1985

Physical Description: 4 folders

Scope and Content Note

The Legislative Office kept members informed on key legislative issues through its memos, bulletins and alerts, which also publicize WILPF views and programs to elected officials and the general public. The Washington Newsletter, published in the 1960s, and Action Bulletin summarized bills and resolutions considered in Congress, analyzed issues and campaigns and tracked voting records of legislators. Through action alerts, the office helped members generate support with local political representatives through suggested letter-writing campaigns and other resources.

This subseries contains a few issues of the Washington Newsletter, the Legislative Bulletin from the 1970s, Legislative Alerts, memos, and various reports, including the testimony of Marjorie Boehm, president of the US Section, before the House Budget Committee, February 27, 1978.

Box-folder 7/6  Legislative Bulletin, 1971-1982
Box-folder 7/8  Assorted memos, statements and correspondence, 1964-1985

Series 3. Western Region, 1963-1993

Physical Description: 1 letter box (14 folders)

Scope and Content Note

This series includes materials generated by the WILPF Western Region, the Southern California State Branch, which included local branches throughout Southern California, and various records from the Washington State and Oregon branches.

The Southern California Regional Council correspondence is mainly of council presidents Sylvia Saiger (1968-1971) and Florence Stevens (1971-1974). Other branch materials consist of flyers, newsletters, clippings and reports submitted by member branches from Northern and Southern California.

Box-folder 8/1  Administrative files, 1974-1975, 1993, n.d.
Box-folder 8/2-8/5  Western Region Conferences, 1980-1986
Box-folder 8/2  San Diego, California, 1980
Box-folder 8/3  Denver, Colorado, 1982
Box-folder 8/4  Western Region Biennial, Madison, Wisconsin, 1984
Box-folder 8/5  Culver City, California, 1986
Box-folder 8/6  Newsletters, 1976-1984
Box-folder 8/7-8/15  Southern California Regional Council, 1963-1983
Box-folder 8/7  By-laws and resolutions, 1963-1973
Box-folder 8/8-8/11  Minutes, 1963-1975
Box-folder 8/8  1963-1967
Box-folder 8/9  1968-1971
Box-folder 8/10  1972-1973
Box-folder 8/11  1974-1975
Box-folder 8/12-8/14  Correspondence, 1964-1974
Box-folder 8/12  General, 1964-1967
Box-folder 8/13  Office of the President (Sylvia Saiger), 1968-1971
Box-folder 8/14  Office of the President (Florence Stevens), 1971-1974

Physical Description: 1 legal half box (7 folders)

Scope and Content Note

This series includes photographs, clippings, commendations and awards, which were originally housed in scrapbooks. Each album page has been photocopied and numbered; the corresponding photographs and awards themselves can be found in separate envelopes. Many of the photographs appear to have been taken at Los Angeles Chapter meetings, Los Angeles-area demonstrations and other events. Where applicable, the photocopies have been labeled. The series also contains two audiotapes: a radio interview on the KOST program, "Metrospect," hosted by Roy Elwell, with L.A. Branch president Sarah Shuldiner and National Vice President, Western Region, Vivien Myerson; and a speech given by Oakland congressman, 9th district, Ronald V. Dellums (b.1935). Shuldiner was president of the Los Angeles branch from 1977 to 1978. Dellums' speech appears to have taken place in the late 1970s. Two autograph books in this series contain the following quotation: "May Peace Prevail on Earth. May peace be in the United States of America. May the United States of America's missions be accomplished." All the entries are signed in Japanese.

Box-folder 9/1  "Miriam Goldsmith Album", 1972-1992
Box-folder 9/2  "Jane Addams Album," n.d.
Box-folder 9/3  Gulf War Demonstration, n.d.
Box-folder 9/4  Jane Addams photographs, n.d.
Box-folder 9/5  Commendations, 1980, 1985, 1990
Box-folder 9/6  Audiotaped radio interview with Sarah Shuldiner and Vivien Myerson, ca. 1977
Box-folder 9/7  Audiotaped speech, congressman Ronald V. Dellums, ca. 1976