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Guide to the
Lexington Democratic Club records

1948-2010 (bulk 1952-1986)

MssCol 18650

Compiled by Sarah Clinet, (INP, 2011), and Philip Heslip, September 2012

Summary

Creator: Lexington Democratic Club

Title: Lexington Democratic Club records, 1948-2010 (bulk 1952-1986)

Size: 8.19 linear feet (20 boxes)

Source: Donated by Jerome Heyman, 2011.

Abstract: The Lexington Democratic Club is a political activist group founded in 1949 to promote a reformist Democratic Party in Manhattan's 9th Assembly District. This collection documents the club's founding, operations, and activities through memorandums, event announcements, planning documents, meeting minutes, financial records, statistical reports, and correspondence.

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Preferred citation: Lexington Democratic Club records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: The collection has been reboxed and refoldered as needed.

Creator history

The Lexington Democratic Club was founded in 1949 by a group of idealistic Manhattan reformers with the goal of electing Democrats in the 9th "Silk Stocking" Assembly District, a longtime Republican stronghold. Unhappy with the Grover Cleveland Club and Tammany Hall's leadership, the Lexington Democratic Club organized to elect their own county committee members. By 1953, they controlled the positions of District Leaders and became the official Democratic club of the 9th Assembly District.

The club's stated goals were to promote the principles of the Democratic Party on national, state, and local levels; to foster honest and efficient in government; and to achieve liberal social reforms. The club focused their activist efforts on voter outreach, the abolition of poverty, and electoral and judicial reform. In addition to selecting and fundraising for Democratic candidates, they also organized petition signing and voter registration drives, and provided oversight to polls on election days. The Lexington Democratic Club is an active voice for liberal reform in local and national politics today.

Scope and content note

The Lexington Democratic Club records document the operations and activities of the organization between 1949 and 2010. Files held in this collection include founding documents, memorandums, event announcements, planning documents, meeting minutes, financial records, statistical reports, and correspondence. These records reveal the challenges inherent in local political activism and in establishing a new presence on an already mature political scene. They also illustrate the various efforts of community organizers in mid-20th century Manhattan, in particular, the fight against Tammany Hall and the rise of civil rights issues.

Arrangement

The Lexington Democratic Club records are organized into the following series:

Series I: Administrative Files, 1948-2010

Series II: Correspondence, 1949-1986

Key terms

Subjects

Election Candidates

Political campaigns -- New York (State) -- New York

Political clubs -- New York (State) -- New York

Places

New York (N.Y.) -- Politics and government

New York (N.Y.) -- Societies and clubs

Names

Democratic Party (N.Y.)

Hyman, Jerome E.

Left, James J.

Lehman, Orin

Lexington Democratic Club

O'Dwyer, Paul, 1907-1998

Stratton, Samuel S.

Special formats

Correspondence

Meeting Minutes

Container list

Series I: Administrative Files, 1948-2010 (12.5 boxes)

The Administrative Files series provides insight to the overall management and structure of the organization, as well as the daily activities carried out by its leadership and members. The creation and evolution of the club is well documented in the founding records, which consist of constitutions, amendments, memorandums, and research files from similar organizations. This series also holds committee files with member rosters and meeting minutes, financial records, legal files in regards to critical political and social issues of the time, and press material. The bulk of the files are concerned with local elections and judicial selection and reform. These records contain election statistic reports, lists of local Democrats and unregistered neighbors, guides on how to successfully register voters, and articles outlining the issues being debated. Of interest are campaign materials from multiple politicians that exist in the form of flyers, photo-adorned cards, and other eye-catching forms. Also present are newspaper clippings and newsletters from the Club and about the Club.

- b.1 f.1 Advisory Council, 1956
- b.1 f.2 Association of Young Democrats, 1952-1953
- b.1 f.3 Biographical Material--Paul O'Dwyer, undated
- b.1 f.4 Biographies of Persons in the 17th Congressional District, 1952-1958
- b.1 f.5 Board of Elections, 1962-1963
- b.1 f.6 Briefs of the New York Supreme Court, 1949
- b.1 f.7 Charter Flights, 1968
- b.1 f.8 Civil Rights Debate, 1960
Includes index of pertinent newspaper articles
- b.1 f.9 Committee (General), 1955-1966
- b.1 f.10 Committee for Better Representation in Albany, 1962-1963
Committee on the Judiciary
- b.1 f.11 Correspondence, 1961-1967
- b.1 f.12 Notices and Minutes of Meetings, 1956-1960
- b.1 f.13 Miscellaneous, 1956-1966
- b.2 f.1 Committee Reports, 1956-1957
- b.2 f.2 Conference, 1960
- b.2 f.3 Congressional Committee (17th), 1950
- b.2 f.4 Congressional District (17th), 1965
- b.2 f.5 Congressional District (18th), 1977-1978 (County committee meeting)
- b.2 f.6-7 Constitution, 1954-1965
- b.2 f.8 Constitutional Amendments, 1967
- b.2 f.9 Constitutional Convention, 1955-1957
- b.2 f.10 Democratic County Committee--Minutes, 1953
- b.2 f.11 Democratic County Committee--Rules, 1955-1975
- b.2 f.12 Democratic State Committee, 1959-1960
- b.2 f.13 Dinner Party Invitations, 1963-1964
- b.3 f.1-3 Election District (18th), 1953-1958 (With other election districts)
- b.3 f.4 Election Law Reform, 1965-1967

Series I: Administrative Files, 1948-2010 (cont.)

- b.3 f.5 Election Procedure, 1959
- b.3 f.6 Election Statistics, 1961-1966
- b.3 f.7-8 Election Law Decisions, 1949-1972
- Elections
- b.3 f.9 General Statistics, 1954-1962
- Campaigns
- b.3 f.10-11 1948-1949
- b.4 f.1-7 1950-1955
- b.5 f.1-8 1956-1961
- b.6 f.1-9 1962-1968
- b.7 f.1-13 1969-1981
- b.8 f.1-7 1982-1988
- b.8 f.8 Financial Records, 1950-1960
- b.8 f.9-10 Financial Reports, 1956-1968
- b.8 f.11 Flight Committee, 1964-1965
- b.8 f.12 Housing, undated
- b.8 f.13 Lease, 1955-1956
- b.8 f.14 Left, James J., 1957
- b.9 f.1-2 Legal Forms and Memos, 1951-1954
- b.9 f.3 Lehman for Congress, 1965-1966
- b.9 f.4 Lexington Building Corporation, 1958
- b.9 f.5 Lexington Democratic Club Information, 2006-2010
- b.9 f.6 *The Lexington Democratic Club Story*, 1959-1960
- b.9 f.7 List of Contributors, 1958
- b.9 f.8 Literature, 1951-1959
- b.9 f.9 List of District Leaders, undated
- b.9 f.10 McCarthy Campaign, 1968
- b.10 f.1 Mayoral Campaign, 1953
- b.10 f.2 Members, 1950-1974
- b.10 f.3 Membership Card, 1953
- b.10 f.4 Memo on Election Law, 1954
- b.10 f.5 Mid-Manhattan Democratic Club, 1959
- b.10 f.6 Minutes of Meetings of Executive Committee, 1956-1968
- b.10 f.7-9 Miscellaneous, 1949-1961, 2009
- b.10 f.10 New York City Charter Reform, 1960-1961
- New York Committee for Democratic Voters

Series I: Administrative Files, 1948-2010 (cont.)

New York Committee for Democratic Voters (cont.)

- b.10 f.11 Correspondence, 1959 January-1961 March
- b.11 f.1 Meeting Minutes, 1959-1965
- b.11 f.2-4 Newsletters, 1959-1967
- b.11 f.5 New York Young Democratic Club, 1948-1958
- b.11 f.6-7 Newsletters, 1961-1990
The Lexington Democrat and The Lexington
- b.12 f.1 Newspaper and Magazine Clippings, 1949-1955
- b.12 f.2 Offices to be Filled, 1953-1954
- b.12 f.3 Opposition Literature, 1952-1954
- b.12 f.4 Platform, 1962
- b.12 f.5 Political Committees, 1959-1963
- b.12 f.6 Political Forms (Blank), undated
- b.12 f.7 Reapportionment, 1964-1966
- b.12 f.8 Registration Statistics, 1953-1956
- b.12 f.9 Reports of Jerome E. Hyman, President, 1958
- b.12 f.10 Role Committee, 1957
- b.12 f.11 Seating Lists, 1960-1961
- b.12 f.12-13 Special Functions and Events, 1955-1989
- b.13 f.1 Special Functions and Events, 1955-1989
- b.13 f.2 Special List [of Members], undated
- b.13 f.3 Statement (Speech) for Lexington Democratic Club, 1958 December 9
- b.13 f.4 Stationary, undated
- b.13 f.5 Steiner Campaign, 1962
- b.13 f.6 Stratton, Samuel D., 1962-1964

Series II: Correspondence, 1949-1986 (7.5 boxes)

The Correspondence series, organized chronologically, spans from 1949 to 1986, and consists of both incoming and copies of outgoing letters. Club communications include newsletters, member memos, meeting and event announcements, fundraiser invitations, letters concerning dues payments, newspaper clippings, and printed fliers related to various local races. Much of this material was addressed to Secretary, Vice President, and later President Jerome E. Hyman. Outside correspondence came from local politicians and political groups, many seeking endorsements and support, and community members interested in the club. The letters further document the involvement of the club in elections, with other political groups, and in strategic planning for the Democratic Party.

- b.13 f.7-9 1949-1954
- b.14 f.1-6 1955-1956
- b.15 f.1-6 1957-1958 July
- b.16 f.1-5 1958 August-1960
- b.17 f.1-4 1961-1964

Series II: Correspondence, 1949-1986 (cont.)

b.18 f.1-4	1965-1968
b.19 f.1-6	1969-1978
b.20 f.1-2	1979-1986