

The content within this
document:

Winnifred S. “Winnie” Foster Research Collection

has been superseded.

This document has been kept in the USFSP Digital Archive for its historical value to reflect the collection as it had existed at an earlier time. Please refer to the successor document in this record for current contents.

The Winifred S. “Winnie” Foster Collection



“Miss City of Central Plaza” Contest, Central Plaza Shopping Center, late 1960s

A Collection Guide by
Jim Schnur
Assistant Librarian

Special Collections and Archives
Nelson Poynter Memorial Library
University of South Florida St. Petersburg

November 2005

Introduction to the Collection

In June 2003, Winifred S. “Winnie” Foster donated a collection of clippings, photographs, and archival materials that document her involvement in local civil liberties activities and the development of commercial activities at the Central Plaza Shopping Center.

Preservation Note

The materials in this collection occupy two acid-free document boxes. While preservation measures may slow the physical deterioration of such items, these steps cannot prevent damage from occurring. To prevent further damage to the fragile materials in this collection, avoid exposing them to light for an extended period of time. Please report any tears or other damage so that library staff may take appropriate preservation or conservation measures. Protective gloves should be worn when handling all fragile materials. While no restrictions limit access to this collection, library staff will evaluate photocopying or digitization requests on an individual basis to ensure the long-term preservation of this unique collection. Patrons using this collection must adhere to copyright and fair-use guidelines and provide proper citation of sources appearing in their research.

Provenance of the Winifred S. “Winnie” Foster Collection

This collection falls under the Local and Regional History provenance of the Special Collections and Archives department, Nelson Poynter Memorial Library, USF St. Petersburg.

Scope and Contents

The contents occupy two document boxes (0.85 ln. ft.). The collection includes a series devoted to the commercial activities of the Central Plaza Merchants Association, largely reflected through clippings of the *St. Petersburg Times* and *St. Petersburg Evening Independent* newspapers.

Biographical Note

Born in 1927, Winnie grew up in a Quaker home environment. She and other farm girls in rural Ohio often made clothes from feed sacks. As she came of age, she embraced the Quaker tradition of pacifism and commitment for equality. She and her husband, also a Quaker, moved to Rhode Island and supported liberal causes. Like many of her generation, she was deeply affected by the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and brought her commitment to civil rights and social justice to St. Petersburg when she moved to the area with her husband in 1969. Winnie immediately became involved with the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg area, civil rights issues, and the local Unitarian church. She soon organized People for Peace as a local antiwar organization that hoped to end American involvement in the Vietnamese conflict. She rose through the ranks of the local and state chapters of the American Civil Liberties Union, ultimately serving as president of the state board. She also worked with other local women to organize the Pinellas County chapter of the National Organization for Women and became a fixture in the Pinellas County Democratic Party. Foster resides in St. Petersburg.

Related Collections

Researchers interested in Winnie Foster’s involvement in social justice and civil liberties activities should also examine the following collections at the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library: the Raymond O. Arsenault Collection, Pinellas County National Organization for Women (Pinellas NOW) Papers, and the Yazell Collection/Pinellas County American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Papers. Scholars who wish to examine activities in the Pinellas County Democratic Party during the 1970s and 1980s—a time when Foster played a role in local party activities—should consult the Hazel Talley Evans Collection, also located in the Poynter Library.

Container Listing

Series: General Files

Materials in this series include items collected by Winnie Foster that illustrate her involvement in civil liberties activities. Most of the materials reflect her involvement with the local and state chapters of the American Civil Liberties Union and correspondence collected by Come Unity, a local “underground” newspaper published by Ray and Margo Yazell.

Box 1

Folder 1: African Americans—St. Petersburg, Fla.

Folder 2: American Civil Liberties Union of Florida—
“Impeach Nixon” Bumper Stickers

Folder 3: American Civil Liberties Union of Florida (1977-1979)

Folder 4: American Civil Liberties Union of Florida (1980-1985)

Folder 5: American Civil Liberties Union of Florida (1990-1999)

Folders include clippings, newsletters, programs, correspondence, and miscellaneous materials, some created by the national ACLU office or the Pinellas County, Fla., Chapter.

Folder 6: Come Unity Publication Correspondence

Letters from the later 1970s, mostly addressed to or from Ray and Margo Yazell, regarding articles in Come Unity, subscription inquiries, and other issues related to the publication. See also: Come Unity issues in the Raymond and Margaret Yazell Files/Pinellas County American Civil Liberties Union Papers.

Box 2

Folder 1: Come Unity Publication Correspondence

Letters from the later 1970s, mostly addressed to or from Ray and Margo Yazell, regarding articles in Come Unity, subscription inquiries, and other issues related to the publication. See also: Come Unity issues in the Raymond and Margaret Yazell Files/Pinellas County American Civil Liberties Union Papers.

Folder 2: Criminal Justice Reform—Pinellas County, Fla.

Folder 3: Fair, Jim—Hospitalization and Incarceration—Clippings

Folder 4: Peace Movements

Folder 5: Peace Movements—Petitions to Withdraw from Southeast Asia

Materials focus on efforts to end American involvement in the Vietnamese conflict.

Folder 6: Photographs of St. Petersburg's African-American Community

Folder 7: St. Petersburg, Fla.—Politics and Government—Miscellanea

Folder 8: Women's Issues and the Proposed Equal Rights Amendment

Series: Central Plaza Shopping Center (St. Petersburg, Fla.)

Materials in this series document commercial activities and plans to redevelop Central Plaza, a shopping complex opened in 1952 in central St. Petersburg. Located on a site once known as the "Goose Pond," the marshy agricultural region near the intersection of Central Avenue and 34th Street (U.S. Highway 19) was transformed into concrete shopping facilities and an asphalt parking lot large enough to accommodate nearly 2000 cars. Many historians believe that the opening of Central Plaza, Tyrone Gardens, and other suburban shopping centers moved the focus of commercial activities away from downtown merchants. By the early 1970s, with the opening of Tyrone Square Mall and the shopping centers at Crossroads, the focus changed once again. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, many merchants left the Central Plaza shopping center and many of the structures were demolished by the 1990s.

Folder 9: Central Plaza—Photographs and Blueprints

Folder 10: Central Plaza—Clippings, General, 1964

Folder 11: Central Plaza—Clippings, General, 1965

Folder 12: Central Plaza—Clippings, General, 1966

Folder 13: Central Plaza—Clippings, General, 1967

Folder 14: Central Plaza—Clippings, General, 1968

Folder 15: Central Plaza—Clippings, General, 1969

Folder 16: Central Plaza—Clippings, General, 1971

Folder 17: Central Plaza—Clippings, General, 1980s

Various clippings announcing new merchants or events at Central Plaza.

Folder 18: Central Plaza Community News

Folder 19: Central Plaza—Redevelopment Plans

This folder includes bold plans—that never materialized—to transform the Central Plaza shopping center by demolishing many structures and rebuilding the stores during the 1980s. This was part of a larger plan to reinvigorate the neighborhoods south of Central Plaza, generally between 34th Street South and 28th Street South, and from 1st Avenue North to 7th Avenue South.