

RG 349: Dorothy M. Hamm Papers

ARCHIVAL COLLECTION, RG 349

RELATED PERSON

Hamm, Dorothy Mae (Bigelow), 1919-2004 (creator)

Collection Contents

RG 349: Dorothy M. Hamm Papers (4 records)

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Dorothy Hamm moved into a home she built with her husband Leslie in the High View Park neighborhood in Arlington in 1950. At the time, the historic black neighborhood, established by newly freed enslaved people after the Civil War, was literally walled off from surrounding white communities. An eight-foot high fence, put up by nearby white homeowners, lined three sides of the neighborhood. The walls finally came down after Hamm and others led the fight to desegregate Arlington's public schools. Over the next two decades, Dorothy Hamm's name became synonymous with the civil rights movement in Arlington.

Hamm became one of the plaintiffs in a civil suit, filed in 1956, that eventually forced Virginia to integrate its public schools after the landmark Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education*, which declared segregated schools illegal. She revealed in an oral history in 1986 that she filed because "I felt that with the Supreme Court's decision my two sons would have an opportunity to attend Stratford, an integrated school....However, almost 2 years had passed, they still had not been permitted to attend; and this is why I really got involved." In 1959, four black seventh-grade students entered Arlington's Stratford Junior High, making it the first school in Virginia to desegregate. Seven months later, Hamm's son finally ended his long commute to Arlington's black middle school and attended Stratford Junior High, located near the Hamm household.

Hamm's fight did not end with public schools. She also served as a plaintiff in a civil action suits that integrated public school athletic program and eliminated the poll tax and race designation on voting records in Arlington County. In the early 1960s, she picketed theaters and stores in Arlington with other activists, which did not allow black patrons or employees. Such establishments opened their doors to African Americans soon after. In 1965, she became the first African American elected to a political party, representing the Woodlawn precinct for the Democratic Committee in Arlington. This was at the tip of her long career as a political official in Arlington. She spent nearly three decades as an officer of elections for Arlington County.

Preserving local African-American heritage became Hamm's later efforts. As President of the John M. Langston Citizen's Association, she fought to clean-up and preserve the High View Park neighborhood. She also wrote many plays about local African-American history, performed at several county events. Though she returned to her hometown in Caroline County, VA in 1987, Hamm's influence in Arlington will continue for years to come.

Black History Month Flyer, John M. Langston Citizens Association
Profiles of Woodlawn Precinct Candidates
Newspaper clipping, Clean-up Award, 1967
Bicentennial Black Heritage Program Flyer

Series 1: Meeting Minutes and Supplemental Materials

File 1: Colored Federation of Citizens' Associations of Arlington, 1940-1941, 1944

File 2: General, 1940-1945

File 3: Supplemental materials for General Meeting Minutes, 1940-1945 for dates March 17, 1944, and May 18, 1945

File 4: Ways and Means Committee Meeting Minutes, 1942-1943

File 5: General, 1946-1952

File 6: Supplemental materials for General Meeting Minutes, 1946-1952, for dates June 29, 1945, March 21, 1947, June 17, 1949, December 4, 1949, January 18, 1950, April 16, 1952, April 18, 1952

File 7: Ways and Means Committee and General, 1950-1953

File 8: General, 1957-1959

File 9: General, Executive Committee, and Nominating Committee Meeting Minutes, 1958-1960

File 10: General, 1960-1961, 1963-1964

File 11: General, 1961, 1963-1966

File 12: General, 1963-1965

File 13: General and Supplemental Materials, 1964

File 14: General, 1964-1966

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File 16: Meeting and Event Notices, 1944, 1951, 1964-1967, 1971-1973, 1977 (1 record)
Black History Month Flyer, John M. Langston Citizens Association

Series 2: Financial Records

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File 5: Recommendations from Auditing Committee and Receipts, 1950

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File 7: "Financial Reports 1952, [Membership] Dues Paid, Etc," and Oliver Brown Sr.'s Application for Membership, 1951-1952

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File 10: "Financial Report, 1955, [Membership] Dues Paid, Etc," 1955

File 11: "Financial Report 1956, [Membership] Dues Paid, etc," 1956

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File 14: Membership Dues Payment Lists, 1947, 1958-1961, 1964, 1966, 1968, n.d.

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File 2: Officers, Membership, and Financial Roll, Cash Receipts, Audit Book, 1940-1957

File 3: Savings Deposit and Checking Account Book, Banking Account Card, and Deposit Slips, 1943-1969

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File 5: "Bank Statements," 1954-1956

File 6: "1958 Bank Statements," 1956-1958

File 7: "'59 Bank Statements," 1959

File 8: Bank Statements, 1959-1965

File 9: "Bank Statements, 1966"

File 10: "Bank Statements, 1967"

File 11: Bank Statements and Supplemental Materials, 1968-1971

File 12: "Property of Mr. E.A. Hicks," Money Receipts and Checks, 1943, 1945

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File 16: Treasurer Payments, 1950-1956

File 17: Money Receipt Stubs, May 1947-March 1951

File 18: Money Receipt Stubs, March 1950-October 1953

File 19: "Can. Clev." Paid Checks, 1950-1955

File 20: Money Receipt Stubs, March 1951-June 1952

File 21: Money Receipt Stubs, September 1952-December 1954

File 22: Money Receipt Stubs, December 1954-October 1956

File 23: Money Receipt Stubs, November 1953-April 1957

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File 25: Money Receipt Stubs, April 1957-May 1964

File 26: "Drafts for 1957," 1957

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File 38: Receipts, 1959 Dinner-Dance and Christmas Tree Program, 1959

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File 4: Ways and Means Committee Flier, ca. 1960s, n.d.

File 5: "Electric Sight Bills, 1960, 1961"

Series 3: Membership

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File 5: Certificates of Membership, 1940s-1950s, 1960, n.d.

File 6: Membership Drive Cards, A-S, n.d.

File 7: Membership Drive Cards, T-Z, inactive or misfiled, n.d.

File 8: Membership Drive Cards, loose, n.d.

File 9: Membership Role Cards, 1957-1958

File 10: Members Contact List, n.d.

File 11: Membership Lists and Phone Numbers, ca. 1959

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File 5: "Signed Neighborhood Conservation" Project Agreements and Materials for Rezoning, Gutter, Curb, and Sidewalk Construction, 1967-1971

File 6: "Neighborhood Conservation [Committee] Parking," 1968

File 7: General "Neighborhood Conservation [Committee] Reports," 1970-1971

File 8: Neighborhood Conservation Committee Reports and Minutes, Cleanorama Material, 1972-1973

File 9: General Neighborhood Conservation Committee Minutes and Reports, 1972-1973

File 10: Neighborhood Conservation, Improvements Needed, 1973

File 11: "Printed Matter" Suggestions for Developing Neighborhood Conservation Plans, 1974

File 12: "Neighborhood Conservation," 1973-1975

File 13: Loose Neighborhood Conservation Committee Notes, Minutes, and Correspondence, 1964-1968, 1970-1974, 1976

File 14: Culpepper St. Resident Curb, Gutter, Sidewalk Improvements Agreements, n.d.

File 15: Resident Cards for Street Improvements, 1967

Subseries 2: Clean-Up and Beautification

File 1: Beautification Committee Notes, n.d.

File 2: Clean-Up Committee Correspondence and Other Real Estate Matters, 1964-1965, n.d.

File 3: Clean-Up Committee Fliers and Membership Dues (April 22, 1964), 1964

File 4: "Clean-Up"/Beautification Committee and Cleanorama, 1967-1968

File 5: Clean Up Committee Trash Pick Up, 1964-1967, 1971

File 6: Clean Up Contest, Cleanorama and Beautification, 1965, 1967, 1970, 1971, n.d.

File 7: Zoning and Clean Up, 1952, 1959, 1964-1973

File 8: Newspaper Clippings, Neighborhood Clean-Up and Housing, 1956, 1964, 1967, 1968(1 record)
Newspaper clipping, Clean-up Award, 1967

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Subseries 5: Events and Miscellaneous

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Profiles of Woodlawn Precinct Candidates

File 2: Independence Day Celebration, 1973

File 3: "Ms. Dorothy Hamm-1976" Bicentennial Celebration, 1976 (1 record)
Bicentennial Black Heritage Program Flyer

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Series 5: Other Organizations

File 1: Correspondence, 1951, 1953, 1959, 1963-1968, 1972

File 2: Green Valley, Arlington View, Central Arlington and High View Park Newsletter, 1969, 1975

File 3: Miscellaneous County and Government Publications, 1957, 1959, 1960, 1963-1967, 1970, 1972

File 4: John M. Langston Membership Certificate for American National Red Cross, 1946

File 5: John M. Langston Citizens Association Community Chest Federation Subscriber Card, 1951

File 6: "Beatrice Williams," NAACP Membership Campaign, 1960

Series 6: Photographs

File 1: John M. Langston Citizens Association Meeting (possibly), ca. 1950s, n.d.

Series 7: Subject Files

File 1: Corporation Dissolution, 1947

File 2: "Letter Heads and Env"[elopes], 1950s, 1960s, n.d.

File 3: Permit for Use of School Building, 1959

File 4: Arlington Hospital Building Fund Subscriber Forms, 1952

File 5: Parliamentary Procedure Instruction Cards, 1961

File 6: Home Remodeling Demonstration Classes Information, 1964, 1968

File 7: Economize While You Ecologize Pamphlet, ca. 1971

Artifacts Box 1

John M. Langston Citizens Association Stamps (2)

Oversize Box 1

Arlington County Planning Base Map, High View Park and Surrounding areas, n.d.

17th Road North Relocated from N. Cameron St. to N. Culpepper St. Map, 1967

N Cameron St., from 22nd St. N. to 17th Rd. N. Map, 1953

19th Rd. N. from N. Edison St. to N. Harrison St. Map, 1962 (2)