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Incredible Gladys Pyle Collection

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"Incredible Gladys Pyle" Collection

Finding Aid

South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections
Briggs Library (SBL) Room 241 Box 2114
1300 North Campus Drive
Brookings, SD 57007
Phone: 605-688-5094
Email: arcrefs@sdstate.edu

Collection Summary

Identifier

MA 20

Title

"Incredible Gladys Pyle" collection

Creator

Jeannette Kinyon and Jean Walz

Dates

1918-1987

Extent

0.42 linear feet -- 1 document case, sound recordings

Language

English

Repository

South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections, Hilton M. Briggs Library, Brookings, South Dakota.

Access note

This collection is open to researchers without restrictions. The materials in the Archives do not circulate and may be used in-house only.

Preferred Citation

Name of item. The "Incredible Gladys Pyle" collection. MA 20. South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections, Hilton M. Briggs Library, Brookings, South Dakota.

Abstract

This collection is a small representation of the research that Jeanette Kinyon and Jean Walz gathered for biography of Gladys Pyle, titled "The Incredible Gladys Pyle." Pyle was a South Dakota politician and the first woman elected to the United States Senate without having previously been appointed to her position; she was also the first female senator to serve as a Republican and the first female senator from South Dakota.

Biographical Note

Gladys Pyle (October 4, 1890 – March 14, 1989) was a South Dakota politician and the first woman elected to the United States Senate without having previously been appointed to her position; she was also the first female senator to serve as a Republican and the first female senator from South Dakota. She was also the first female senator never to marry.

She was born to John and Mamie (Shields) Pyle and graduated from Huron College in 1911. She taught in the public high schools at Miller, Wessington, and Huron from 1912-1918. In 1923 she became first woman member of the State House of Representatives, serving from 1923-1927. Pyle then served as Secretary of State of South Dakota from 1927–1931 and ran unsuccessfully for the Republican nomination for governor in 1930, garnering nearly a third of the vote in the primary but losing after seven recounts of the votes. She was a member of the State securities commission from 1931-1933. She engaged in the life insurance business in private life.

Gladys, her mother Mamie, and two sisters were very involved in the Women's Suffrage movement and frequently hosted meetings of the local chapter in their house.

On November 8, 1938 she was elected as a Republican to the United States Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Peter Norbeck. She defeated Tom Berry, a former Democratic Governor of South Dakota. She served from November 9, 1938, to January 3, 1939.

In 1981, Jeanette Kinyon and Jean Walz began to gather research for a biography of Gladys Pyle, a prominent woman in South Dakota politics. They interviewed Miss Pyle and researched books, manuscripts, letters, news stories, editorials, and other interviews. This collection is a small representation of the research gathered for this project.

Contents Note

"The Incredible Gladys Pyle" Collection consists of clippings, correspondence, financial records, manuscripts, research, transcripts and audio cassettes.

The clippings include advertisements for the published book and clippings of Gladys Pyle on her 96th birthday. The correspondence includes letters on the publication of the book and letters from Gladys Pyle noting corrections for the book. Included is a handwritten letter from Governor Sigurd Anderson praising Gladys Pyle and her contributions to South Dakota politics.

The financial records are minimal and include itemized lists of expenses. There are two manuscripts for the book, one is with the published title "The Incredible Gladys Pyle", and the other with an alternative title "Gladys Pyle: Always a Pioneer". The transcripts appear to accompany only one set of audiocassettes. Included with the transcripts are notebooks with interview questions for Miss Pyle.

Related Resources

The incredible Gladys Pyle, by Jeanette Kinyon and Jean Walz
Vermillion, S.D. : Dakota Press, 1985.
Call number: E656.P9 K56 1985

Key Words

Pyle, Gladys, 1890-1989

South Dakota -- Biography

Women legislators -- South Dakota

Women teachers -- South Dakota

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open to researchers without restrictions. The materials in the Archives do not circulate and may be used in-house only.

Researchers conducting extensive research are asked to make an advance appointment to access archival material. Please call or e-mail prior to visiting the collection and indicate as much detail as possible about a particular topic and intended use.

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Arranged and Described by

Crystal J. Gamradt, 1999 July 25.

Container List

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
1	1	Clippings	1986-1987
1	2	Correspondence	1981-1985
1	3	Financial records	1982
1	4	Manuscript: "Gladys Pyle : Always a pioneer"	undated
1	5	Manuscript: "The Incredible Gladys Pyle"	undated
1	6	Research	1918-1984
1	7	Transcripts of taped interviews	1971, 1982

Audiocassettes

Identifier	Description	Date(s)
AV MA 20-0004	Huron College continues, business career, time on claim, ERA committee involvement, views, recollections of years in Pierre	1982
AV MA 20-0006	Travel log of Merrill ? - Taiwan	undated
AV MA 20-0003	Gladys Pyle 90th birthday, Territory incidents, childhood, qualities, Huron College items	1982

Identifier	Description	Date(s)
AV MA 20-0009	Gladys Pyle interview [side 1-2]	undated
AV MA 20-0011	Gladys Pyle interview [side 4-5]	undated
AV MA 20-0008	Travel log of Robert ? - India/Sri Landa	undated
AV MA 20-0002	Radio Issues Forum [side 3]	1976
AV MA 20-0001	Radio Issues Forum [side 1-2]	1976
AV MA 20-0010	Gladys Pyle interview [side 3]	undated
AV MA 20-0005	Continuation of resolutions, questions, Banberg (?), Ins. Indicent	1982
AV MA 20-0007	Travel log of Robert ? - China/Japan	undated
AV MA 20-0012	Gladys Pyle interview [side 6]	undated
AV MA 20-0013	GG [guitar music - some practicing?	undated