

1121-110-GSM-gau (USMARC)

City of Savannah, Research Library & Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia [GSG (OCLC/LYRASIS)]

Record Series #: 1121-110

Name: W. W. Law Working Files

Dates: circa 1940s-2002, no date

Extent/Size: 14 records cartons (14.0 cubic feet)

Language: English

Name of Creator(s):

Westley Wallace Law

Biographical History:

W. W. Law (1923-2002) was a prominent Civil Rights leader, local historian, historic preservationist and community leader in Savannah, Georgia.

Westley Wallace Law was born on January 1, 1923 in Savannah, Georgia, the oldest of three children of Geneva Wallace and Westley Law. He was greatly influenced by his mother, Geneva W. Law, grandmother, Lillie Belle Wallace, mentor, Reverend Ralph Mark Gilbert, and scoutmaster, John S. Delaware. Both Reverend Gilbert and John Delaware were officials in the Savannah chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Law joined the NAACP Youth Council in high school and later served as its president. He attended Georgia State Industrial College (now Savannah State University) before being drafted into the U. S. Army during World War II. After he completed his military service, he finished his bachelor's degree in biology. Law was a long-time boy scoutmaster for Troop 49 which was made up of boys from First Bryan Baptist Church, of which he was a member and Sunday school teacher. He was a mail carrier for the United States Postal Service for over forty years.

From 1950-1976 Law served as President of the Savannah chapter of the NAACP. During the 1960s, he led weekly mass meetings at Bolton Street Baptist Church and St. Philip A.M.E. Church during which he urged "passive resistance to segregation" and nonviolent protests. He was involved in efforts to desegregate Grayson Municipal Stadium, department store lunch counters on Broughton Street, and the beaches at Tybee Island. He led an eighteen-month boycott of Broughton Street merchants. Law is largely credited for helping to keep Savannah's Civil Rights movement more peaceful than those in other southern cities. In 1961, he was fired from his postal job because of his Civil Rights activities, but reinstated after national NAACP leaders and President John F. Kennedy came to his defense.

After finishing his run as NAACP president, he focused his efforts on preserving Savannah African American History. He established the Savannah-Yamacraw Branch of the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History (ASALH), the King-Tisdell Cottage Museum, Beach Institute African American Cultural Center, the Ralph Mark Gilbert Civil Rights Museum, and the Negro Heritage Trail Tour. He also helped bring attention to and preserve Laurel Grove South Cemetery, the City's historically African American municipal cemetery.

Law received honorary doctorates from the Savannah College of Art & Design and Savannah State University. He was honored by the National Trust for Historic

Record Series 1121-110, W. W. Law Working Files

Preservation and the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation for his preservation efforts in the community. W. W. Law died on July 28, 2002 at his home in Savannah. He willed his home and belongings to Remer K. Pendergraph who formed the W. W. Law Foundation to celebrate and continue the work of W. W. Law. The Foundation in turn donated his collections, documenting Savannah's civil rights movement, historic preservation, and African American history, to the City of Savannah for preservation and access to the public.

For more information on W. W. Law see:

Elmore, Charles J. "W. W. Law (1923-2002)." New Georgia Encyclopedia, last updated 10 January 2014 (available on the web at <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/w-w-law-1923-2002>).

"The W. W. Law Foundation – About Us." W. W. Law Foundation, last updated 2012 (available on the web at <http://www.wlawfoundation.org/the-ww-law-foundation/>).

Scope & Content:

The W. W. Law Working Files (circa 1940s-2002, no date) includes 14 records cartons of files sorted into general subject categories during archival pre-processing. The records include personal correspondence, financials, artifacts, and various subject folders related to Law's involvement in the Savannah community and his personal interests. Law was involved in various organizations throughout his life including: the Chatham-Savannah Historic Sites and Monument Commission; Georgia's National Register Review Board; Boys Scouts of the Coastal Empire; the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA); American Legion Post 500, etc. This is a working record series that has been temporarily created and opened to facilitate public access to the records/papers during a multi-year archival project to process the W. W. Law Collection. The W. W. Law Working Files series is likely to grow as additional files are sorted from unprocessed boxes or shrink as files are pulled out for processing into the final record series/collections.

System of Arrangement & Ordering:

The W. W. Law Working Files (circa 1940s-2002, no date) are arranged by subject or topic. See the attached inventory for more information.

Conditions Governing Access:

None

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:

Please read carefully the statement on copyright below. ***Permission to reproduce does not constitute permission to publish.*** Researchers who plan publication are asked to discuss this with the archivist first for written permission. While most of the Library & Archives collections are public records and in the public domain, not all are, and the Library & Archives may not be the owner of copyright for all its archival materials. Researchers are responsible for obtaining any necessary permission to publish from the

Record Series 1121-110, W. W. Law Working Files

holder of copyright. In the event that the Library & Archives becomes a source for publication, a copy of the publication is requested for the Library & Archives.

NOTICE: WARNING CONCERNING COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve a violation of copyright law.

Access Points:

African American schools--Georgia--Savannah.

African Americans--Georgia--Savannah.

American Legion. Post 500 (Savannah, Ga.)

Battlefield Park (Savannah, Ga.)

Bethesda Home for Boys (Savannah, Ga.)

Boy Scouts of America--Georgia--Savannah.

Charity Hospital (Savannah, Ga.)

Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

Education--Georgia--Savannah.

First African Baptist Church (Savannah, Ga.)

First Bryan Baptist Church (Savannah, Ga.)

Franklin Square (Savannah, Ga.)

Georgia. Department of Natural Resources. Division of State Parks, Historic Sites, and
Monuments

Georgia Heritage Trust Commission

Historic buildings--Georgia--Savannah.

Historic Savannah Foundation

Historic sites--Georgia--Savannah.

Housing

Law, W. W. (Westley Wallace), 1923-2002

Live Oak Public Libraries

Longshoremen.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Day.

Museums

Savannah (Ga.).

Savannah (Ga.)--History.

Savannah (Ga.)--Tours.

Savannah State University (Ga.)

Tourism

United States. Post Office Department

1121-110-GSM-gau (USMARC)

City of Savannah, Research Library & Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia [GSG (OCLC/LYRASIS)]

Record Series 1121-110, W. W. Law Working Files

Sponsors/Funding:

Chatham County, Georgia, Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funding.

Preferred Citation:

1121-110, W. W. Law Working Files. City of Savannah, Research Library & Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Processed by:

L. Brooks, May 2016. Revised, M. Kerkhoff, October 2018.

Record Series 1121-110, W. W. Law Working Files

Inventory:

Box WWL 1

ARMSTRONG through BOOKS

- Armstrong
- Atlanta Life Insurance/Pilgrim Health and Life Insurance-Savannah Office records, 1991 (1 of 3)
- Atlanta Life Insurance/Pilgrim Health and Life Insurance-Savannah Office records, 1991 (2 of 3)
- Atlanta Life Insurance/Pilgrim Health and Life Insurance-Savannah Office records, 1991 (3 of 3)
- Baha'i Community
- Battlefield Park
- Battlefield Park-Grant Application to the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, April 14, 1975
- Beach High School
- Bethesda
- Bicentennial-National-Georgia Commission
- Bicentennial-National-Savannah Commission
- Bicentennial-State of Georgia
- Black Caucus
- Boy Scouts, 1 of 3 ["Negro Troop" material]
- Boy Scouts, 2 of 3 [W. W. Law Certificate from Boy Scouts of America, 1946]
- Boy Scouts, 3 of 3 [Cub Pack #48 official charter, 1942-04-30]
- Bonaventure
- Books, 1 of 3
- Books, 2 of 3
- Books, 3 of 3

Box WWL 2

BROTHERHOOD IN RHYTHM through DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

- Brotherhood in Rhythm
- Brumby Rocker
- Businesses
- Businesses-Restaurants
- Calendars
- Cemeteries
- Charity Hospital
- City of Savannah, 1 of 3
- City of Savannah, 2 of 3
- City of Savannah, 3 of 3
- City of Savannah-Police

Record Series 1121-110, W. W. Law Working Files

- Chatham-Effingham-Liberty Regional Library Board
- Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission
- Chatham County-Savannah MPC-Sign Ordinances
- Chatham-Savannah Board of Public Education
- Chatham County
- Chatham County/Savannah Government Consolidation
- Coastal Area Planning and Development Commission
- Coastal Heritage Society
- Colleges (general)
- Consumer's Guide to Sales and Services in the Minority Community
- Downtown Neighborhood Association

Box WWL 3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY through GEORGIA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

- Economic Development Authority
- Economic Opportunity Authority
- Electric Company PBS Show [Autographed]
- Elks Club
- Events
- Fans
- Fisk University
- Food
- Ford, Henry-Richmond Hill
- Fort Jackson
- Frank Callen Boys and Girls Club
- Franklin Square Renovation, 1973
- Friends of the Library
- Funeral programs, 1 of 2
- Funeral programs, 2 of 2
- Garrison, Esther
- Genealogy
- Georgia Association of Educators
- Georgia Centennial Farm
- Georgia Council on Human Relations-Chatham Chapter
- Georgia Endowment for the Humanities
- Georgia Historical Records Advisory Board
- Georgia Historical Society
- Georgia Humanities Council
- Georgia Municipal Association

Box WWL 4

GEORGIA PUBLIC TELEVISION ADVISORY COUNCIL through LOUISIANA

Record Series 1121-110, W. W. Law Working Files

- Georgia Public Television Advisory Council
- Georgia Public Television Advisory Council Binder
- Georgia Southern University
- Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation
- Georgia Women of Achievement
- Gospel Album Collection, W. W. Law, May 1970
- Health/Health Benefits
- Heritage Committee-First City Club
- Historic Savannah Foundation, 1 of 3
- Historic Savannah Foundation, 2 of 3
- Historic Savannah Foundation, 3 of 3
- Historic Tourism Subcommittee, 1974
- History
- Housing
- Inauguration of Jimmy Carter, 1977, Invitation and guides to Washington
- Jekyll Island
- Jobs/Labor
- Kiah Museum
- Law, W. W.
- Lewis, John (U. S. Representative)
- Libraries
- Libraries-Savannah New Materials lists, no date 1960-1969
- Libraries-Savannah New Materials lists, 1970-1982
- Littering
- Longshoremen
- Louisiana

Box WWL 5

MAPS through MUTUAL BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

- Maps (general)
- Maps-Georgia
- Maps-Savannah
- Maps-Waterways
- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Observance Day Association, Inc.
- Masons
- Massie School, 1 of 2
- Massie School, 2 of 2
- Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil
- Military/Veterans/Civil Service Commission
- MLK Revitalization and Redevelopment Authority
- Model Cities
- Monuments and Sites Commission

Record Series 1121-110, W. W. Law Working Files

- Movies
- Museums
- Museums/Historic Sites-Franklin D. Roosevelt Library
- Music, 1 of 3
- Music, 2 of 3
- Music, 3 of 3
- Mutual Benevolent Society

Box WWL 6

ORGANIZATIONS through SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY

- Organizations
- People
- Politics/Voter Information
- Public Media Home Video
- Public Television
- Radio
- Recycling
- Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce
- Savannah Arts Association
- Savannah Chapter of the Links
- Savannah College of Art and Design
- Savannah Concert Association
- Savannah Development and Renewal Authority
- Savannah Downtown Economic Market Analysis and Development Plan, April 1981
- Savannah International Trade and Convention Center
- Savannah Jazz Festival
- Savannah Ogeechee Canal
- Savannah Onstage
- Savannah River
- Savannah State University, 1 of 2
- Savannah State University, 2 of 2

Box WWL 7

SAVANNAH SYMPHONY through YOUTH

- Savannah Symphony, 1 of 3
- Savannah Symphony, 2 of 3
- Savannah Symphony, 3 of 3
- Savannah Tour of Homes and Gardens
- Savannah Tourist Coloring Book
- Savannah's Customs House
- Schools
- Schools-Savannah

Record Series 1121-110, W. W. Law Working Files

- Skidaway Institute of Oceanography
- Theater
- Tourism Brochures (general)
- Tourism Brochures-Georgia
- Tourism Brochures-Savannah
- Tybee Island, Georgia
- United States Departments (general)
- United States Post Office
- United States Post Office- Letter Carriers' Quarto-Century Celebration Banquet Program, 1921
- United States Post Office- Action against W. W. Law, 1961
- USS McFaul Commissioning Day, April 25, 1998
- Willie E. Manor Prison Records, 1992
- Winston-Salem, North Carolina
- YMCA
- Youth

Box WWL 8

CHURCHES/RELIGIOUS MATERIAL

- First African Baptist Church, Savannah, Georgia
- First Bryan Baptist Church, Savannah, Georgia
- *"One Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church?" The African American Struggle for Incorporation in the Episcopal Church* by Eleanor S. Harrison, 1992
- Churches/Religious material (general)

Box WWL 9

PERSONAL, ARTIFACTS

- Buttons (general)
- Buttons Envelope 1-ASALH Bicentennial Siege of Savannah
- Buttons Envelope 2-ASALH Civil Rights Museum
- Buttons Envelope 3-ASALH Reverend Andrew Bryan, A. K. Des Verney
- Buttons Envelope 4-Chatham Area Transit
- Buttons Envelope 5-Civil Rights/NAACP
- Buttons Envelope 6-Institutions and Organizations
- Buttons Envelope 7-Lapel Pins
- Buttons Envelope 8-Political, 1 of 2
- Buttons Envelope 9-Political, 2 of 2
- Buttons Envelope 10-Religion/Churches
- Buttons Envelope 11-Savannah Community Relations and Health
- Buttons Envelope 12-Tourism, Advertisement, and Unknown
- Coins
- Matchbooks
- Stamps

Record Series 1121-110, W. W. Law Working Files

- Stickers

Box WWL 10

PERSONAL, CORRESPONDENCE

- Correspondence (general)

Box WWL 11

PERSONAL, CORRESPONDENCE through FINANCIALS

- Correspondence-Cards
- Correspondence-Commercial
- Desk Diary, W. W. Law-1956
- Envelopes
- Financials [**RESTRICTED PENDING ARCHIVIST'S REVIEW**]

Box WWL 12

PERSONAL, FINANCIALS through PERSONAL RECORDS

- Financials-Taxes [**RESTRICTED PENDING ARCHIVIST'S REVIEW**]
- Geneva Law records
- Names/Addresses/Phone Numbers/Notes/Business Cards
- Pendergraph's Records on Law's Death [**RESTRICTED PENDING ARCHIVIST'S REVIEW**]
- Phonebook, March 1980
- Personal Records (Financials, Correspondence, Medical) [**RESTRICTED PENDING ARCHIVIST'S REVIEW**]

Box WWL 13

STATE OF GEORGIA, 1 of 2

- Departments (general)
- Commission on the Preservation of the State Capitol
- Department of Natural Resources, 1 of 2
- Department of Natural Resources, 2 of 2
- Department of Natural Resources-"A Report on Endangered and Threatened Plant Species which Occur in Georgia," By David R. Ettman, 1976-11-16
- Department of Natural Resources-Georgia Historic Resources Survey-Industrial Garden City
- Department of Natural Resources-Georgia Historic Resources Survey-Other Garden City of Savannah
- Department of Natural Resources-Georgia Historic Resources Survey-Port Wentworth, 1 of 3
- Department of Natural Resources-Georgia Historic Resources Survey-Port Wentworth, 2 of 3
- Department of Natural Resources-Georgia Historic Resources Survey-Port Wentworth, 3 of 3

Record Series 1121-110, W. W. Law Working Files

- Department of Natural Resources-Georgia Historic Resources Survey-Rossignol Hill
- Department of Natural Resources-Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation

Box WWL 14

STATE OF GEORGIA, 2 of 2

- Department of Transportation-Maps
- Georgia Heritage Trust Commission, 1 of 2
- Georgia Heritage Trust Commission, 2 of 2
- Georgia National Register Review Board, 1 of 2
- Georgia National Register Review Board, 2 of 2
- State Park Maps