

**Roanoke Public Libraries
Virginia Room
Willis M. Anderson Collection**

Collection Description:

Repository: Roanoke Public Libraries, Virginia Room

Accession Number: 2009.8.1

Title: Willis M. "Wick" Anderson Collection

Physical Characteristics: One thin, legal-size document storage box; digital files

Donated by: Nan Mahone

Arrangement: Documents are arranged chronologically

Creator: Unknown

Reproduction Restrictions: No known restrictions on publication. Virginia Room copy fees apply.

Processor: Angela Stiefbold, August 2024.

Biographical Note:

Willis M. "Wick" Anderson (1928-2002) was a lawyer and politician. He was first elected to Roanoke City Council in 1958 and was the city's mayor from 1960-62, becoming the youngest mayor in the city's history. He then represented Roanoke in the Virginia legislature from 1964-72, as a member of the Democratic Party. Anderson attended Roanoke College and received a law degree from Washington and Lee University. He served as a First Lieutenant in the US Army JAG Corps in Germany (1952-54) and later was the General Counsel for the Shenandoah Life Insurance Company. Anderson served on the boards of many local organizations, including Virginia Western Community College, Roanoke Symphony Society, Kiwanis Club, Mill Mountain Theatre, Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Greater Roanoke Valley Development Foundation, and Explore Park.

Scope and Content:

The collection consists of four scrapbooks documenting Willis M. "Wick" Anderson's political career from 1958 through 1969. The scrapbooks were comprised primarily of newspaper clippings glued to paper. One scrapbook was traditional in style; the others consisted of pages inserted in plastic page covers and held in three ring binders. All pages were scanned and digital versions created, due to the instability of newsprint. Non-newsprint items were removed from the scrapbooks and placed in folders. These include government publications, photographs, and ephemera.

Container List:

Box 1

Folder 1: 1958-63 Scrapbook Items – Non-newsprint items removed from scrapbook. Photograph of campaign billboard.

Folder 2: 1964-65 Scrapbook Items – Non-newsprint items removed from scrapbook.

- Folder 3: 1966-67 Scrapbook Items – Non-newsprint items removed from scrapbook. Photograph of campaign billboard. Inaugural Ceremonies program for Gov. Mills E. Godwin Jr., Richmond, Jan. 1966. Essay, “The Constitution of Virginia: Then and Now.” *Virginia Town & City*, July 1967 issue, with article on the Metropolitan Areas Study Commission. Photographs of Willis M. Anderson at the 1966 inauguration. Photographs from the 1966 Eagleton Legislative Seminar in Miami, FL. Additional undated photographs of Willis M. Anderson.
- Folder 4: 1967-69 Scrapbook Items – Non-newsprint items removed from scrapbook. “Metropolitan Virginia: A Program for Action,” by the Hahn Commission, Nov. 1967. Photographs of Willis M. Anderson.
- Folder 5: Additional Items – Items donated along with scrapbooks. Copied collages of newspaper headlines. Greeting card from Yugoslavia (1962). Photographs of Willis M. Anderson.

Digital Items

- 1958-63 Willis M. Anderson Scrapbook – This book documents Anderson’s initial campaign for and election to Roanoke City Council in 1958, and his campaign for a Virginia House of Delegates seat in 1963. It also includes articles about Anderson’s selection as the youngest mayor of Roanoke and use of television and radio to communicate with the public. Other topics include discussions about building a new municipal auditorium and coliseum, the establishment of the sister cities program, the opening of Towers Shopping Center, and the extension of a spur of the Blue Ridge Parkway to Mill Mountain. Clippings include photographs of local events, such as the visits of Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson, Mrs. John H. Glenn Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy. Anderson’s 1963 campaign focused on the topics: Highway Safety; Improved Mental Health; Public Education; Highways and Airports; and Strengthening Local Government.
- 1964-65 Willis M. Anderson Scrapbook – This book documents Anderson’s 1964-65 term as a state legislator and his 1965 reelection campaign. Articles cover a wide variety of issues the general assembly faced, including repeal of the poll tax, and information about Young Democratic Club activities and the Mill Mountain Playhouse. Clippings also include photographs of local events, including a visit by President Lyndon B. Johnson.
- 1966-67 Willis M. Anderson Scrapbook – This book documents Anderson’s 1966-67 term as a state legislator and his 1967 reelection campaign. Articles cover a wide variety of issues the general assembly faced, including the community college bill, a sales tax bill, annexation legislation, poll taxes, air and water pollution, modernizing the state constitution, art and culture museums, as well as information on Young Democratic Club activities and Anderson’s service on the Metropolitan Areas Study Commission (the Hahn Commission). Additional items include the program of and additional ephemera related to the Inaugural

Ceremonies at the Virginia Statehouse, Jan. 1966, a typed essay about the state constitution and its potential amendment or revision, the July 1967 issue of *Virginia Town & City*, and photos and ephemera from the Eagleton Legislative Seminar in Miami, August 1966.

1967-69 Willis M. Anderson Scrapbook – This book documents Anderson’s work in the general assembly from 1967-1969. Articles cover a wide variety of issues the general assembly faced, including the Hahn Commission report on metropolitan areas, a liquor bill, the establishment of a medical training facility in Roanoke, constitutional revision, lowering the voting age, as well as information on Young Democratic Club activities. Additional items include: the report of the Hahn Commission, “Metropolitan Virginia: A Program for Action”; information on a committee to study mental health; a program from the People’s Voters League Annual Voter Education Dinner (n.d.); a program from the Roanoke Valley Association for Mental Health Annual Meeting (1968), and a congratulatory letter from Vice President Hubert Humphry.