

∞ The Ward M. Canaday Center ∞
for Special Collections
The University of Toledo

Finding Aid

➤ **Geraldine Macelwane Scrapbooks Collection** ◀

MSS-314

Size: 4 linear ft.

Provenance: Received from Mary Pero and Kathleen Wernert via Tom Pletz

Access: Open

Collection Summary: Includes scrapbooks kept by Judge Geraldine Macelwane containing documents from 1894 to 1974

Subject(s): [Politics and Government](#); [Women](#)

Related Collections: Mary Boyle Burns Papers, MSS-034; Judge William Potter Papers, MSS-013; Linda Furney City Council Files, MSS-150

Processing Note: Collection in generally good condition. One scrapbook (box 4) has come unbound and its pages are extremely fragile. It should be handled with extreme care. A digital copy is available upon request.

Copyright: The literary rights to this collection are assumed to rest with the person(s) responsible for the production of the particular items within the collection, or with their heirs or assigns. Researchers bear full legal responsibility for the acquisition to publish from any part of said collection per *Title 17, United States Code*. The **Ward M. Canaday Center for Special Collections** may reserve the right to intervene as intermediary at its own discretion.

Completed by: Tom Smith, December 2016

**Geraldine Macelwane Scrapbooks
Collection, 1894-1974**

Biographical Sketch

Geraldine Macelwane (1909-1974) was born in Detroit, but moved with her family to Toledo in 1924. After graduating high school, she began working as a railroad clerk, but because of the Great Depression, her job was lost. After that, she took night classes in Law at the University of Toledo, passing the bar exam in 1932, a full six years before receiving her degree. After working as a Lucas County prosecutor for several years, Macelwane was elected to the Toledo Municipal Court in 1952, and in 1956, she was appointed to fill a vacancy in the Lucas County Court of Common Pleas: the first female judge in either body.¹ She is noted for her work in cases of child neglect and in traffic law. She advocated serious changes to the traffic court, since, in her view traffic court is often the first and only encounter most citizens have with the justice system. She suggested reorganizing the court so that a bureau would handle nonmoving violations and a judge could preside over the more serious moving violations. Her judicial skill saw her elected to the Common Pleas Court for four more terms. She died in 1974.

¹ Floyd, Barbara. 2016. *Legendary Locals of Toledo, Ohio*. Charleston, South Carolina: Legendary Locals. p. 90

**Geraldine Macelwane Scrapbooks
Collection, 1894-1974**

Scope and Content Note

This collection covers the life of Geraldine Macelwane in the form of eleven bound scrapbooks made by Macelwane. The scrapbooks contain newspaper and press clippings, including an article on her passing the bar in 1932, materials on her work with the Women's Traffic Council, advertisements and campaign materials for her election bid to the Court of Common Pleas in 1954 and material on her personal life and interests up to her death in 1974. Also included are miscellaneous materials.

Of particular interest are a verdict slip of the Lucas County Court of Common Pleas from 1894 and a program from the 1965 commencement exercises of St. Francis de Sales High School.

Researchers interested in the legal history of Toledo, women in the legal profession, or the general social history of twentieth century America will find this collection extremely helpful.

Scrapbooks are listed chronologically by date of earliest material. Original scrapbook titles, where available, are included. Miscellaneous material not included in a scrapbook is listed alphabetically by type.

Folder List

Box	Folder	Item
1	-	Scrapbook, 1925-1946
3	-	Scrapbook, 1926-1961
2	-	Scrapbook, 1947-1964
3	-	Scrapbook, 1950-1974, Newspaper Clipping Photocopies
2	-	Scrapbook, 1952-1956
4	-	Scrapbook, 1953-1954, Women's Traffic Safety Campaign*
2	-	Scrapbook, 1954, Common Pleas Appointment and Election Campaign
3	-	Scrapbook, 1954-1955, Women's Traffic Council
1	-	Scrapbook, 1956-1974
1	-	Scrapbook, 1960-1963, JFK Assassination
2	-	Scrapbook, 1965-1966
1	-	Program, 1965, Eighth Annual Commencement Exercises, St. Francis de Sales High School.
1	-	Verdict Slip, 1894, Lucas County Court of Common Pleas

* Scrapbook is extremely fragile. A digital copy is available upon request.