

Finding Aid to Ruth Mahaney Papers

(2002-35)

Repository: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society

Collection Title: Ruth Mahaney Papers

Collection Number: 2002-35

Physical Description: 1 ½ linear feet (2 document boxes, and 1 half-size document box)

Creator: Ruth Mahaney

Date (inclusive): circa 1970 - 2019

Language of Material: English

Abstract:

Ruth Mahaney is a radical, lesbian leftist heavily involved in the movement for gay rights as well as antiwar and various other leftist causes. This collection primarily consists of various pamphlets, photographs, performance fliers, newspapers, letters, and material about popular leftist figures, informal queer community events, left-leaning politicians, and organizations Mahaney was involved in.

Preferred Citation:

[Identification of item], Ruth Mahaney Papers (2002-35), The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

Conditions Governing Access:

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights:

Copyright to material has been transferred to the GLBT Historical Society. All requests for reproductions and/or permission to publish or quote from material must be submitted in writing to the GLBT Historical Society Archivist.

Acquisition Information:

The collection was donated to the GLBT Historical Society by Ruth Mahaney in 2002. Accretions were added in 2019 and 2020.

Processing Information:

Finding Aid created by Sophia Faaland in 2022.

This finding aid uses terminology for LGBTQ people that was in current use at the time of its creation. Descriptive language for queer identities evolves quickly and some of these terms may now be dated or even offensive. Finding aids are themselves historical documents; they reflect the moment in which they were written and often reflect the terms that subjects used for themselves. Please contact the GLBT Historical Society Archivist with questions or comments.

Biographical/Organizational History Note:

Ruth Mahaney is a radical, lesbian leftist heavily involved in the movement for gay rights as well as antiwar and various other leftist causes. Born in Indiana in 1944, Mahaney grew up in a conservative family and area; the neighborhood in which she was raised was heavily segregated and somewhat guarded. After completing her undergraduate degree and moving on to graduate school, Mahaney became a politically active member of the anti-war movement in light of the Vietnam War, and transformed her political identity to that of a leftist as she questioned her conservative roots. She moved to San Francisco in 1971, involved herself in the leftist community, and began to explore her identity as a lesbian. She was a founding member of the GLHS Society in San Francisco (which later became the GLBT Historical Society), and frequently visited a lesbian and leftist inclusive bookstore named Modern Times Bookstore.

Scope and Content:

This collection primarily consists of various pamphlets, photographs, performance fliers, newspapers, letters, and material about popular leftist figures, informal queer community events, left-leaning politicians, and organizations Mahaney was involved in. Extensive meeting strategy, and debrief notes for the Lesbian Committee of the GLHS Society are featured in the collection. Although there are personal letters included, they do not reveal much of Mahaney's personal life - primarily they reveal her devotion to activism. The collection reflects Mahaney's involvement in the leftist circle of the GLBT community throughout the 80s and 2000s; in particular, the range of her involvement in grassroots, as well as large-scale political organizations. Her personal life outside of these organizations is not highlighted in this collection.

Indexing Terms:

Lesbians
Activism
Feminism
Education

Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1

No on 64, circa 1986

Box 1, Folder 2	No on Prop 64, circa 1986
Box 1, Folder 3	Ruth Mahaney - ephemera, circa 1996
Box 1, Folder 4	Misc. Ephemera, circa 1970
Box 2, Folder 1	Grassroots Fundraising Journal, 2000
Box 2, Folder 2	GLHS Awards, 2001
Box 2, Folder 3	GLHS Awards, 2001
Box 2, Folder 4	GLHS Butterflies and Orange Exhibits, 2002
Box 2, Folder 5	Modern Times Bookstore Pamphlets, 2007
Box 2, Folder 6	GLHS Women's Committee Meeting Notes, 2009
Box 2, Folder 7	Obituary Pamphlets and GLBTHS Panel Spotlight, 2009-2020
Box 3, Folder 1	GLBT Events, 1986-2019
Box 3, Folder 2	March for Washington DC, circa 1987
Box 3, Folder 3	Gay Freedom Day, 1988
Box 3, Folder 4	Gay Freedom Day, 1988
Box 3, Folder 5	GLHS Trolley Pride, 1988
Box 3, Folder 6	John Dececo 70th Birthday, circa 1990
Box 3, Folder 7	GLHS Awards, 1994
Box 3, Folder 8	GLHS Awards, 1994
Box 3, Folder 9	GLHS Awards, 1994
Box 3, Folder 10	GLHS Awards, 1994
Box 3, Folder 11	GLHS Awards, 1994
Box 3, Folder 12	GLHS General Board Meeting, 1994
Box 3, Folder 13	GLHS Awards, 1996
Box 3, Folder 14	GLHS Pride, 1996
Box 3, Folder 15	GLHS Awards Dinner, 1997
Box 3, Folder 16	Willie Walker and Misc. GLHS, circa 1999
Box 3, Folder 17	GLHS Freedom Parade, 1981
Box 3, Folder 18	Gay Pride Parade, circa 1980
Box 3, Folder 19	Gay Pride Parade, circa 1980
Box 3, Folder 20	Archival Storage Tips, circa 1999
Box 3, Folder 21	Historical Society Gala, circa 2000
Box 3, Folder 22	Historical Society Gala, circa 2000
Box 3, Folder 23	Historical Society Gala, circa 2000