

A Guide to the Oral History Interview of Ruby Walden, community and civil rights activist, October 1, 2018

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Author: Ashley Vavra

Contact information:

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Descriptive Summary

Accession Numbers

00044867

Language

English

Creator

Supreme Court of Virginia Archives

Extent

1 digital video recording (2 hours, 5 minutes, 42 seconds); 1 transcript (39 pages)

Repository

Supreme Court of Virginia Archives, Virginia State Law Library

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection is open to research.

Use Restrictions

Because the library is not open to the general public, researchers should contact the library to arrange access to the collection.

Acquisition Information

The interview was recorded for the Supreme Court of Virginia Archives in October 2018 and accessioned in 2019.

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Biographical/Historical Information

The Supreme Court of Virginia Historical Commission was established in 2006 to preserve and promote the history of the court. Oral history interviews of retired Supreme Court of Virginia justices, Court of Appeals of Virginia judges, other individuals associated with the Virginia courts, and civil rights attorneys were begun in 2007. The project is ongoing.

Ruby H. Walden, formerly Ruby Lucille Holland, was born and raised in Nansemond County, now Suffolk, Virginia. She was a homemaker and mother of four, the secretary and bookkeeper for her husband's brick masonry business, and an active community and civil rights advocate. At the time of this interview, Mrs. Walden lived in Suffolk, Virginia.

Scope and Content

In this interview, Mrs. Walden discusses her family and her childhood in rural Nansemond County, with a particular focus on her education in a two-room primary school and the Nansemond County Training School, where she graduated in 1938. She also describes the education of her children, who faced educational experiences similar to her own. Mrs. Walden was part of the Parent-Teacher Association, who, with the support of the NAACP, filed a lawsuit for the equalization of schools.

Mrs. Walden was active in various committees. She worked with the Suffolk-Nansemond branch of the NAACP and helped create a community center and ballpark (Nansemond Community Ballpark). She helped organize the Holland-Holy-Neck Civic League, which worked to increase voter participation, helped to establish a Legal Aid Society in Suffolk, and worked with a Literacy Council. She tells about an opportunity she had to speak personally with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Suffolk, as well as her experience as a delegate at the Democratic Convention in 1984.

Index Terms

Walden, Ruby, 1921-2020.

Newby-Alexander, Cassandra.

Oral histories (document genres) -- Virginia.

Location of Originals

The Ruby Walden oral history video and transcript may be found at <https://scvahistory.org/oral-histories-judges-and-court-staff/oral-histories-civil-rights-attorneys/>.