

Erica Ball Personal Papers
1950-2013
(2016:1:1)

A Finding Aid for the Erica Ball papers
at the Natick Historical Society



THE NATICK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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NATICK, MA 01760
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Erica Ball materials, 1950-2013

2016:1:1

Collection Overview

Extent: 10 Archival Boxes, 1 Oversize Box (OVS), 1 Textile Box (TX)

Creator: Ball, Erica E. 1937-

Language: English

Conditions for Access and Use: This collection is open for research use

Copyright Notice: Copyright restrictions may apply

Preferred Citation: Erica Ball Personal Papers, Natick Historical Society, Natick, MA

Acquisition Information: Gift of Erica Ball, 2016 (Acc. # 2016:1:1)

Processed by: Caleigh Ross, September 2016

Biographical Note

Erica Esther Weisz (Ricky) was born in Vienna in 1937. She and her parents emigrated to Trinidad in 1938, where she lived until she was ten years old. Erica and her parents then moved to Passaic New Jersey, where she attended high school before attending Brandeis University, graduating in 1958 with a degree in Anthropology and Sociology. She also married her husband, Jay Ball, in 1958, and had three sons: David, Alan and Jonathan. David became a nurse and a Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Air Force, and Alan is a professional actor in Chicago. Their son Jonathan was killed in a school bus accident in 1967, and the tragedy galvanized their efforts to ensure greater school bus safety measures. Their 'no standees' initiative is now state law, and many communities employ the school bus monitor concept they promoted.

Ball entered politics by way of the League of Women Voters (LWV), which she joined in 1967 and in which she was a driving force for 21 years. She served as President of the Natick LWV for two terms, from 1967 to 1970, playing a major role in the formation of the Lake Cochituate Watershed Association, and serving on the League's State Legislative Committee from 1972 to 1974. From 1968 to 1980 she represented the League on the South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC), an agency which she later served as President (1974-1975) and Vice President (1976-1977), and whose annual scope of operations grew, under her leadership, from \$250K to \$3.5M.

In 1975 she campaigned for a seat on the Natick Board of Selectmen, and became the first woman in the town's 350-year history to serve in that capacity. Chairing the Board in 1978-1979 and 1983-1984, she led in the implementation of the Town Charter, as well as the hiring of the first Town Administrator. She led the campaign to create the Natick Neighborhood Bus and promoted the incorporation of computers into town financial operations, creating and serving on what is now the Information Systems Advisory Board.

In her spare time Ball co-founded and served as Vice-Chair (1976-1978) of Women Elected Municipal Officials, an organization that supports female Selectmen, aldermen, and city councillors. From 1977 to 1980, she was the Governor's apprentice to the State Housing Appeals Board, and she has been a Natick Town Meeting Member since 1973. From 1983-1984 Ball served on the Natick Ad-Hoc Day Care Committee, initiating and coordinating efforts to utilize existing town staff and facilities to offer extended day child care in Natick. She went on to co-found and serve as Director (1984-1989) of Natick Extended Day, Inc., Natick's first public/private partnership in after-school childcare. From 1985-1986 she also served as the Coordinator for the Massachusetts Coalition for Pregnant and Parenting Teens.

An inveterate political campaigner, Ball has actively participated in and volunteered for countless campaigns, including her husband Jay's campaign for Natick's Board of Selectmen in 1997. Ball was a founder of The Center of the Arts, a growing and vibrant venue for the performing and visual arts, located in downtown Natick, and continues to remain actively involved as a member of the Board of Directors, focusing on Development.

In 2010 Ball ran for a position on the Board of Commissioners for the Natick Housing Authority, and continues to serve on the board.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains documents, correspondence, photographs, news clippings, notes, and ephemera related to Erica Ball's extensive work in local government and service organizations, including the town of Natick's Board of Selectmen, League of Women Voters, and Housing Authority, among others. This collection also contains letters, memos, and reports created during her 1982 campaign for Massachusetts State Representative. Series within this collection are arranged alphabetically by Series Title.

Arrangement

Arranged in 11 series:

Series 1: Awards

Series 2: Board of Selectmen

Series 3: Campaigns

Series 4: Correspondence

Series 5: Events and Celebrations

Series 6: Memoir

Series 7: News Clippings

Series 8: Notes and Ephemera

Series 9: Organizations

Series 10: Photographs

Series 11: Town Administrator Screening Committee

Series 1: Awards

Date Range: 1977-2009

Extent: 3 folders

Arrangement: Chronological

Series Description: This series contains various awards and certificates presented to Ball, most notably the 2000 Good Scout of Natick Award. Ball was also actively involved with the planning and presentation of the 1999 Good Scout Award.

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title
1	1	1977-2009
1	2	Good Scout of Natick Award Dinner, 1999
1	3	Good Scout of Natick Award Dinner, 2000
OVS	1	Award Certificates

Series 2: Board of Selectmen

Date Range: 1975-1984

Extent: 27 folders (2 archival boxes)

Arrangement: Chronological, then Alphabetical by Folder Title.

Series Description: This series contains documents, memos, meeting minutes, and correspondence related to Ball's service on the Natick Board of Selectmen from 1975 to 1984.

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title
1	4	1975
1	5	1976
1	6	1977
1	7	1978
1	8	1979 (1 of 2)
1	9	1979 (2 of 2)
1	10	1980
2	1	1981
2	2	1982 (1 of 2)
2	3	1982 (2 of 2)
2	4	1983 (1 of 3)
2	5	1983 (2 of 3)
2	6	1983 (3 of 3)
2	7	1984
2	8	Undated
2	9	Civil Service Appointments, 1975-1976 (1 of 2)
2	10	Civil Service Appointments, 1975-1976 (2 of 2)
3	1	Insurance, 1979-1981

3	2	Lois Talis vs. Zoning Board of Appeals, 1977-1978 (1 of 2)
3	3	Lois Talis vs. Zoning Board of Appeals, 1977-1978 (2 of 2)
3	4	Municipal Directory, 1978-1979
3	5	Natick Charter Commission, 1980
3	6	Town Employees, 1978-1981
3	7	Zoning Board of Appeals, 1974-1976
3	8	Zoning Board of Appeals, 1977
3	9	Zoning Board of Appeals, 1978-1979
3	10	Zoning Bylaws, 1979

Series 3: Campaigns

Date Range: 1975-2010

Extent: 22 folders (2 archival boxes)

Arrangement: Alphabetical by Campaign Position

Series Description: This series contains notes, memos, correspondence, reports, and promotional materials relating to Ball's various campaigns for elected positions within local and state government. The bulk of this series contains materials related to Ball's 1982 campaign for Massachusetts State Representative.

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title
4	1	Board of Selectmen, 1975
4	2	Board of Selectmen, 1977
4	3	Board of Selectmen, 1978
4	4	Board of Selectmen, 1984 (1 of 2)
4	5	Board of Selectmen, 1984 (2 of 2)
4	6	Housing Authority, 2010 (1 of 4)
4	7	Housing Authority, 2010 (2 of 4)
4	8	Housing Authority, 2010 (3 of 4)
4	9	Housing Authority, 2010 (4 of 4)
5	1	Sign Locations, 1975-1982
5	2	State Representative, 1982: Campaign Contributions
5	3	State Representative, 1982: Campaign Finance, 1981
5	4	State Representative, 1982: Campaign Finance Reports, September 1982
5	5	State Representative, 1982: Campaign Finance Reports, October 1982
5	6	State Representative, 1982: Flyers, letters, volunteer information (1 of 3)
5	7	State Representative, 1982: Flyers, letters, volunteer information (2 of 3)
5	8	State Representative, 1982: Flyers, letters, volunteer information (3 of 3)
5	9	State Representative, 1982: Legal information
5	10	State Representative, 1982: Notes and correspondence (1 of 2)
5	11	State Representative, 1982: Notes and correspondence (2 of 2)

5	12	State Representative, 1982: Press releases
5	13	State Representative, 1982: Questionnaires and responses
OVS1	2	Proofs
TX	1	Campaign T-Shirts

Series 4: Correspondence

Date Range: 1965-2010

Extent: 5 folders

Arrangement: Chronological

Series Description: This series contains letters, notes, and greeting cards sent to Ball from friends, relatives, and colleagues.

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title
6	1	1965-1979
6	2	1980-1989
6	3	1990-1999
6	4	2000-2010
6	5	Undated

Series 5: Events and Celebrations

Date Range: 1950-2007

Extent: 1 folder

Arrangement: Chronological

Series Description: This series contains invitations and pamphlets from a few celebratory events related to Ball, as well as Ball's junior and senior high school diplomas.

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title
6	6	1951-2007

Series 6: Memoir

Date Range: 1998

Extent: 1 folder

Arrangement: 1 item.

Series Description: This series contains a bound volume of several essays outlining the experience of the Jewish Diaspora in Trinidad in the early 1940s. Among the essays is a contribution by Ball, outlining her experiences in Trinidad.

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title
6	7	"Our Calypso Shtetl," 1998

Series 7: News Clippings

Date Range: 1970-2013

Extent: 12 folders

Arrangement: Chronological

Series Description: This series contains news clippings, the majority of which mention Ball by name, in the course of her activism. Articles that do not mention Ball by name were likely related to a topic that concerned Ball's activities and interests.

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title
6	8	1970-1973
6	9	1974
6	10	1975
7	1	1976
7	2	1977
7	3	1978
7	4	1981
7	5	1982
7	6	1983-1986
7	7	1990-1999
7	8	200-2013
7	9	Undated

Series 8: Notes and Ephemera

Date Range: 1958-2007

Extent: 5 folders

Arrangement: Alphabetical by Folder Title

Series Description: This series contains ephemeral materials ranging from loose notes and notebooks, tickets and pamphlets, to articles saved by Ball and a folder of academic course materials.

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title
7	10	Articles, 1979-2007
7	11	Bound notebooks, 1958-1985
7	12	Loose notes, undated
7	13	Nameplate
7	13	Tickets, Pamphlets, and flyers, 1991-2003
7	14	Western New England College Public Law Course, undated

Series 9: Organizations

Date Range: 1971-2013

Extent: 28 folders (2 archival boxes)

Arrangement: Alphabetical by Organization name.

Series Description: This series contains documents, correspondence, memos, and promotional materials related to the many organizations with whom Ball was actively involved. Notable among these organizations is the League of Women Voters, for whom Ball served as President from 1967-1970.

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title
8	1	Miscellaneous Memberships, 1974-2005
8	2	Adult Day Center, 1984
8	3	Democratic Party: Candidates, 1982-2001
8	4	Department of Social Services Area Board Selection Committee, 1979-1980
8	5	Housing Appeals Committee, 1974
8	6	League of Women Voters (1 of 3)
8	7	League of Women Voters (2 of 3)
8	8	League of Women Voters (3 of 3)
8	9	League of Women Voters: Housing Action Committee
8	10	Massachusetts Women's Political Caucus, 1982-1985
8	11	Middlesex County Advisory Board, 1978-1980
8	12	Natick Community Organic Farm, 1985-1997
8	13	Natick Data Processing Committee, 1975-1977 (1 of 2)
8	14	Natick Data Processing Committee, 1975-1977 (2 of 2)
9	1	Natick Democratic Town Committee, 1983-2008
9	2	Natick Extended Day, 1984-2009
9	3	Serenity House, 1973-1978 (1 of 2)
9	4	Serenity House, 1973-1978 (2 of 2)
9	5	South Middlesex Opportunity Council, 1971-1980
9	6	Temple Israel, 1978-1999
9	7	The Center for the Arts, Natick (TCAN), 1999-2005
9	8	The Compassionate Friends, 2013
9	9	Town Meeting, 1980-1997
9	10	Women Elected Municipal Officials (WEMO), 1975-1976
9	11	Women Elected Municipal Officials (WEMO), 1977
9	12	Women Elected Municipal Officials (WEMO), 1978-1980
9	13	Women's League for Conservative Judaism, 1979
9	14	Women in Municipal Government (WIMG), 1978-1979
OVS	3	Posters

Series 10: Photographs

Date Range: [1975]-2004

Extent: 1 folder

Arrangement: Chronological, though the majority of photographs are undated.

Series Description: This series contains photographs of Ball, as well as relatives, friends, and colleagues. Notable within this series is a calendar containing images of Ball and several family members.

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title
10	1	[1975]-2004

Series 11: Town Administrator Screening Committee

Date Range: 1980

Extent: 8 folders

Arrangement:

Series Description: This series contains memos, reports, correspondence, questionnaires, and applications relating to the town of Natick's search for a Town Administrator following the ratification of the Natick Town Charter in 1980. Ball served on the screening committee for applicants for the Town Administrator position.

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title
10	2	Applications (1 of 5)
10	3	Applications (2 of 5)
10	4	Applications (3 of 5)
10	5	Applications (4 of 5)
10	6	Applications (5 of 5)
10	7	Correspondence, data sheets, and reports (1 of 3)
10	8	Correspondence, data sheets, and reports (2 of 3)
10	9	Correspondence, data sheets, and reports (3 of 3)