

Guide to the Alfred E. Smith Memorial Dinner Collection
Collection Number 025.001



**Guide to the Alfred E. Smith Memorial Dinner Collection
Archives of the Archdiocese of New York
Collection 025.001**

Finding Aid Prepared by Kate Feighery

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Summary Information

Creator: Archives of the Archdiocese of New York

Title: Alfred E. Smith Memorial Dinner Collection

Date: 1942-2005

Extent: 4.46 linear feet

Language: English

Access Restrictions: Collection is open to researchers at the Archives of the Archdiocese of New York. Advance appointments are required for the use of archival materials.

Preferred Citation: Published citations should take the following form: Identification of item, date (if known); Alfred E. Smith Memorial Dinner Collection, Collection Number 025.001; box number, folder number. Archives of the Archdiocese of New York, St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie.

Location of Related Materials: Photos of various Al Smith Dinners can be found in Collection 016: Prints & Photographs.

Biographical/Historical Note

The Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation was established in 1946 by then-Archbishop Spellman to honor the memory of former Governor Al Smith, the first Roman Catholic presidential candidate. The foundation is primarily a fundraising organization, and the money raised goes to support various Catholic Charities projects and organizations, mostly in the field of healthcare. While the Foundation is associated with the Archdiocese of New York, it is an independent organization. The main event of the Foundation is the annual Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner, a white-tie dinner series. The first dinner was held in 1945, the year after Smith's death, and pre-dates the formation of the Smith Memorial Foundation. The dinners are traditionally held on the third Thursday of October at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, and the majority of the annual speakers are prominent politicians and political leaders. Originally the impetus behind this focus was to maintain the memory of Smith's extraordinary political career, and has since developed into annual tradition. It is traditionally a stop on the presidential campaign trail, with the exceptions of 1996 and 2004. Since 1945, only two presidents have not spoken at the dinner: Harry Truman and Bill Clinton.

Scope & Content Note

This collection contains materials directly related to the planning, implementation, and aftermath of the Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinners, from the inaugural dinner in 1945 to the present day. While the collection does contain material from the Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation, it all relates in some way to the dinner event. Series I: Invitations, Lists, and Programs consists of the printed material produced for the various dinners, from invitations to tickets to programs, menus, and other lists. Series II: Correspondence, Minutes, and Statements is mostly made up of material created by or for the Alfred E. Smith Foundation in relation to the planning and execution or summation of the annual dinner. Series III: Speeches contains the text of various speakers at the Memorial Dinner throughout its history. Series IV: Press contains both press releases put out by the Foundation and the Archdiocese of New York relating to the dinner as well as newspaper clippings of coverage of the annual dinners in the press. Series V: Recordings is a collection of recordings of the annual event, dating back to 1957. The recordings are in a variety of formats, from records to VHS tapes.

Arrangement

The Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner Collection is arranged in five series: I: Invitations, Programs, and Lists; II: Correspondence, Minutes, and Statements; III: Speeches; IV: Press; V: Recordings.

Administrative Information

Access and Use: Collection is open to researchers at the Archives of the Archdiocese of New York. Advance appointments are required for the use of archival materials.

Reproduction and Use: Permission to reproduce any material in this collection not in the public domain must be obtained from the Archives and the copyright holder.

Language: English

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Processing Note: Series I of this collection had no discernible order before processing. There were multiple duplicates of much of the event's printed materials. The Series was sorted chronologically, and many of the duplicates were discarded. Series II, III, and IV were sorted based on type of material. Chronological order was imposed on these series. Folder titles for the collection were assigned, as there were no pre-existing folder titles. All materials in the collection were placed in acid-free folders and boxes.

Related Materials: Photos of various Al Smith Dinners can be found in Collection 016: Prints & Photographs.

Collection

Box Number	Folder Number	Description	Date Range
Series I: Invitations, Programs, and Lists			
1	1	Invitations	1945-1955
1	2	Invitations	1956-1969
1	3	Invitations	1970-1983
1	4	Invitations	1984-1996
1	5	Invitations	1997-2005
1	6	Tickets	1999-2005
1	7	Programs	1960-1972
1	8	Programs	1973-1977
1	9	Programs	1978-1984
1	10	Programs	1985-1991
1	11	Programs	1992-1998
1	12	Alphabetical List and Table Arrangement	1945-1952
1	13	Alphabetical List and Table Arrangement	1953-1959
1	14	Alphabetical List and Table Arrangement	1960-1967
1	15	Alphabetical List and Table Arrangement	1968-1975
1	16	Alphabetical List and Table Arrangement	1976-1984
1	17	Alphabetical List and Table Arrangement	1985-1989
1	18	Alphabetical List and Table Arrangement	1990-1995
1	19	Alphabetical List and Table Arrangement	1996-2000
1	20	Alphabetical List and Table Arrangement	2001-2005
1	21	Event Timetables and Schedules	1958-1976
1	22	Menus	1964-1976
Series II: Correspondence, Minutes, and Statements			
2	1	Memorial Foundation Meeting Minutes	1946-1950
2	2	Memorial Foundation Meeting Minutes	1950-1957
2	3	Memorial Foundation Meeting Minutes	1958-1967
2	4	Correspondence	1960-1969
2	5	Memorial Foundation Meeting Minutes	1968-1977
2	6	Correspondence	1970-2000
2	7	Memorial Foundation Financial Statements	1974-2004
2	8	Memorial Foundation Meeting Minutes	1978-1987
2	9	Memorial Foundation Meeting Minutes	1987-1994
2	10	Memorial Foundation Meeting Minutes	1995-1998

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Series III: Speeches			
2	11	Addresses about Al Smith to the Cardinal's Committee of the Laity for Catholic Charities	1942-1959
2	12	Speeches & Remarks	1968-1972
2	13	Speeches & Remarks	1973-1976
Series IV: Press			
2	14	Press Releases	1958-1966
2	15	Press Releases	1967-1976
2	16	Newspaper Clippings	1958-1983
2	binder	Press Clippings	1968-1984
2	binder	Press Clippings	1981-1993
2	binder	Press Clippings	1994-2004
Series V: Recordings			
3		Al Smith Dinner Recordings, Audiotapes	1957-1979
3		Al Smith Dinner Recordings, Records	1965, 1972
4		Al Smith Dinner Recordings, Cassette Tapes	1960-1995
3		Al Smith Dinner Recordings, VHS Tapes	1990-1998
5		Al Smith Dinner Recordings, Video Tapes	1989-1990
6		Al Smith Dinner Recordings, Video Tapes	1991-1993
7		Al Smith Dinner Recordings, Video Tapes	1994