

EUGENE McDOWELL COLLECTION

A Guide to the Collection in Garrett Park Town Archives

Prepared 05/15/2020

GARRETT PARK TOWN ARCHIVES
4600 Waverly Avenue
Garrett Park, MD 20896
(301) 942-3035
Archives@GarrettParkMD.gov

TITLE OF COLLECTION

Eugene McDowell Collection

REFERENCE NUMBER(S)

2020.0005

DATES OF CREATION

1946–2009 (non-inclusive)

HISTORICAL/ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

In the early 1980s, the Cold War between the U.S. and Soviet Union was ongoing. In January 1981, Ronald Reagan was sworn in as the 40th U.S. President, and later that year talks began with the Soviet Union over nuclear arms reductions.¹ In March 1982, the officers of the Garrett Park Citizens Association wrote a letter to the Town Council and Mayor requesting that they place on the May 1982 town ballot the following referendum:

“The people of this town hereby declare the town of Garrett Park to be a Nuclear-Free Zone. No nuclear weapon shall be produced, transported, stored, processed, disposed of, nor used within Garrett Park. No facility, equipment, supply or substance for the production, transportation, storage, processing, disposal or use of nuclear weapons shall be allowed in Garrett Park.”

Eugene McDowell, who served as Vice President, and later President, of the Citizens Association presented the letter at a Town Council meeting and explained that the purpose of the ordinance “is to publicize the concept of a nuclear-free zone, to send a message to the national leadership that the Town favors actions to reduce the threat of nuclear warfare, and to show other local jurisdictions that they can make similar gestures.”² A motion was passed, and the referendum was added to the May ballot. It passed overwhelmingly on May 3, 1982, making Garrett Park the first town in the U.S. to declare itself a Nuclear Free Zone.

EXTENT

0.5 cubic feet: 1 legal size box, oversized materials

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection contains the personal papers, photographs, and memorabilia of Garrett Park resident, Eugene McDowell. The bulk of the collection relates to McDowell’s (and others, including Ray Pinkson’s) efforts to have the town designated as a Nuclear Free Zone in the

¹ Oberdorfer, Don. (1981). “U.S.-Soviet Nuclear Talks To Begin Nov. 30 in Geneva.” *The Washington Post*, September 25, 1981. Accessed at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1981/09/25/us-soviet-nuclear-talks-to-begin-nov-30-in-geneva/dbdd2123-e1c6-4c35-92f5-61a1e6581a51/>.

² Minutes of Town Council Meeting, March 8, 1982.

early 1980s. It also includes McDowell's papers from his other work and contributions to the Town of Garrett Park. The collection is arranged in three series: (I) Nuclear Free Zone, (II) Citizens Association, and (III) Elderhaus Committee.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series I. Nuclear Free Zone (0.2 cubic feet)

This series includes materials related to McDowell's efforts to have the town designated as a Nuclear Free Zone and the subsequent reaction to the designation. The series includes eight sub-series:

1. Task Force
2. Correspondence
3. News Coverage
4. Sisters Cities
5. Nuclear Free Zone Sign
6. Oral Histories
7. Pinkson Materials
8. Miscellaneous

Series II. Citizens Association (0.2 cubic feet)

This series includes documents, correspondence, and notes from McDowell's work on the town's Citizen Association.

Series III. Elderhaus Committee (2.0 cubic feet)

This series includes meeting minutes, plans, and notes from McDowell's work on a citizen's committee to explore the possibility of developing a senior living community in Garrett Park, which would allow residents to age in place.

LANGUAGE

English

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS

This collection is open for research.

USING THIS COLLECTION

Records in this collection are available primarily in hardcopy form only. With the exception of some photographs, the materials have not been digitized. To request use of this collection, please contact the Town Archivist to arrange a visit.

The preferred citation for materials from this collection is:

Garrett Park Town Archives, Garrett Park, MD. "Eugene McDowell Collection." Box number. Folder title.

The right of access to material does not imply the right of publication. Permission for reprinting, reproduction, or extensive quotation from this collection must be obtained through written application, stating the use to be made of the material. The reader bears the responsibility for any possible infringement of copyright laws in the publication of such material.

PROVENANCE

The bulk of this collection was donated by the McDowell family following McDowell's death in February 2020.

PROCESSING PROCEDURES

General processing procedures included arranging and organizing documents in folders, as well as disposing of duplicate materials and discarding non-archival binders, metal clips, rubber bands, and other supplies. We placed oversized documents and memorabilia in separate storage containers. Separation sheets were inserted in the original location within the folder to indicate the new locations for these items. We made preservation copies of newspaper clippings when feasible. Unless otherwise indicated, we arranged records in folders in forward chronological order.

RELATED COLLECTIONS

- Town Record Collection: Nuclear Free Zone
- Oral History Collection

ARCHIVES STAFF & FINDING AID AUTHOR

Town Archivist Claire McDonald, MLIS, processed this collection and prepared the finding aid.

BOX INVENTORY

Box 1

Series I: Nuclear Free Zone

Sub-Series 1: Task Force

Agenda, Minutes, and Notes, 1982

Sub-Series 2: Correspondence

Original and Draft Letters, 1982–1985

Sub-Series 3: News Coverage

Articles and Clippings, 1982–1986

Press Releases and Media Contacts, n.d.

Sub-Series 4: Sister Cities

Correspondence, 1982–1986

Sub-Series 5: Nuclear Free Zone Sign

Background and Correspondence, 1982–1983

Photographs, 1983

Sub-Series 6: Oral Histories

Kenneth Ingham, 1997–1998

Eugene McDowell, 1997–1998

Yasu Nakada, 1997–1998

Ruth and Ray Pinkson, 1993; 1997

Sub-Series 7: Pinkson Materials

Newsclippings, Correspondence, and Background, 1970; 1982–1986

Sub-Series 8: Miscellaneous

Film List, 1980

Series II: Citizens Association

Notes and Materials from Town Meetings, 1982–1986

New Constitution and By-Laws, 1984

ASHA Land Development, 1984–1985

Series III: Elderhaus Committee

Minutes and Plans, 1983–1984