



MS031

Bill and Cordelia Onweiler Photograph and Audio-Visual Collection

Donors: Cordelia “Corki” Onweiler

Dates: 1898-1970s

Extent: .416 LF (1 Manuscript Box) and 26 digital objects

Biographical History:

Bill Onweiler was born in Boise, Idaho, in 1923, and grew up in the small village of Ustick, Idaho. From 1940-1945 Bill served in the United States National Guard. In 1952 Bill married Cordelia “Corki” Shellworth and eventually became a devoted father to six children and three foster children. Bill supported his family as a real estate appraiser and insurance agent but was equally active in serving his community. In the late 1960s, Bill served four years on Boise City Council where he championed preserving open space within city limits. Bill played an instrumental role in the establishment of the Boise Greenbelt in the 1960s, earning him the nickname “Greenbelt Billy.” Bill worked tirelessly on the Greenbelt project, going so far as to produce a promotional film titled “Boise River Today” in the autumn of 1970 that showed aerial footage of the Boise River. Bill also served in the Idaho House of Representatives where he advocated for land-use measures and taxing legislation for municipalities. Onweiler retired in 1999 and eventually moved with his wife to Rancho Mirage, California. He died in 2010.

Cordelia “Corki” Shellworth was born in 1931 and grew up in Boise. She attended St. Teresa’s Academy and worked at C.C. Anderson’s Department store located in downtown Boise. In 1952 Corki married Bill Onweiler and supported him throughout the 1960s in his political endeavors. Committed to literacy, historic preservation, and the Boise Greenbelt, Corki served on various administrative boards in Boise and was elected to Boise City Council in 1976. However, she did not serve her entire term, as she and her husband relocated to McCall, Idaho in 1978. Corki later moved to Rancho Mirage, California with her husband. She currently resides in Orange, California.

Scope/Content Description: This collection contains photographs and audiovisual materials from Bill and Cordelia Onweiler’s political and public service in Boise, Idaho during the 1950s-1970s. Special emphasis is placed on the development of Boise’s Greenbelt. The collection also includes a printed manuscript titled “Billy Goes to War” that Bill Onweiler wrote about his service in the United States National Guard during World War II. The collection contains digital reproductions of images and newspaper clippings.

Arrangement: The collection is arranged into two series:

- Series I: Bill Onweiler, 1950s-1970s
- Series II: Cordelia Onweiler, 1970s

Materials are arranged chronologically within each series.

Conditions Governing Access: Collection is open for research.

Languages: Materials are in English.

Box List/Inventory:

Box 1

Series I

Folder 1: Bill Onweiler Digital Images, circa 1950-1960

Folder 2: Bumper stickers, circa 1960s

Folder 3: Photographs of Greenbelt Meeting, circa 1960s

Folder 4: Boise River Today video, Fall 1970

Folder 5: Billy Goes to War, undated

Series II

Folder 6: Cordelia Onweiler Digital Images, circa 1970s

Source of Acquisition: Received from Cordelia “Corki” Onweiler, Orange, CA, in one installment.

Preferred Citation: [item description], Bill and Cordelia Onweiler Photograph and Audio-Visual Collection, MS031, Boise City Archives.

Processing Information: Stephanie Milne-Lane processed this collection in spring 2019.

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