

South Carolina Political Collections
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Mary T. Kelly
(b. 1923)
Papers, 1970-2008

Volume: 18 linear feet

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Provenance: Donated by Mary T. Kelly

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Biographical Note:

Mary T. Kelly, a leader in the League of Women Voters and an active environmentalist, was born on January 18, 1923 in Yonkers, New York. She earned a B.S. in chemistry from the College of Mount St. Vincent in Riverdale, New York and an M.S. and a Ph.D. in organic chemistry from New York University. While at NYU, she met Robert J. Kelly, also pursuing a Ph.D. in chemistry. They later married and raised seven children. In college, Kelly worked at a chemical manufacturing plant. Discussing her job there, she remembered, "In those days, we dumped into the river, the Hudson. It didn't go into secure landfills. What you once could do, you can't anymore. You have to have social responsibility." Kelly taught biology and chemistry part time at both high-school and college levels. The family moved to Columbia, South Carolina in 1965.



L-R, Kelly, Speaker of the South Carolina House David Wilkins, and Superintendent of Education Barbara Nielsen.)

Mary Kelly spent more than 35 years as an active environmentalist. She joined the League of Women Voters of South Carolina in 1972, inspired by a series of bad experiences with septic systems and by the opening of the Laidlaw Hazardous Waste Landfill in Sumter County. Upon seeing the landfill for the first time she says "We thought it was not a great idea to put [the landfill] near Lake Marion. When we went out there it wasn't lined, it just had barrels. I thought it was inadequate." At various times during the following decades, she served as the State League President, Co-President, Director, Natural Resources Chair, Associate Director, Spokesperson, and Grant Administrator. She contributed many articles to the League newsletter and worked on a variety of League initiatives. (In this picture,

Kelly also served on committees and task forces created by the South Carolina Governor's Office, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), and other state government divisions. These included the DHEC Environmental Quality Control Advisory Board, the Governor's Statewide Hazardous Material Steering Committee, and the South Carolina Joint Legislative Committee on Energy Policy Panel. She attended many state government meetings and public hearings relating to environmental issues, often delivering official League of Women Voters statements on the issues being discussed.

Kelly was a member of various non-governmental groups as well. She was on the board of the South Carolina Environmental Law Project and the Carolina Peace Resource Center, and was also a member of the Sierra Club. She attended many conferences and summits and often wrote

letters to the editor and guest columns for local newspapers, both on her own and as an official representative of the League of Women Voters.



Mary Kelly, with representatives of environmental groups, speaks at State House

Kelly's primary interest lay in nuclear-related environmental issues, particularly those dealing with the Savannah River Site and the Barnwell Low-Level Nuclear Waste Facility, both located in South Carolina. She was strongly opposed to the development and use of nuclear power plants and to the storage in South Carolina of nuclear and hazardous waste that had originated in other states. She also took an interest in and devoted time to non-nuclear environmental issues such as forest and wetlands protection, reduction of air and water pollution, and promotion of recycling. Her activism in areas unrelated to environmental issues included serving on the Carolina Peace Resource Council and the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education Blue Ribbon Committee on Medical Doctor Education. She also worked on League of Women Voters campaigns for elections reform and voter registration.

Kelly received the South Carolina Wildlife Federation's Conservationist of the Year Award in 1984 and was nominated for the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Environmental Awareness Award in 2002. In April 2009, the League of Women Voters of South Carolina held a reception in her honor at their 29th Biennial Convention.

Description:

The Mary T. Kelly Papers consist of 18 linear feet of material, 1970 to 2008, divided into topical, clippings, and photographs. Much of this collection relates to environmental issues important to Kelly and documents her involvement in organizations such as the Sierra Club and the League of Women Voters.

The general folder includes biographical information on Kelly and letters and awards from the Sierra Club and the South Carolina Wildlife Foundation, along with general newspaper editorials by Kelly.

Topical files documenting the issues important to Kelly make up the bulk of this collection. Six topics dominate this section: Energy (non-nuclear), Hazardous Waste, League of Women Voters, Nuclear, Solid Waste, and South Carolina. [The energy files](#) include folders on the South Carolina Hazardous Waste Task Force and the South Carolina Joint Legislative Committee on Energy. Kelly sat on the Energy Policy Panel of the latter. [The hazardous waste files](#) include three folders on the Laidlaw landfill—the issues that prompted Kelly to get involved with the League of Women Voters. [The League of Women Voters files](#) start when Kelly first joined the league in 1972 and continue through 2008. Files include general information about the league, convention workbooks, “The Voter” newsletter, correspondence, and other materials. [The Nuclear material](#) makes up eight boxes, the majority of which cover the Savannah River Site and Barnwell facilities here in South Carolina, nuclear waste and nuclear weapons. [The solid waste files](#) include information on the South Carolina Solid Waste Policy and Management Act and the Beverage Container Deposit Legislation/Litter Tax, among other efforts. Finally, [the South Carolina series](#) has quite a bit of information on DHEC, including the Board of Health and Environmental Control and the Environmental Quality Control Advisory Committee. There is also material on the Environmental Law Project and the Environmental Symposium.

The clippings series includes general clippings, 1982 to 2006, and clippings on Barnwell, Laidlaw, Nuclear issues, Savannah River Site, Utilities, Waste, and other topics.

The photographs include two photos of Kelly at events.

Box List

Topical:

Box 1

- General
- Air Pollution
- Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR)
- Carolina Peace Resource Center:
 - General
 - “Waging Peace” Newsletter
- Central Midlands Council of Governments (4 folders)
- Central Midlands Regional Planning Council (3 folders)
- Chip Mills, 1998-1999
- Citizens Local Environmental Action Network (CLEAN), 1991-1993
- Coastal Issues:
 - General, 1979-2002
 - Beaufort County Industrial Development
 - Charleston Aquarium Site
 - South Carolina Beachfront Management Bill

South Carolina Coastal Council:

General

Appeal of Coastal Council Permit for C. E. Graham Reeves

Sierra Club and League of Women Voters vs. Coastal Council and Jack Maybank

Columbia Hydropower Project

Common Cause

Congaree Floodplain Development, 1999-2001 (1 of 2 folders)

Congaree Floodplain Development, 1999-2001 (2 of 2 folders)

Box 2

Conservation Leaders' Summit, 2002, 2003

Correctional System

Dioxin, 1988-1991

Economy

Education:

1988-1999

2000-2007 & n.d.

Elections Reform/Voter Registration:

1977-1984

1985-1989

1990-2007 & n.d.

Electricity

Energy (Non-Nuclear):

General:

1977-1979

1979-1999

2000-2008

Environmental Impacts

Government Regulations/Utility Deregulation:

1980-1999

2000-2005 & n.d.

South Carolina Joint Legislative Committee on Energy:

General

South Carolina Energy Conservation and Efficiency Act, 1992

South Carolina Energy Policy Panel, 1991

State Energy Policy Planning Advisory Panel, 1984

Environmental Issues

Environmental Protection Agency:

General

Audits

Regional Round Table

Georgetown Oil Refinery, 1980-1983

Handbook for Citizens on Environmental Health in Appalachia, 1980

Hazardous Waste:

Box 3

General:

1976-1979

1980-1989
1990-2002 & n.d.
Clean Up
Facilities:
 General
 “Financial Responsibility Assessment of the Pinewood Hazardous Waste Facility”
Formosa Plastics
GSX/Laidlaw (3 folders)
Hazardous Waste Management:
 General (2 folders)
 Hazardous Waste Management Act (3 folders)
 Hazardous Waste Management Research Fund (2 folders)
 Survey, 1980
 Household Hazardous Waste, 1988, 1990, 1995
 Public Hearing on Hazardous Waste Activities
Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
Safety-Kleen
South Carolina:
 Department of Health and Environmental Control:
 Advisory Committee on Hazardous Waste

 Hazardous Waste Task Force: **Box 4**
 General
 Education Subcommittee
 Financial Responsibility Subcommittee
 Future Needs Subcommittee
 Hazardous Waste Reduction Subcommittee
 Risk Assessment Subcommittee (2 folders)
 Siting Subcommittee
 Technical Alternatives Subcommittee
 Transportation Subcommittee
 Governor’s Statewide Hazardous Material Steering Committee (2 folders)
Superfund, 1980-1996
Tennessee House Bill 945
Thermal Oxidation Corporation
ThermalKEM Incinerator, 1988-1989
Toxic Substances (2 folders)
Waste Alert! Conference, 1980
Hog and Chicken Farms:
 1989-1999
 2000-2001 & n.d.
Huron Tech Sodium Chlorate Plant, 1998
Hydrogen Fuel Cells
Jocassee Gorges, 1998 (Oconee and Pickens Counties, South Carolina)
League of Women Voters:
 General:

1972-1979
1980-1989
1990-1991

1992
1993-1995
1996
1997-1999
2000-2004
2005-2006
2007
2008 & n.d.

Box 5

Agenda for Action
Coalitions
Convention Workbooks
Directories
“Impact on Issues”
“Voter” Newsletter:
 1979-1998
 2001-2008
Mercury, 2003-2004
Mining, 1979-1997
Natural Resources:
 General:
 1980-1993
 1994-2008 & n.d.
 Natural Resources Forum, 1987-1991
Nuclear:
 General (2 folders)
 Atomic Energy Act
 Climate Change

Cost
Crystalline Repository Project:
 General
 Notebooks
Decommissioning
Department of Energy:
 General
 Draft Agenda
Energy:
 1974-1989
 1990-2003
 2004-2008 & n.d.
Facilities:
 General

Box 6

Barnwell:

- General (2 folders)
- Allied General Nuclear Services (AGNS)
- Atlantic Compact
- Away-from-Reactor Storage
- Chem-Nuclear
- Closing
- Environmental Issues
- Legislation
- Licensing
- Low-Level Waste Policy Act
- Safety

Southeast Compact:

- 1982-1984
- 1985-1989

- 1990-1991

- 1992

- 1993-1994

- 1995-2000 & n.d.

“State of South Carolina and Chem-Nuclear Systems, Inc.”

Transportation

Waste Management, Inc. Hearing

Duke

Hanford

Oak Ridge

Rocky Flats

Savannah River Site:

General:

- 1978-1989

- 1990-2001

- 2002-2008 & n.d.

Citizens Advisory Board:

General:

- 1991-2002

- 2003-2008

Newsletter

Consolidated Incineration Facility

Contractors

Environmental Advisory Committee

“Environmental Bulletin”:

- 1990-2001

- 2002-2008

Environmental Forum

Environmental Protection Agency Final Approval

Box 7

Box 8

Environmental Report: State of Savannah River Site
Epidemiology Study
F-Canyon
Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP)
H-Canyon
Health:
 General
 CDC Dose Reconstruction:
 1991-1997
 1998-2005 & n.d.
League of Women Voters
Mixed Oxide Fuel (MOX):
 General:
 1996-2001
 2002-2008 & n.d.
 Fuel Fabrication Facility:
 General
 Construction Authorization
 Environmental Impact Statement (2 folders)
 Health/Safety
 License Renewal
 Mixed Oxide Xchange Newsletter
 Transportation:
 General
 Duke
 Europe
 Russia
Monitored Retrievable Storage
NuStart Energy
Part 70 Air Quality Permit
Plutonium:
 General
 Disposal
 Modern Pit Facility:
 2001-2002

 2003-2005
 Shipment
 Storage/Consolidation
 Weapons
Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement
Radiological Assessments Corp.
Reactors:
 L-Reactor:
 General
 Lawsuit

Box 9

K-Reactor
New Production Reactor
Restart
Safety
Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
Richland County Public Library Public Meeting
Safety
Salt Stone Disposal (2 folders)
Savannah River Ecology Lab
Spent Nuclear Fuel
Transportation
Tritium
Waste:
 General:
 1977-1999
 2000-2008 & n.d.

Clean Up
Defense Waste Processing Facility
Ground Water Protection
Grouting
High-Level Waste
Management
National Defense Authorization Act
Reclassification
Seepage Basin
Tank Closures
Transuranic (TRU) Waste
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant
Weapons/Terror
William Lawless Investigation

Utah
V.C. Summers
Yucca Mountain Nevada (2 folders)

G8 Summit
Generic Environmental Impact Statement
Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) (2 folders)
Health (2 folders)
Importation
International
International Atomic Energy Agency
League of Women Voters:
 General
 “Aging of the Nuclear State”
 Bottom Line Forum, 1981
 Maine

Box 10

- Nuclear Education Fund:
 - General:
 - 1978-1981
 - 1982-1994

 - 1995-1996
 - 1997-1999
 - 2000-2008 & n.d.
 - San Diego, 1998
 - Nuclear Waste Task Force, 1999
 - Southeast Compact
 - Speech Information
- Legislation
- Monitored Retrievable Storage
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Nuclear Information and Resource Service
- Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC):
 - General
 - Licensing
- Price-Anderson Act
- Publications:
 - “Defense Monitor”
 - “EM Progress”
 - “Energy and Security”
 - “Environmental Excellence in South Carolina” (2 folders)
 - “Palmetto Nuclear Report,” 1980-1983
 - “The Radioactive Exchange,” Dec. 1991-Feb. 1992
 - “Research Exchange”
 - “Science for Democratic Action”
- Reactors:
 - General (2 folders)
 - Breeder Reactors
 - Light Water Reactors
 - Problems
 - Safety (2 folders)

- South Carolina:
 - General (2 folders)
 - Away-from-Reactor Consultations Committee
 - Governors Nuclear Advisory Council:
 - 1982-1983
 - 1988-1990
 - 1999-2002
 - 2003-2007
 - Legislative Survey
 - Nuclear Waste Task Force

Box 11

Box 12

Spent Fuel:
 General (2 folders)
 MUSC Spent Nuclear Fuel Project
Submarines
Terrorism
Transportation (2 folders)
Tritium
Uranium
Waste:
 General (1-2 of 4 folders)

 General (3-4 of 4 folders) **Box 13**
 Clean Up
 Consultation Committee
 High-Level Waste
 Low-Level Waste:
 General (2 folders)
 Management
 Management
 Nuclear Waste Digest:
 1989
 1995
 Reprocessing
 Storage
 Transport
Weapons:
 General (2 folders)
 Bunker Busters
 International
 National Nuclear Security Administration
 Plutonium
 Policies
 Treaties
 Weapons Complex
 Weapons of Mass Destruction
Oil, 1990-1991
Peacemaking Conference, 1985

Resolve (Citizens' Monitoring and Technical Assessment Fund), 2002-2003 **Box 14**
Russell Dam Pumps, 1986-1988
Saluda Hydroelectric Project:
 1998-2000
 2001
 2002 (2 folders)
 2003
 2004 (2 folders)

- 2005-2006
- Sierra Club (2 folders)
- Solid Waste/Recycling:
 - General:
 - 1970-1988
 - 1989-1991
 - Beverage Container Deposit Legislation/Litter Tax:
 - 1975-1979
 - 1980-1989
 - Clemson University Solid Waste Strategic Implementation Committee
 - South Carolina Solid Waste Policy and Management Act, 1990 (1 of 2 folders)

- South Carolina Solid Waste Policy and Management Act, 1990 (2 of 2 folders) **Box 15**
- South Carolina Solid Waste Task Force, 1989-1990
- South Carolina:
 - General
 - Commission on Higher Education Blue Ribbon Committee on Medical Doctor Education, 1982-1983 (2 folders)
 - Department of Health and Environmental Control:
 - General (2)
 - Board of Health and Environmental Control:
 - 1985-1989
 - 1993-1994
 - 2003-2006
 - Environmental Quality Control Advisory Committee:
 - 1979-1982
 - 1984-1987
 - 1988-1992
 - Restructuring, 1996-1999
 - Department of Natural Resources Drought Response Committee, 1997-1998
 - Earth Day, 1989-1990
 - Environmental Excellence Program:
 - 1991-2001
 - 2001-2003
 - 2003-2006
 - Environmental Law Project:
 - 1986-1988

 - 1988-1991
 - 1992-2004

 - Erosion and Sediment Control Conference, 1980
 - Myrtle Beach
 - Legislation (2 folders)
 - State Government Restructuring
 - South Carolina Environmental Symposium (sponsored by Santee Cooper, USC, and others):
 - General, 1996-2003

- Second Symposium, 1993
- Fourth Symposium, 1995
- Southeastern Dialog on the Changing World Economy Conference, 1980
- Sprawl/Land Use:
 - General (2 folders)
 - Imagine Richland 2020 Task Force 2000-2001
 - Palmetto Conservation Foundation, Richland County Development Futures Study
 - South Carolina Comprehensive Planning and Enabling Act
 - “Takings” Bill, 1995-1998 (2 folders)
- Understanding and Responding to Public Environmental Concerns
- Union Camp
- United States Department of Defense Environmental Cleanup Stakeholders Forum, 2000
- University of South Carolina Public Affairs Bulletin, 1979-1984
- Water:
 - General (3 folders)
 - Clean Water Act

- Department of Health and Environmental Control Bureau of Water: **Box 17**
 - General (2 folders)
 - Lawn Irrigation Backflow Task Force, 2002-2004
 - Ground Water
 - Safe Drinking Water Act (3 folders)
 - Waste Water
- Wetlands, 1988-1992
- Winyah Bay Alliance/Study Group, 1980
- Wistar Rabies Vaccine Test, 1988-1989
- Clippings:
 - General:
 - 1982-1989
 - 1992, 1997-1998
 - 2000-2001
 - 2003, 2005-2006
 - Barnwell
 - Computers:
 - 1997
 - 1998
 - 2005-2006
 - Development
 - Energy
 - Environment
 - Government
 - Graniteville, 2005
 - Green Diamond
 - Hog Farms
 - Laidlaw:
 - 1988-1990, 1992

1993
1994
1995
1996
1997
1998-1999
2000-2001

Natural Resources

Nuclear:

Box 18

1979-1982
1983, 1987
1988
1989
1991-1992
1993
1994
1995
1996
1997
1998
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003-2004
2005
2006
2007
2008

Reedy River

Savannah River Site:

1987-1988
1990, 1992
1993
1994
1995
1996
1997
1998
1999
2000
2001
2002, 2005-2006

Science

Tobacco

Utilities:

1996

1997

1998, 2001, 2006

Waste:

1978-1981

1982-1985

1987-1988

1989-1990

1991-1992

1993

1994

1995

1996

1997

1998

1999

2000

2001

2002

2003-2005

Weapons:

1994-1995

2003-2007

Wells

Photographs