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Heyward Elliott McDonald
(1925-2000)

Papers, 1962-2000, 2005

- Volume:** 3.25 linear feet
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Biographical Note

Heyward E. McDonald served in the South Carolina General Assembly from 1963 until 1984. His supporters regarded him as an honest politician with a heart for his community, unafraid to take a stand even when it wasn't popular. His service in the House representing Richland County spanned from 1963 to 1966. This term was followed by election to the Richland County school board, where he served from 1968 to 1970. He then served in the S.C. Senate representing Richland, Fairfield and Chester counties from 1977 to 1984. In a speech given at the dedication of the McDonald Interchange in May of 2000, Alex Sanders, a former state Senate colleague, described McDonald as, "...the most ethical human being I have ever known...He had the courage to persevere in the face of overwhelming odds. He had the courage to buck the tide. He had the courage to speak rather than remain silent. He had the courage to stand up when sitting down would have been more comfortable."

Heyward McDonald was born September 27, 1925, to James E. McDonald, Jr., an attorney, and Lucy Pride Heyward McDonald in Winnsboro, S.C. The family soon moved to Chester, S.C., where Heyward attended public schools, took up boxing, and achieved the rank of Eagle Scout.

After one year at Davidson College, McDonald entered the U.S. Naval Academy and was commissioned an officer in 1946. He married Sylvia Jean Buck of San Diego, California, on March 5, 1949. The couple had three daughters.

In 1953, after serving in the Korean War, McDonald contracted polio which ultimately deprived him of the full use of his legs. He was discharged from the Navy as 100 percent disabled. With hard work and strenuous rehabilitation, McDonald eventually was able to walk again with the aid of leg braces and crutches.

He had never considered a career in law like his father and grandfather before him, but a legal education now seemed logical. So, in 1954, he entered Law School at the University of South Carolina. "I decided to go to law school because I knew I could be a lawyer and get around with braces," McDonald noted. He graduated *magna cum laude* in 1958 and eventually became a renowned trial lawyer in Columbia.



Dedication to the service of others characterized McDonald's tenure in the General Assembly. As a House member in 1963 he introduced a precedent-setting bill that required all state buildings to meet certain requirements making them handicapped accessible. Some of these requirements included entrance ramps and elevators. South Carolina was the first state to pass such a law, and since doing so, each state in the U.S. has passed similar legislation. Advocacy for the handicapped was a theme throughout McDonald's public life. McDonald also was

dedicated to improving the quality of education in South Carolina. While serving in the Senate, he oversaw the development and passage of the Education Improvement Act.

McDonald regarded himself as a politician who identified less with a certain political party and more with connecting to humans and serving their needs. One of his campaign slogans exemplified this trait, urging voters to, "Vote for the Man, Not the Party." Following a reapportionment, McDonald was not reelected to the Senate in 1984. This defeat led to an outpouring of support from the community and suggestions that he run for governor. In a personal letter to McDonald, attorney Walton J. McLeod, III, wrote, "I urge you to make some noises about running for governor. I do not know what your pocketbook will stand, but if you could take one solid month off from work; make a speech every other day to a different group in a different town; and project some of that hardcore leadership ability which you possess and the other likely candidates lack, it is my opinion that you will be very pleasantly surprised."



Following the unsuccessful reelection bid of 1984, McDonald became Governor Dick Riley's appointee to the State Board of Education. He also served on several college and hospital boards, and received countless honors and awards, including the Order of the Palmetto in 1986, the highest honor the State can bestow. He ran for the Senate again in 1988.

During a distinguished career, McDonald tried cases in Family Court, County Court, Circuit Court, and Federal District Court. He also handled appeals before all South Carolina appellate courts, the U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the U.S. Supreme Court. McDonald was an active member of Shandon Presbyterian Church in Columbia, where he sang in the choir, taught Sunday school, and was a member of its Session. McDonald died January 5, 2000, at the age of seventy-four.

Description

The McDonald Papers consist of 3.25 linear feet of material, chiefly 1962 to 2000, documenting his career in public service and personal life. The Collection is arranged in four series: Public Papers, Personal Papers, Audio-Visual Materials, and Clippings.

Public Papers are comprised mostly of correspondence generated during McDonald's terms in public office. Programs from events at which McDonald either spoke or was honored also are included.



Of particular interest among the public papers are several speeches written to address the topic of teenage pregnancy in South Carolina. The possibility of a sex education curriculum in the South Carolina public schools was a hot topic during the 1980s. McDonald attended various events as guest speaker in order to discuss the issue and urge those listening to support the bill (S. 546) for a program of instruction for South Carolina schools. This bill faced resistance from some South Carolinians, and McDonald addressed their concerns while continuing to advocate the bill, "We are deeply concerned about what seems to be a declining morality in our country and the use of drugs and the abuse of sex. We are saddened by the phenomena of children having children and genuinely alarmed by the specter of AIDS. But we will not simply wring our hands or bury our heads in the sand. For educators, school board members, and legislators—indeed, for all

of us, this is a time for reason and a time for courage."

Personal Papers chiefly reflect McDonald's campaigns for election to the state House and state Senate, along with his unsuccessful 1970 campaign for U.S. Congress. Most extensive are the records for the 1984 and 1988 Senate campaigns. Records for both campaigns include donations received and telephone canvassing results. Radio advertisement scripts exist from the 1988 campaign.

Other items in the Personal Papers include correspondence, biographical information, law school notes, papers relating to McDonald's legal career, and material related to his religious activities. The biographical material includes accounts written by McDonald himself as well as material written by others, including a sixth grade student who interviewed McDonald for a class project. Among the religious materials are notes for a speech in which McDonald explains his views on capital punishment.

Audiovisual Materials in the collection consist of one audio cassette recording of a radio

advertisement and eight folders of photographs. Among the photographs are images of McDonald giving speeches, interacting with other political figures, including South Carolina Governor Dick Riley and U.S. Senator Fritz Hollings, and working on his 1988 campaign.

Clippings are arranged alphabetically by topic. Major topics include the sex education act, education improvement act and indigent health care. Two scrapbooks are comprised primarily of newspaper clippings that have been arranged in date order.

McDonald Timeline

- 1925 Born to James E. McDonald, Jr. and Lucy Pride Heyward in Winnsboro; reared in Chester, SC
- 1942 Attended Davidson College for about one year
- 1946 B.S. degree from US Naval Academy
Entered US Navy
- 1949 Married Sylvia Jean Buck of San Diego, California
- 1953 Contracted polio
- 1954 Medically retired from Navy as lieutenant
Entered USC Law School
- 1958 Graduated from Law School, *magna cum laude*; admitted to the Bar
- 1959 Chaired Richland County March of Dimes
- 1962 Elected from Richland County to SC House, served 1963-1966
- 1963 Named South Carolina's Outstanding Handicapped Citizen
- 1968 Elected to the Richland I School Board
- 1970 Candidate for US House in 2nd District
- 1976 Elected to SC Senate from Richland County, served 1977-1984
- 1984 After reapportionment, lost reelection
- 1985 Appointed to the State Board of Education
- 1986 Awarded Order of the Palmetto
- 1988 Campaign for the SC Senate
- 2000 Died, Jan. 5

SERIES:

Public Papers
Personal Papers
Audio-Visual Materials
Clippings and Scrapbooks

Box List

Public Papers:

Box 1

General
Education:
 General
 Richland 1 School Board
 State Board of Education
Events:
 General (2)
 Mental Health Tribute Dinner
Handicapped
S.C. House of Representatives:
 Correspondence
 State Parks Bill
S.C. Senate:
 General
 Correspondence
Teenage Pregnancy:
 General
 Correspondence
 Speeches

Personal Papers:

General:
 1981-2005
 n.d.
Biographical Material
Campaigns:
 General, 1962-1988
 1962, S.C. House of Representatives:
 General
 Correspondence
 Finance
 Speeches
 1968, Richland 1 School Board
 1970, U.S. Congress:
 General

Speeches
1976, S.C. Senate
1984, S.C. Senate:
 General
 Canvassing
 Correspondence, sympathy for defeat
 Finance
 Reapportionment

1988, S.C. Senate:

Box 2

 General
 Canvassing
 Donation letters
 Gene Rogers/Airport issue
 Opposition Research
 Radio spot scripts
 Schedules
 Speeches

Confederate Flag

Law School Notes

Legal Career:

 General
 American Arbitration Association
 DuRant Distinguished Public Service Award
 Professional Papers [presented at conferences, etc.]

Religious:

 Annotated Books
 Annotated Guides (3 folders)
 Book of Romans, Notes and Transparencies (4 folders)

Capital Punishment Speech Notes

Box 3

Church Officer Duties Talk, Notes and Transparencies

Mere Christianity, Notes and Annotations

Miscellaneous Index Card Notes (4 folders)

Notes and Miscellany (2 folders)

Sunday School Notebook (3 folders)

Audio/Visual Material:

Audio Cassette, Radio Ad

Photographs:

 General
 Campaign, 1988
 Carolina Journal
 Events
 Family

Portraits

Riley, Governor Dick

Winthrop University, Board of Visitors, 1989-1993

Clippings:

General

Awards and Honors

Campaigns

Education:

General

Education Improvement Act

Sex Education

Health

Judiciary

Obituary

Opinions/Letters to the Editor

Reapportionment

Senate

Welfare

Scrapbooks:

1934-1964

1979-1984

Housed with Scrapbooks