



## **St. Louis Regional Fellowship of Reconciliation Records (S0082)**

**Collection Number:** S0082

**Collection Title:** St. Louis Regional Fellowship of Reconciliation Records

**Dates:** 1941-1967

**Creator:** St. Louis Regional Fellowship of Reconciliation

**Abstract:** The St. Louis Regional Fellowship of Reconciliation Records contain correspondence, meeting minutes, newsletters, and reports documenting the chapter's commitment to the philosophy and programming of religious pacifism. Topics of interest include conscientious objectors during World War II and the Korean War, the relocation of Japanese citizens, and nuclear weapons disarmament.

**Collection Size:** 0.6 cubic foot  
(22 folders)

**Language:** Collection materials are in English.

**Repository:** The State Historical Society of Missouri

**Restrictions on Access:** Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at [stlouis@shsmo.org](mailto:stlouis@shsmo.org). Collections may be viewed at any research center.

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**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *St. Louis Regional Fellowship of Reconciliation Records* (S0082); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-St. Louis].

**Donor Information:** The records were donated to the University of Missouri by Roy Sommerer on August 31, 1976 (Accession No. SA0886). An addition was made on July 10, 1980 by Marian Weir (Accession No. SA2305).

**Processed by:** Processed by Western Historical Manuscript Collection Staff, July 1980. Revised by Zack Palitzsch, October 2020.

### **Historical Note:**

Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) is a peace organization founded in 1915 as an interfaith society whose members share a commitment to seek a resolution to international and inter-group conflicts by non-violent and reconciling means. Around thirty St. Louis area members of FOR had been meeting for nearly five years before they decided to officially establish the St. Louis Regional chapter of the Fellowship of Reconciliation in November 1940. The following year, they organized the Metropolitan Board for Counseling Conscientious Objectors to help conscientious objectors in civilian public service camps during World War II. These camps were an alternative to military service that allowed conscientious objectors to serve required military service as noncombatants, as outlined by the Selective Service Act of 1917. Conscientious objectors were assigned duties such as soil conservation, forestry, firefighting, and agriculture. They worked without pay and received little support from the federal government. Additionally, St. Louis Regional FOR sponsored Japanese Americans and European war refugees, helping them get work and attend school following their release from internment camps.

In 1941, St. Louis Regional FOR coordinated with the Civil Liberties Union to establish an interracial committee, which conducted a survey in 1943 and 1944 on attitudes toward hiring African American employees in St. Louis. Following World War II and throughout the 1950s and 1960s, St. Louis Regional FOR continued to work towards better race relations. They established the Committee for Freedom of Residence to combat residential segregation. During the Korean War and Vietnam War, St. Louis Regional FOR again offered draft counseling to conscientious objectors. However, St. Louis Regional FOR's main concern was nuclear disarmament and peace. They opposed the resumption of atmospheric nuclear testing and the building of personal bomb shelters. In the early 1960s, they established Shelters for the Shelterless, a campaign designed to build communal fallout shelters for homeless people. Additionally, they would often cosponsor peace lectures and programs with other peace organizations such as the St. Louis Committee for Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE) and the St. Louis Citizens for Peace in Vietnam. They would also hold peace and protesting events, such as Fast for Peace in Vietnam, during the Vietnam War.

Fellowship of Reconciliation continues to promote peace throughout the world. In the 1970s through the 1990s, they continued to advocate for nuclear disarmament, often teaming up with the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign and SANE on peace projects. Currently, FOR is still dedicated to promoting peace and equality through nonviolent means.

### **Arrangement:**

The collection has been arranged into the following three series:

- Administration
- Correspondence and Survey Forms
- Newsletters

**Scope and Content Note:****Administration**

This series contains bylaws, membership lists, and meeting minutes documenting the organization's governance and operations. The materials in this series date from 1940 to 1962 and are arranged chronologically.

**Correspondence and Survey Forms**

This series consists of correspondence and survey forms, notes, and results relating to conscientious objectors, civilian public service camps, the relocation of Japanese evacuees, European refugees, the conscription of women, and Interracial Employment Service during World War II. Materials of interest include a survey conducted by the Interracial Employment Committee of twenty wards in St. Louis to gauge public opinion on the employment of African Americans in public utility services. The series also documents nuclear disarmament, fair housing, and fallout shelters. The material in this series dates from 1940 to 1969 and are arranged chronologically.

**Newsletters**

This series contains newsletters published by the St. Louis Regional Fellowship of Reconciliation as well as newsletters from other Fellowship of Reconciliation chapters across the United States, including *Fellowship Bulletin* of Kansas City. The materials in this series date from 1941 to 1962 and are arranged chronologically followed by the *Fellowship Bulletin* newsletters and national Fellowship of Reconciliation newsletters.

**Container List:**

f. 1-5		Administration
Box 001	f. 1	Meeting reports and notes, January 25, 1942
	f. 2	Membership lists, 1942-1943
	f. 3	Meeting minutes and <i>Fellowship News</i> , 1950-1954
	f. 4	Bylaws, 1960
	f. 5	Membership lists, 1960-1962
f. 6-12		Correspondence and Survey Forms
	f. 6	Conscientious objectors, civilian public service camps, 1940-1943
	f. 7-8	Relocation of Japanese evacuees, 1941-1943
	f. 9	World War II, refugees, and conscription of women, 1941-1943
	f. 10	National and Midwest Fellowship of Reconciliation, 1942-1943
	f. 11	Interracial Employment Survey Committee, correspondence, notes, and results, 1943-1944
	f. 12	Interracial Employment Survey Committee, survey forms, 1943-1944
	f. 13	National Fellowship of Reconciliation, 1960-1962
Box 002	f. 14	Disarmament, fair housing, and fallout shelters, 1960-1969
	f. 15	Midwest Regional Conference, 1961
f. 16-22		Newsletters
	f. 16-20	<i>Fellowship News</i> , 1941-1943, 1954-1962

- f. 21 *Fellowship Bulletin*, Kansas City FOR, 1942-1943  
 f. 22 National Fellowship newsletters, 1943, 1956

**Index:**

<b>Index Term</b>	<b>Folder</b>
African Americans--Employment	11-12
Civilian Public Service	1, 3, 6, 16
Cold War (1945-1989)	13-14
Committee to Oppose the Conscription of Women	9
Conscientious objectors	1, 3, 6, 16
Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962	13
Discrimination in housing--Missouri--Saint Louis	14
Draft--United States	6
Fellowship of Reconciliation (U.S.)	10, 22
Fellowship of Reconciliation (U.S.). Kansas City (Mo.) Branch	21
Greater St. Louis Committee for Freedom of Residence	11-12, 14
Japanese Americans--Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945	1, 7-9, 16
Jerome Relocation Center (Ark.)	7-8
Korean War, 1950-1953	3
Lewis, Tedford P.	6
Mid-West Fellowship of Reconciliation	10
Muste, A. J. (Abraham John), 1885-1967	10
Nuclear disarmament	13-14, 18-20
Nuclear bomb shelters	13-14
Nuclear weapons	13-14, 18-20
Nuclear weapons--Testing	13-14
Peace movements--Missouri--Saint Louis	1-22
Pacifism	1-22
Race discrimination	6, 11-12
Service, Compulsory non-military	1, 3, 6, 16
St. Louis Regional Fellowship of Reconciliation	1-22
United States--Foreign relations--Soviet Union	19-20
United States. Selective Service System	1, 3, 6, 16
United States. War Relocation Authority	7
World War, 1939-1945	1, 6-10, 16
World War, 1939-1945--Conscientious objectors	1, 6, 16
World War, 1939-1945--Refugees	9, 16
Young Women's Christian Association (Saint Louis, Mo.)	7