



## **Maurice and Doris Wheeler Papers (S0599)**

**Collection Number:** S0599

**Collection Title:** Maurice and Doris Wheeler Papers

**Dates:** 1906-1989

**Creator:** Wheeler, Maurice, 1907-1993

**Abstract:** The Maurice and Doris Wheeler Papers contain correspondence, newsletters, publications, and reports documenting the Wheeler's social activism and involvement in groups such as the American Federation of Technical Engineers, Eighth Ward Independent Democrats, New Democratic Coalition, Reform Organization of Welfare (ROWEL), and Socialist Party.

**Collection Size:** 16 cubic feet  
(469 folders, 32 photographs)

**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).

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**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Maurice and Doris Wheeler Papers* (S0599); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-St. Louis].

**Donor Information:** The papers were donated to the University of Missouri by Maurice Wheeler on April 4, 1972 (Accession No. SA0111); Additions were made on June 11, 1973 by Maurice Wheeler (Accession No. SA0277); February 28, 1985 by Maurice Wheeler (Accession No. SA2674); March 3, 1988 by Maurice Wheeler (Accession No. SA2847); and April 5, 1991 by Maurice Wheeler (Accession No. SA2990).

**Related Collections:** Additional materials related to the Maurice and Doris Wheelers Papers can be found in the following collections:

[Paul William Preisler Papers](#) (S0235)

[Oral History Collection](#) (S0829)

[Socialist Party of Missouri Collection](#) (S0090)

[American Federation of Technical Engineers, Local 23 AFL-CIO Records](#) (S0385)

[Ethical Society of St. Louis Records](#) (S0444)

[International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in St. Louis Collection](#) (S0779)

[Rita Oberbeck Papers](#) (S0198)

[Edward Mallinckrodt Jr. Papers](#) (S0452)

**Processed by:** Processed by William Fischetti, December 1991; Revised by Rachael Heriford, and Remy Cognac, November 2023.

### **Biographical Note:**

Maurice R. Wheeler was born in Yokohama, Japan on January 31, 1907. His mother served as a missionary, and his father as a merchant. In 1922, Maurice immigrated to the United States with his family. After moving to St. Louis in 1941, Maurice worked as a design draftsman at Barry-Wehmiller Machinery Co. and helped organize the Socialist Party. Wheeler began his labor activism career by helping to form the American Federation of Teachers in New England and Local 23 of the American Federation of Technical Engineers in St. Louis in the mid-1940s. Wheeler later served as vice president of the American Federation of Technical Engineers (AFL-CIO). In 1952, Wheeler unsuccessfully ran for governor of Missouri under the Socialist Party. From 1960 to 1967, Wheeler served on the St. Louis Planning Commission as a representative of the labor movement. After retiring as an engineer in 1971, Wheeler continued his political and labor activism by serving on the Board of Directors for Compton Heights Neighborhood Association and Reform Organization of Welfare (ROWEL). Maurice Wheeler died in St. Louis, Missouri, on June 23, 1993.

Doris Bausch Wheeler was born in 1906 in St. Louis, Missouri. Doris attended Washington University during the 1920s, where she studied botany, and later graduated from Radcliffe University with a master's in plant physiology. While attending Washington University, Doris met her first husband, Paul W. Preisler, a chemical engineer and later lawyer and labor activist, and the couple married in 1927. She became a charter member of the St. Louis Chapter of the American Federation of Teachers, Local 420, founded by her husband, Paul W. Preisler, in 1934, launching her long career as a labor and social reform activist. From 1935 to 1971, Doris served as the regional education director for the Ladies Garment Workers Union. During the mid-1950s, she met and married fellow activist Maurice Wheeler. The couple were honored in 1974 by the New Democratic Coalition for their service and contributions to the growth of the labor movements in the St. Louis area. Doris also participated in the Socialist Party, Compton Heights Neighborhood Association, and Reform Organization of Welfare (ROWEL). Doris Wheeler died in St. Louis, Missouri, on January 14, 1985.

### **Arrangement:**

The collection has been arranged into the following 13 series:

Personal

Subject Files

Calendars

Reform Organization of Welfare (ROWEL)

New Democratic Coalition  
City Planning Commission  
Compton Heights Neighborhood Association  
Eighth Ward Independent Democrats  
American Federation of Technical Engineers  
Cooperatives  
Publications  
Photographs  
Artifacts

Please note that this collection has been minimally processed and has not been heavily indexed.

### **Scope and Content Note:**

#### **Personal**

The Personal series documents the personal activities of Maurice and Doris Wheeler outside of their labor and political activism, and includes naturalization papers, correspondence, grade cards, poetry, and newspaper clippings. The series is arranged alphabetically and contains materials from 1929 to 1990.

#### **Subject Files**

The Subject Files series consists of subjects of interest to the Wheelers, including abortion, child support, and tax reform. Additionally, the series provides information on organizations working towards these causes, like Americans for Democratic Action and the Coalition for Sensible and Humane Solutions. This series is arranged alphabetically and contains materials from 1940 to 1988.

#### **Calendars**

The Calendars series contains daily and appointment calendars from 1939 through 1988. The series is arranged chronologically.

#### **Reform Organization of Welfare (ROWEL)**

The Reform Organization of Welfare (ROWEL) series consists of agendas, correspondences, minute, reports, and other materials related to the Wheeler's work with ROWEL, an organization working for changes to the welfare system, such as increased funding to Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). The series is arranged alphabetically and contains materials from 1963 to 1988.

#### **New Democratic Coalition**

The New Democratic Coalition series consists of candidate information, correspondence, financial materials, minutes, newsletters, and reports from the New Democratic Coalition, a reform group within the Democratic Party founded in 1968. The series is arranged alphabetically and contains materials from 1968 to 1988.

### **City Planning Commission**

The City Planning Commission series contains reports on the Central West End and Mass Transit, administrative documents, newsletters, and press releases. The series is arranged alphabetically and contains materials from 1957 to 1967.

### **Compton Heights Neighborhood Association**

The Compton Heights Neighborhood Association series consists of booklets, correspondence, and newsletters pertaining to the Wheeler's participation in the Compton Heights Neighborhood Association, which sought to improve conditions of the Compton Heights neighborhood in St. Louis City. The series is arranged alphabetically and contains materials from 1971 to 1989.

### **Eighth Ward Independent Democrats**

The Eighth Ward Independent Democrats series contains announcements, correspondence, financial material, minutes, and newsletters about elections and political candidates in St. Louis' Eighth Ward. The series is arranged alphabetically and contains materials from 1968 to 1988.

### **American Federation of Technical Engineers**

The American Federation of Technical Engineers series consists of contract agreements, convention material, correspondence, newsletters, and reports documenting Maurice Wheeler's involvement with AFTE from 1941 to 1988. The series is arranged alphabetically.

### **Cooperatives**

The Cooperatives series contains correspondence, newsletters, publications, and reports about consumer cooperatives between 1946 and 1952. The series is arranged alphabetically.

### **Publications**

The Publications series consists of pamphlets and newsletters from organizations not covered by the other series in the collection and publications from newspapers and magazines such as *Environment* and *The Progressive*. The series is arranged alphabetically and contains materials from 1934 to 1988.

### **Photographs**

The Photographs series contains 32 photographs, most of which are family photographs. The photographs have been arranged numerically by label number.

### **Artifacts**

The Artifacts series contains bumper stickers, pins, and a ballpoint pen.

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