

OSBORNE, KATHY: Files, 1981-1989 – REAGAN LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

This collection is available in whole for research use. Some folders may still have withdrawn material due to Freedom of Information Act restrictions. Most frequent withdrawn material is national security classified material, personal privacy, protection of the President, etc.

OSBORNE, KATHY: Files, 1981-1989

Office of the President: Personal Secretary to President Ronald Reagan

Biography

Kathleen “Kathy” Osborne was born Kathleen Edwards in Sacramento on December 4, 1943. She attended Glendale Junior College in southern California, while working as a secretary. In 1965 she completed airline stewardess training in Dallas, and moved to the northeastern United States to work as a stewardess for American Airlines. She left this job when she married William Osborne in 1966. The couple had two children before divorcing in early 1981.

Ms. Osborne moved back to Sacramento with her husband in 1967. She was hired as an assistant to Helene von Damm, Governor Reagan’s personal secretary. Osborne also served as Nancy’s Reagan’s secretary beginning in 1972. In 1973, she left the Governor’s Office to work for Californians for Lower Taxes, an organization formed to promote the tax-lowering initiative Proposition 1. In 1975 she co-founded Sacks Howe Avenue, a juniors’ apparel store in Sacramento. She remained involved with the store until it closed in 1984.

Osborne did volunteer work for the Reagan-Bush 1980 presidential campaign. The following July, she visited President Reagan at the White House. During the visit Michael Deaver, the White House Deputy Chief of Staff who knew Osborne from Reagan’s governorship, approached her about becoming Reagan’s new personal secretary. Osborne became Reagan’s secretary on October 1, succeeding von Damm who moved to the Office of Presidential Personnel. Osborne remained the President’s personal secretary until he left office in January 1989. She was named a Special Assistant to the President in 1985, a Deputy Assistant in 1987, and a full Assistant to the President in December 1988.

Osborne worked in Reagan’s post-presidential office in Los Angeles until 1990. She later served as Executive Assistant to Warren Christopher, while he was a senior partner with the Los Angeles law firm O’Melveny & Myers.

Scope and Content Note

The Reagan Library has arranged the collection in a loose “series” order consisting of subject file material, Eureka College material, Dixon, IL and the Reagan boyhood home, Presidential Library material, and personal correspondence. The folders are filed alphabetically within this loose arrangement. Correspondents include: William “Bill” Thompson, who helped restore the Reagan boyhood home in Dixon; Doug Morrow, a friend from Reagan’s career as an actor;

Bertha and Samuelion (Samueline/“Sam”) Sisco, two sisters who corresponded regularly with Reagan beginning in the 1970s; and longtime White House reporter Trude Feldman. Osborne handled the President’s personal mail with the help of Katherine “Charley” Shepherd of the White House Correspondence Office.

This collection originally consisted of a single oversize attachment found while arranging the “true” oversize attachments. In addition, we found three archives (Hollinger) boxes containing a personal papers collection for Kathy Osborne. Upon inspection, the material did not have a solicitation/acquisition file and it contained a note from Rod Soubers (Reagan Library Supervisory Archivist, 1989-1996). The note stated the material was “personal” and it apparently had been removed from presidential records and transferred. There is some indication that Osborne sent this material to the Ralph Bledsoe, the Director of the Library, 1991. No further documentation was found. It has now been integrated with the original Osborne material.

Much of this material would qualify as personal records of Ronald Reagan although handled routinely by Kathy Osborne. We have processed and opened it under the Reagan Deed of Gift.

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1

Quotes for Ronald Reagan (1)-(4)

White House Background

[Young American Medal for Bravery; for Service]

Eureka College Printouts

Eureka College Scholarship Fund (1)-(3)

Eureka Printout (1)(2)

Dixon, Illinois Printouts (1)-(4)

Ronald Reagan – 03/15/1984 – Thank-you Letter to Donors [Boyhood Home]

William Thompson [Boyhood Home Letter]

[Audio-Visual Information re: Presidential Library]

Becket [Potential Architectural Firm – Presidential Library]

Box 2

Becket [Potential Architectural Firm – Presidential Library] (2)-(5)

[Bill Thompson] (1)-(10)

Box 3

[Bill Thompson] (11)-(19)

Doug Morrow

[Kathy Osborne Files – Presidential Years] (1)-(4)

Box 4

[The President – Spinoff Project] (1)(2)

[Sisco Sisters] (1)-(8)

[Trude B. Feldman] (1)-(6)