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Champaign County Bicentennial Commission  
Records

Collection 247

## Champaign County Historical Archives

**Compiled by:** Cassie Ward

**Creator/Corporate Name:** Champaign County Bicentennial Commission

**Inclusive Dates:** 1775-1983, bulk 1974-1976

**Physical Description:** 6 boxes (3.5 linear ft.)

**Language:** English

**Provenance:**

The Champaign County Bicentennial Commission records were donated to the Champaign County Historical Archives in 1998 or earlier.

**Access:**

These records are accessible to the public within applicable copyright restrictions and limited to use at the Champaign County Historical Archives of The Urbana Free Library.

**Biographical/Historical Note:**

The United States Bicentennial was made up of local and national public celebratory events and culminated on Sunday, July 4, 1976 with the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the *Declaration of Independence*. Champaign County and many of the county's cities and townships were recognized as Bicentennial Communities in 1974. The Champaign County Bicentennial Commission was officially designated by the Champaign County Board in December of 1974 to plan and host bicentennial related activities in the community in 1975 and 1976, as well as partnering with local, statewide, and national groups. The commission extended its work further into the late 1970s to advance community improvement projects, including a renovation and cleanup along Boneyard Creek.

The Champaign County Bicentennial Commission was chaired by Jeanne Rochford, who was active in the politics and community building in Champaign-Urbana. Several other key members of the commission included treasurer Hobart L. Peer, Marguerite Pease, Dr. Natalia Belting, and Maxine Bohn.

**Scope and Content Note:**

The collection contains material from the start of the Bicentennial Commission in 1974 through the Urbana Sesquicentennial in 1983. Material concerning Champaign's centennial in 1960 is also included, but it is brief, as well as a few newspapers from 1776. The collection is primarily concerned with documenting the planning of the bicentennial events that occurred in the Champaign-Urbana area, as documentation of those events.

**Arrangement:**

The collection is arranged into three series, Published Event Information, General Information, and Oversized Materials. Series one includes volumes of event calendars and activity indexes, as well as the final report for the Illinois bicentennial as a whole. Series two is the bulk of the collection and includes correspondence, memorandums, pamphlets, newspaper clippings, volunteer forms, and event planning



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Information. Series three includes all of the oversized materials, such as cups, a t-shirt, and two BetaMAX tapes of the 1976 Fourth of July Parade. The first two series are held in half Hollinger boxes, while the third series is held in an oversized box.

**Subject Terms:**

American Revolution Bicentennial, 1976 – Illinois  
American Revolution Bicentennial, 1976

**Name Terms:**

Champaign County Bicentennial Commission  
Illinois Bicentennial Commission  
People's Bicentennial Commission  
Rochford, Jeanne

**Container List:**

**Box 1**

**Series 1: Published Event Information**

Volume 1: Comprehensive Calendar, State by State, June 1975  
Volume 2: Comprehensive Calendar, State by State, October 1975  
Volume 3: Comprehensive Calendar of Events, February 1976  
Volume 4: Final Report, Illinois Bicentennial Commission, undated  
Volume 5: Index of Bicentennial Activities, February 1976  
Volume 6: Master Register of Bicentennial Projects, February 1976  
Volume 7: National Calendar of Bicentennial Events, July 1975  
Volume 8: Official Master Reference for Bicentennial Activities, April 1974

**Box 2**

**Series 2: General Information**

Folder 1: Advisory Committee, 1975  
Folder 2: Agendas and Minutes, 1974-1977  
Folder 3: America's Birthday Party, Correspondence and Cake Photos, 1975-1976  
Folder 4: American Indian Summer Celebration Correspondence, 1975  
Folder 5: American Revolution Local History, 1775, 1975  
Folder 6: Arts and Crafts Show Correspondence, 1975  
Folder 7: Bicentennial Activities in Other Communities, 1975-1977  
Folder 8: Bicentennial Calendars, 1975-1976  
Folder 9: Bicentennial Celebrations in Champaign County Towns, 1975  
Folder 10: Bicentennial Community Designation, 1975  
Folder 11: Bicentennial Project Survey, undated  
Folder 12: Bicentennial Tapestry, 1975  
Folder 13: Bicentennial Times, 1974-1975 (issues missing)  
Folder 14: Bicentennial Times, 1976 (February missing)



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- Folder 15: BINET Confirmations, 1975-1976
- Folder 16: Celebrity at Century Twentyone, 1975-1976
- Folder 17: Certificates and Proclamation of Appreciation, 1975-1976
- Folder 18: Champaign Centennial Committee, 1960
- Folder 19: Champaign County Bicentennial Commission Correspondence, 1974-1976
- Folder 20: Champaign County Bicentennial Commission Organization, undated
- Folder 21: Champaign County Fair Correspondence and Ephemera, 1975-1976

**Box 3**

**Series 2: General Information**

- Folder 1: Champaign Park District, 1974-1976
- Folder 2: Construction of First Train Diorama, 1975
- Folder 3: Contest Correspondence and Materials, 1975-1976
- Folder 4: Correspondence concerning United States Flag, 1975-1976
- Folder 5: Correspondence for Rail Road Murals, 1975
- Folder 6: County Museum News Article, 1975
- Folder 7: Eighteen Monthly Themes Leading Up to the Bicentennial, 1975-1976
- Folder 8: Fourth of July Freedom Celebration and Parade, 1975-1976
- Folder 9: "From the Hearts of Men", 1975
- Folder 10: Grant Applications, 1975
- Folder 11: Hands Across America, 1975-1976
- Folder 12: Harry Breen Prints Correspondence, 1975-1976
- Folder 13: Heartland Heritage Days, 1974-1976
- Folder 14: Historic Sites Marking and Preservation, 1975-1976
- Folder 15: Illinois Bicentennial Commission Correspondence, 1974-1977
- Folder 16: Illinois Correspondent, 1974-1975
- Folder 17: Jeanne Rochford Correspondence, 1974-1977
- Folder 18: Johnny Horizon '76, 1976
- Folder 19: Johnny Horizon '76 Ephemera, undated
- Folder 20: Joint Projects with Urbana, Ohio and History, 1975-1976
- Folder 21: "Just Outside Chicago is a Place Called Illinois", Script and Ad, 1976
- Folder 22: Lincoln Bicentennial Project, 1975-1976
- Folder 23: Local Programs, undated
- Folder 24: Memorandums, 1975-1977
- Folder 25: Miscellaneous Club Information, 1975
- Folder 26: National Bell Ringing Ceremony, 1975-1976

**Box 4**

**Series 2: General Information**

- Folder 1: Newspapers, 1979
- Folder 2: News Clippings, 1975-1978
- Folder 3: Newspaper Clippings – Activities, Champaign County Pioneers, Historical Music, 1975-1976
- Folder 4: Newspaper Clippings – American Catholic Bicentennial, undated



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- Folder 5: Newspaper Clippings – Bicentennial Diary From Farm Bureau Paper, 1975-1976
- Folder 6: Newspaper Clippings – Bicentennial Events, 1975-1976
- Folder 7: Newspaper Clippings – Bicentennial Fire Hydrants, What’s Good About America?, 1975
- Folder 8: Newspaper Clippings – Bicentennial Products, 1975-1976
- Folder 9: Newspaper Clippings – Boneyard, 1975-1976
- Folder 10: Newspaper Clippings – Champaign and Urbana, 1975-1976
- Folder 11: Newspaper Clippings – Champaign County Village Events, 1975-1976
- Folder 12: Newspaper Clippings – Colonial America and the American Revolution, 1975-1976
- Folder 13: Newspaper Clippings – Heartland Heritage Days, 1975-1976
- Folder 14: Newspaper Clippings – Historic America Sites, 1975-1976
- Folder 15: Newspaper Clippings – National Bicentennial Activities, 1976
- Folder 16: Newspaper Clippings – People’s Bicentennial, 1975
- Folder 17: Newspaper Clippings – University of Illinois, Business and Professional Women’s Club Activities, undated
- Folder 18: Our Boneyard, It Can Happen Ephemera, undated
- Folder 19: “Our Grass Roots” Kick Off Dinner, 1975
- Folder 20: Painting Fire Hydrant and Mailboxes Project, 1974-1975
- Folder 21: Pamphlets – Abraham Lincoln, 1975-1976
- Folder 22: Pamphlets – The Bicentennial, 1975-1976
- Folder 23: Pamphlets – Events, 1975-1976
- Folder 24: Pamphlets – History, undated
- Folder 25: Pamphlets – Products for Sale, 1976
- Folder 26: People’s Bicentennial, 1975
- Folder 27: People’s Bicentennial Newspapers, undated
- Folder 28: Popcorn Festival, 1975

**Box 5**

**Series 2: General Information**

- Folder 1: Press Releases, 1975-1976
- Folder 2: Press Releases, 1975-1976
- Folder 3: Press Releases - UIUC and Parkland, 1975-1976
- Folder 4: Proposals, 1975-1976
- Folder 5: Resource Guides for Various Groups, 1975
- Folder 6: Signed Pages from a Scrapbook, undated
- Folder 7: Sources for the History of Champaign County: A Bibliography, 1975
- Folder 8: Speaker’s Bureau, 1975
- Folder 9: “Tale of Two Cities” History of Champaign and Urbana, 1975
- Folder 10: Time Capsule Correspondence, 1976
- Folder 11: Town Crier’s Meeting, undated
- Folder 12: Treasury Reports, 1975-1976
- Folder 13: “Up with People” Correspondence, 1975-1976
- Folder 14: Urbana Courthouse Bell and Clock, 1976
- Folder 15: Urbana Sesquicentennial General Publicity, 1983



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- Folder 16: Urbana Sesquicentennial Mailing, 1983
- Folder 17: Urbana Sesquicentennial Newspaper Clippings, 1983
- Folder 18: Urbana Sesquicentennial posters, Magazines, Flyers, 1983
- Folder 19: Urbana Sesquicentennial Radio and Television Promotion, 1983
- Folder 20: Volunteer Information, undated
- Folder 21: Workshop and Form Materials, 1975-1976
- Folder 22: World Speed Skating, 1975
- Folder 23: 1776 Shoppe, 1975-1976

**Box 6**

**Series 3: Oversized Materials**

- American Revolution Bicentennial Plastic Bronze Pin
- American Revolution Bicentennial Plastic White Pin
- Ben Franklin T-shirt
- Champaign County Parade July 4, 1976 recorded by WCIA (TV) Part 1 on BetaMAX
- Champaign County Parade July 4, 1976 recorded by WCIA (TV) Part 2 on BetaMAX
- Guest Book
- Illinois' Celebration '76 Hand Held Flag
- Illinois' Celebration '76 Pin
- Lincoln Memorial Medal
- Mr. Lincoln's Country, Decatur, Illinois Pin
- Official American Revolution Bicentennial Emblem Pin on card
- Ohio Champaign County Bi-Centennial Cup
- Our Boneyard It Can Happen Ceramic Mug
- '76 Shoppe Notebook for Logging Hours Worked and Purchases Made