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special

Who Was Your Favorite President?

This was a question often asked of Senator Smith during her lifetime, most particularly after her retirement from public service. During her service in Washington, she served with six presidents beginning with Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Richard M. Nixon. During her high school class trip to Washington in 1916, she met Woodrow Wilson. Perhaps this inspired Maine's first woman Senator to enter the field of politics. Whatever the reason, Maine and the nation were well rewarded. Photos of Margaret Chase Smith with Presidents of the United States and her comments are scattered throughout this newsletter.

Truman

“Harry S. Truman will go down in history as one of our greatest Presidents principally because he had the courage to make difficult decisions and to take the initiative in doing so. I admired him particularly because he spoke his mind.”

Roosevelt

“Of course, it will always be recognized that Franklin Delano Roosevelt stood out above so many others when he pulled us out of that deep, deep depression in the early thirties. One must have high respect for a person who took the stand that he did. It was unfortunate that a later President did not find his way to take advantage of the Herbert Hoover Commission report and act on item after item in cutting down to size the departments one by one. This could easily have been done in the fifties and we would not be facing the great debt that is before us now.” (*Presidential Thoughts cont. pg.2*)

Eisenhower

Although of opposing parties, Lyndon Johnson and MCS remained close friends from the time they entered the Senate in 1949. This photo was taken in 1966 prior to a luncheon hosted by Senators Mansfield and Dirksen.

Franklin Roosevelt letter to Smith in April of 1943

Presidential Thoughts



“President Eisenhower was so popular with the American people that he could have done practically anything he desired. But he was a passive President rather than an activist leader. He could have streamlined and reorganized our Federal Government and eliminated much of the bureaucratic waste and red tape—but he didn’t. Had he been more active on civil rights he could have shaped a more orderly process for that goal and thus avoided the turbulence and violence that followed in the 60s. But he shied away from controversy that desperately needed to be faced. An example was his shying away from the McCarthy issue.”

Kennedy

“John Kennedy, I think, cannot be appraised. He was in such a brief time. I was with him just one month before he was assassinated and I came to the conclusion that he was young, he was attractive, he was beginning to better understand government and if he had lived, he could have done great things. But, I think it’s not well to even try to guess at what he could have done.”

Johnson

“Lyndon Johnson and I served together on the same committees with [Senator Richard B.] Russell and Senator [John C.] Stennis. The four of us were together through the early forties right through to the time that Johnson was Vice-President. I think if it had not been for Vietnam, Johnson’s handling of the Vietnam situation, when he did not call up the Reservists, but instead took the young boys—with little training and sent them to Vietnam. If he had not done that, I think he could have gone down in history as a great president. But he, because he had great background, was brought up sponsored by one of our great Speakers, Sam Rayburn. He [Johnson] was an excellent, very effective majority leader of the Senate, but he went very wrong when he didn’t stand up to that Vietnam [situation] and instead let other people like McNamara run it.”

Nixon

“Nixon came into the House when I was there and he was ambitious, no question about that. I never had full confidence in him, however. I think he was not for me in campaigns, but as far as on the surface was concerned, we were friendly. I think it was quite unnecessary for him to get into the tragedy that he got into, because there were a lot of people wire tapping. If he had come in and told the truth on the whole story—had he done that, all of us would have probably said, “Thank you, now let’s start over again.” In fact, I think, probably today, if it was not for that absence of the truth, he was probably the most knowledgeable man in foreign affairs of any person in the country.”

We Quote:

(article in Sanford Tribune, July 27, 1961, regarding Kennedy versus United States Steel which quoted a portion of a speech made by Smith at the National Republican Women's Conference in Washington.)

“As a Republican, I applaud the results of President Kennedy's use of the high office of the Presidency with all its enormous prestige and power to mould and marshal public opinion against a resented steel price rise. In United States Steel he couldn't have had a better political ‘patsy.’ But I do not applaud OTHER tactics that he resorted to in this matter—tactics such as the threatening of criminal prosecution and the use of police state methods such as the FBI routing a reporter out of bed in the middle of the night.

“Nor do I believe that price control should be effected by presidential action solely on one industry. If price control IS needed, then the proper course is the enactment of legislation covering all industries and business and covering wages. For those who applaud the tactics of threat of criminal prosecution and the use of the FBI in police state methods, I would say—to the consumer housewife, that if the President alone can set the price of steel, then he can set the wage that her husband receives—to the corner grocery store man or the corner drug store man, that if the President can set the price of steel, then he can tell them how much they can charge for a loaf of bread or a tube of toothpaste—to the members of the press, that if the President or the Attorney-General can order the FBI to rout a reporter out of bed in the middle of the night on a news story, then it can be done to you sometime on some news story you have written. Strength, the American way, is not manifested by threats of criminal prosecution or police state methods.”

“Leadership is not manifested by coercion, even against the resented. Greatness is not manifested by unlimited pragmatism which places such a high premium on the end justifying ANY means and ANY methods.”

Sanford Tribune editorial comment: “Once again, Maine's own Senator Smith has displayed her courage in taking a stand on every important issue. She attacks what she regards as wrong, whether it be a Republican or a Democratic action. Sensible Republicans applauded her denunciation of the Republican witch-hunter, Senator Joseph McCarthy, in the early 1950s. She dared speak then, when most of her colleagues remained silent because of fear. We commend her courage on this matter, and we ask those of our readers who agree with her stand on the steel issue to let her know by letter. This is the least we can do to give her our moral support when she speaks out with such integrity and eloquence.”

“Who Said” Answer from January

Newsletter—The answer can be found on the front cover just above the “What's Inside” box. Who called Senator Smith “the devil in the disguise of a woman?” The answer is Soviet Union Premier Nikita Khrushchev.

Trivia question for the month of April is: The first time in history when two women ran for the U. S. Senate was in 1960. Margaret Chase Smith was one of those women. Who was the other?

Students from Jefferson Elementary School (above) visit on February 1.

Orland Elementary School students raised \$1,000 to sponsor the Ricky Craven snowmobile ride. Money from this event was used to support four charities. Two of the students, Alex and Miranda, are pictured at right.

Don't Forget—Skowhegan Girl Expanded Program This Summer

Because last summer's program was such a success, two Skowhegan Girl programs are being offered in June: “A Day in the Life of Margaret Chase” and “The Road to Washington.” The June 19-23 session welcomes young people ages 9-12; the June 26-30 session will explore the circumstances leading up to Margaret Chase Smith's journey to Washington. This second week welcomes interested students age 12-14. If interested in either of these free, educational programs, contact Vanessa Caron at 207-474-7133. Space is limited to 10 students per session.

One of President John Kennedy's final trips—to the University of Maine in October of 1963 just prior to his assassination. Smith and Kennedy are shown waving to the crowds. Jane Muskie climbs the flight steps.

Mainer of the Century?

You guessed it, Margaret Chase Smith. In a survey of Maine residents polled during the week of December 7, Margaret Chase Smith was chosen as the most influential Mainer of the past century. Senators Edmund Muskie and George Mitchell followed close behind. The most influential person of the century in the United States chosen by Mainers was Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Mother Teresa for world honors. During a random selection and without prompting by pollers from Strategic Marketing Services of Portland, Senator Smith was chosen by twenty-five percent of those surveyed. The greatest American president selected was Abraham Lincoln; favorite athlete was Michael Jordan; most significant event of the 20th century was World War II; most important invention was the computer; greatest challenge facing the U. S. is maintaining peace; and nearly half of those polled felt we would not find intelligent life on other planets in the next 100 years. Senator Smith's selection as the most influential Mainer of the Century is well deserved and those who knew her couldn't agree more.

Hampden Academy Key Club members are involved in many community service projects and became Santa's Helpers, raising \$200 during the holidays for those less fortunate.

Pictured above are 2nd-grade students from the McGraw School in Hampden who collected 20 boxes of supplies for a local homeless shelter.

8th graders from the Piscataquis Middle School in Guilford have been mentoring younger students. At Christmastime, each mentor made a book and toy for his or her partner.

*Crystal Perkins, MCSL staff member, presents Mary Behn with a copy of Dr. Janann Sherman's recent biography on Margaret Chase Smith, **No Place for a Woman**. Mrs. Behn was the winner of the free book raffle at the recent Skowhegan Community Action Group "Getting-to-Know-You-Fair." Congratulations!!*

Military Man Makes Use of Library

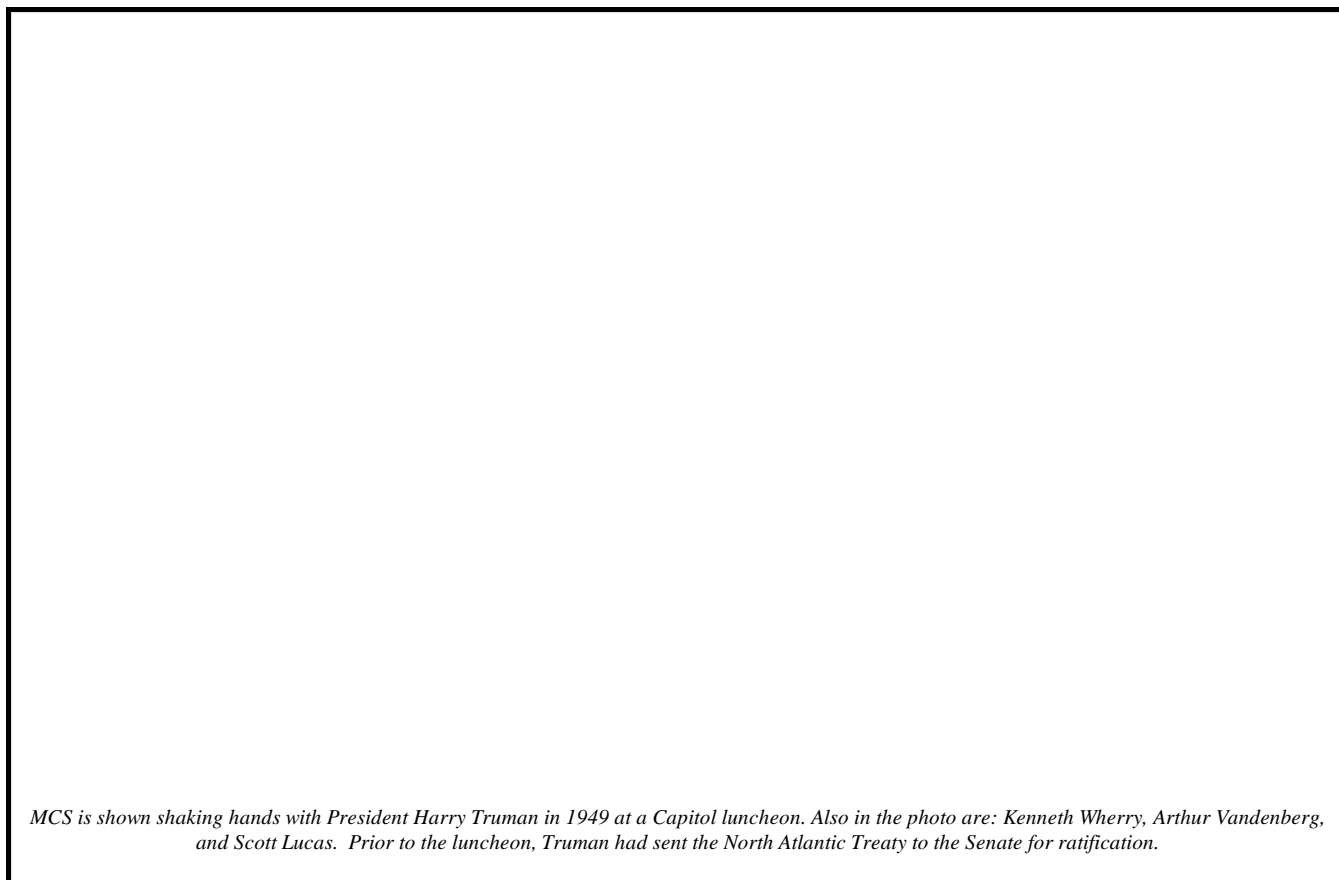
Tim Wright, a senior at the U. S. Military Academy at West Point, visited the library in February to review the files related to McCarthy and Communism in the 1950s. Tim attended schools in Bangor, Maine, and seemed pleased to return to Maine to find such a valuable resource so close to his hometown.

Worthy Causes Attract Maine Students

Students from Carol Jowdry's 5th grade class at Manchester Elementary School raised close to \$1,000 for the Maine Children's Cancer Fund. In photos below, Mrs Jowdry holds the project scrapbook as a young student reads her description of why raising the money was so important. The entire class is also pictured below right during their visit to the library.

“Senator Smith devoted the final years of her life trying to instill in young people the importance of service. You can be sure that her life and philosophy of serving others will continue to influence us as we continue our education and as well as throughout our lifetime.”

Students from Brewer High School's Business Education Department—Brandon Frost, Laura Crosby, Gretchen Reif, Michelle Whitney, with teachers Mrs. Hunt and Mrs. Crosby (pictured right)—held a bake sale which raised nearly \$300 for the benefit of the Santa's Helper Fund.



MCS is shown shaking hands with President Harry Truman in 1949 at a Capitol luncheon. Also in the photo are: Kenneth Wherry, Arthur Vandenberg, and Scott Lucas. Prior to the luncheon, Truman had sent the North Atlantic Treaty to the Senate for ratification.

A Portrait is Forever

Ron Frontin hopes to capture the spirit of Margaret Chase Smith when submitting his name for selection as the artist to paint the portrait to be placed in the United States Senate in Washington DC. A Camden, Maine, native, Frontin completed his studies at the Philadelphia College of Art and made his mark by painting a portrait of Maine's former Governor, John R. McKernan. Says Frontin, "the expression is everything in a portrait. Too broad of a smile could look maniacal, or like a smirk. A serious or blank expression could read as a frown. A penetrating gaze could unsettle viewers." In attempting to capture the essence of Senator Smith, Frontin has visited the MCSL and will return to review the hundreds of photographs and interview staff members who knew her. "Portraits are a real test of an artist's drawing ability," says Frontin, "...they demand that the artist use more than his eyes." The degree of difficulty in portraying posthumous subjects is heightened.

Frank Morton (below) is an oil and pastel artist from Oakland, Maine. He, too, hopes to secure the Smith portrait commission. Even as a youngster, he was known to have a gift, a flair, a talent for painting. Sharpening his artistic skills in Florida and California art schools as an adult, he embarked on a career in public relations and spent twenty years in Hollywood. Now returned to Maine, Morton gives art instruction in his home, working with oil, pastels, acrylics, pencils, and even sculpture. His desire to paint the Smith portrait brought him to Skowhegan where he spent time reviewing the hundreds of photographs in an attempt to capture the essence of Margaret Chase Smith.

Portrait artist Ron Frontin



www.mcslibrary.org

Check us out! We have officially launched our website with interesting and informative material about Senator Smith's long career in public service. Click on the options to learn more about Maine's famous lady politician. Listen to the campaign song used in the 1964 bid for the Presidency. Read primary documents; survey the archival collection; find a map and directions. Note the many library programs and events and meet the staff. It's easy, it's educational—it's available now.

We welcome a visit!

Special thanks to Cally Gurley, formerly Special Collections Archivist for the George J. Mitchell Papers at Bowdoin College, for her invaluable assistance during our website building process.

Senator Smith's portrait will join those of the two other women currently on display in the Senate—Pocahontas and Hattie Carraway. One of Maine's current senators, Olympia Snowe, has

Portrait artist Frank Morton

been the major proponent, with full support from Majority Leader Trent Lott, in securing the agreement to display the portrait and the funding to commission its work. The process of the artist's selection, research and the actual painting is expected to take upwards of two years to complete. As Snowe says, Smith's life was a "testimony to the possibilities that exist for women in America," and the choice of Smith "is most fitting."

The Library is pleased to host "Journeys," another New Books/ New Readers discussion series organized by the Maine Humanities Council.

Faith Baptist Christian School students were very impressed with their tour of the MCS Library. “Comments such as “this is what I’m studying in social studies,” makes the tour worthwhile and beneficial. Say Supervisors Elizabeth and Glenn Ackroyd, “may our area students continue to benefit from the information about Mrs. Smith and her sound values.”

“I hope some day the Margaret Chase Smith Library will turn into a mansion that will be the best international place to go. Someday somebody from Washington D. C. will give you an offer to make the Margaret Chase Smith Library to be the best place in America.” Tyler S. Morgan, Canaan Elementary School

Skowhegan Area Middle School students, Marc Denis, John Savage, Ashley Greenleaf, and Ramsey Sargent, recently made use of the archives while preparing a presentation about World War II for Maine National History Day.

Mrs. Clapp’s and Mr. Poulin’s 4th grade students from Canaan Elementary School organized a food drive. The school donated over 800 items to the local food cupboard.

6th grade students from Garrett Schenck School in Anson visit with teacher Mr. McManus. For “Make a Difference Day,” they assisted local senior citizens.

Students from Cape Cod Hill School in New Sharon proudly display a graph which charts the 1,009 items collected for the local food bank.

June 1, 2000
***50th anniversary of Senator
 Smith's Declaration of
 Conscience***

Watch for details of special events commemorating this historic date to be publicized in Maine newspapers. Copies of this history-making, "Declaration of Conscience" speech are available by contacting the library.

***"I speak as a
 Republican.
 I speak as a
 woman.
 I speak as a
 United States
 Senator.
 I speak as an
 American."***

Margaret Chase Smith, June 1, 1950

The "Friends" Newsletter is published by the Margaret Chase Smith Library. Editor: Dr. Gregory P. Gallant; Coordinated by Angela Stockwell with the assistance of Vanessa Caron, Lynnette King, Crystal Perkins, Byron Pooler, and David Richards. The Library is a non-profit research center and museum of 20th century political artifacts committed to bringing the ideals of Senator Smith's career in public service to the people of Maine and the nation.

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Friends of the Library Newsletter

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