Title: Evelyn Shakir Collection
Creator: Shakir, Evelyn
Inclusive dates: 1880s-2000
Bulk dates: 1910-1930
Extent: 5.5 linear feet
Accession number: 2011.01.00

Abstract:
This collection from author Evelyn Shakir documents the Boston chapter of the Syrian Ladies Aid Society. Materials include the club’s minutes, account records, and correspondence. A smaller portion of the collection is transcripts from many of Shakir’s oral histories, conducted as research for her books. The Syrian Ladies Aid Society materials date from 1919-2000 and the oral histories were conducted in the 1990s.

Language: Material is in English and Arabic
Acquisition: Donation from George Ellenbogen in 2011
Access: Box 10 are restricted materials
Photographs: Box 1; Folder 37; Box 19
A-V Material: See related materials
Digital Materials: Select material is available online on aannm.contentdm.oclc.org
Copyright: Copyright has been transferred to the Arab American National Museum.
Processed: March 2013 by Elizabeth Skene. Updated November 2018 by Elyssa Bisoski.
Arrangement: By person/organization, then by type. Original order preserved when possible.
Preferred citation: [item], Folder [#], Box [#], Evelyn Shakir Collection, Arab American National Museum

Edited November 2018
**Biography**

Evelyn Catherine Shakir grew up in West Roxbury, Massachusetts. She is the daughter of Hannah and Wadie Shakir who were first generation Lebanese Americans, and her community was largely comprised of Lebanese immigrants. She held a special fondness for those that shared her family’s culture. She had a passion for writing and received a master’s from Harvard and a doctorate from Boston University. In the 1970s, Dr. Shakir began collecting and telling the stories of the Lebanese women in her community. She published these collected stories in 1997 with *Bint Arab* and in 2007 with *Remember Me to Lebanon*, giving a voice to Arab American women.

**Scope and Content Note**

This collection primarily documents social organizations in Boston – the Syrian American Club, the Syrian Ladies Aid Society, and the New Syria National League. There is a significant amount of correspondence by these groups, largely civic in nature, as well as bank statements, a blank naturalization form (Box 1, Folder 8) and Massachusetts civil service form (Box 1, Folder 8). Also documented are the clubs’ war efforts – namely buying bonds. There is a collection of bank statements and business transactions of the Sabbagh Bros. company and a Sabbagh family tree put together by Evelyn in 1983 for a family reunion. Evelyn also typed the minutes of nearly all the Syrian Ladies Aid Society meetings (Box 1, Folders 14-35) and collected various ephemera, program booklets, accounting ledgers, and some photographs. Box 1, Folder 45 contains thank you notes to Philip Shakir from Universities and libraries after he sent copies of his uncle’s, Elias Sabbagh’s, book of poetry. An addendum papers donated in 2017 include personal and academic papers from Evelyn’s own life.

**Subjects**

- Arab American writing
- Arab Americans--Bibliography--Catalogs.
- Arab Americans--Cultural assimilation.
- Arab Americans--Churches.
- Arab Americans--Directories.
- Arab Americans--Ethnic identity.
- Arab Americans--History--20th century
- Arab Americans--Social conditions--21st century.
- Arab Americans--United States
- Interviews--Arab Americans.

**Genre terms**

- Correspondence
- Minutes
- Account books
- Photographs
- Bank statements

**Related Materials**

- 2012.04.00 – 227 cassette tapes of oral histories conducted by Evelyn Shakir
Contents

Box 1
Folder 1. Sabbagh Bros.
Folder 2. Sabbagh Bros.
Folder 3. Sabbagh Bros.
Folder 5. New Syria National League, Syrian American Club of New York
Folder 6. New Syria National League, Syrian American Club of Boston
Folder 7. Syrian American Club
Folder 8. Syrian American Club
Folder 9. Syrian American Club
Folder 10. Syrian American Club
Folder 11. Syrian American Club, File Box (1 of 2)
Folder 12. Syrian American Club, File box (2 of 2)
Folder 13. Syrian Ladies Aid Society membership lists *(possibly tally of mentions in minutes)*
Folder 14. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1918-1924*
Folder 15. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1919-1932*
Folder 16. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1933
Folder 17. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1934
Folder 18. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1935
Folder 19. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1936
Folder 20. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1937
Folder 21. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1938
Folder 22. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1939
Folder 23. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1940
Folder 24. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1941
Folder 25. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1942
Folder 26. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1943
Folder 27. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1944
Folder 28. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1945
Folder 29. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1946
Folder 30. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1947
Folder 31. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1948
Folder 32. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1949
Folder 33. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1949-1954
Folder 34. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1979-1984
Folder 35. Syrian Ladies Aid Society minutes, 1985-2000
Folder 36. Syrian Ladies Aid Society
Folder 37. Syrian Ladies Aid Society photos
Folder 38. Syrian Ladies Aid Society photocopies
Folder 39. Syrian Ladies Aid Society international aid
Folder 40. Ayoob family correspondence
Folder 41. Arabic language correspondence *(the contents of this folder came as a bundle in a plastic bag)*
Folder 42. Shakir correspondence, notes
Folder 43. Shakir papers, notes, events
Folder 44.  Shakir photographs (*Unidentified, presumably Shakir family. Two packets, original order.*)
Folder 45.  Phillip Shakir thank you notes
Folder 46.  Radcliff Institute agreement
Folder 47.  West Newton Property (SLAS)
Folder 48.  2015 Addendum

**Box 2**
Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston programs, ephemera, and realia
- 1932, Fifteenth Anniversary, complete report
- 1942, Silver Jubilee Program, 25th Anniversary
- 1950 Annual banquet program
- 1967, 50th Anniversary Celebration program
- 1972, 55th Anniversary Celebration program
- 1977, 60th Anniversary Celebration program
- 1987, 70th Anniversary Celebration program
- 1992, 75th Anniversary Banquet program
- 1997, 80th Anniversary Banquet program
- 2002, 85th Anniversary Banquet program
- By-Laws of the Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston
- 1945, Junior Chapter Annual Dance Program
- 1947, Junior Chapter Annual Dance Program
- 1948, Junior Chapter Annual Dance Program
- 1983, The Arabic Hour Second Anniversary
- 1929, “The Secret Marriage” program, presented by the SLAS
- 1937, Musical concert program, presented by the SLAS
- 1934, Program inaugurating the SLAS Mortgage Fund Campaign
- 1958, Banquet and musical concert program
- 1947, “A Bridegroom from Oklahoma” program, presented by the SLAS
- 1947, Musical concert program, presented by the SLAS (3)
- 1945, Musical concert program, presented by the SLAS
- 1984, 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Syrian-Lebanese Women’s Club of Greater Boston

Folder 1.  Epemera/realia
Folder 2.  Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston program booklet photocopies
Folder 3.  Speech from 1977 60th Anniversary Celebration

Published Materials (plays, booklets, journals, magazines)
*As Sayeh* (Syrian Arabic Magazine), New York, 1923
*As Sayeh* (Syrian Arabic Magazine), New York, 1930
Bison, Alexandre. “Madam X: Story of a Mother’s Love,” 1930
Syrian Educational Society booklet, 1916
Unpublished Materials
Nasser, Paul Eugene. “East Utica.”
Notebook of articles by Elias Sabbagh

Box 3
Folder 1. Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston, handwritten minutes photocopies, 1990s
Folder 2. Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston, handwritten minutes photocopies, Junior Chapter, Aug. 1934 – Aug. 1935
Folder 3. Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston, handwritten minutes photocopies, Junior Chapter, September 1935-April 1937
Folder 4. Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston, handwritten minutes photocopies, Junior Chapter, 1937-1940
Folder 5. Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston, handwritten minutes photocopies, Junior Chapter, 1940-1943
Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston handwritten minutes – 5 steno books, 3 notebooks

Box 4
1. Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston, handwritten minutes photocopies, 1943-1948
2. Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston, handwritten minutes photocopies, 1932-1934
3. Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston, handwritten minutes photocopies, 1934
4. Syrian Ladies Aid Society Junior Chapter, Boston photocopies, 1931-1947

Box 5
Folder 1. Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston ledger photocopies*
Folder 2. Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston ledger photocopies, 1918-1920*

Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston ledgers:
  o 1934-1936
  o 1936-1938
  o 1931?
  o 1932
  o 1922-1929

Box 6
Evelyn Shakir oral history transcripts

Box 7
Evelyn Shakir oral history transcripts

Box 8
Evelyn Shakir oral history transcripts

Box 9
Evelyn Shakir oral history transcripts
Box 10
Restricted materials
- Syrian Ladies Aid Society bank statements and receipts, 1990s
- Syrian Ladies Aid Society program planning and ad sales, 1990s-2000s

Box 11 Book Tray

English Language Books
Rihbany, Abraham Mitre. *America Save the Near East*, 1918.

Arabic Language Books
Abu Madi, Elia. *Al-Jadawil* [The Streams], 1927.
Abu Madi, Elia. *Al-Khamar’il* [The Thickets], 1940.
Al-Haddad, Salim Fares. *Immigration Story*.
Ayoub, Rashid. *Aghani Al-Darwish* [Songs of the Dervish], 1928.
Ayoub, Rashid. *Al-Ayyoubiat*, 1916.
Gibran, Kahlil. *Al-Sanabil* (selected works), 1929.
Gibran, Kahlil. *Ara’is al-Muruj* [Spirit Brides], 1906.
Gibran, Kahlil. *Al-Arwah al-mutamarrida* [Spirits Rebellious], 1908.
Kassab, Saleem. *Kitaab Al-Dura Al-Faridah* [The Book of the Precious Pearl], 1883.
Rihan, Ameen. *Muluk-ul Arab* [Kings of the Arabs], 1951
Sabbagh, Elias. *Wahee Al-Yoyoos* [The Cupboard], 1932. 2 copies.
Ziadeh, May. *May: In Syria and Lebanon*, 1924

Box 12 Book Tray

Arabic Books – no single author
Bible, 1904
Bible, 1962
Dictionary
*Preparations*, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.
*The Gathering of the Pen League* (anthology), 1921

Arabic Language Journals
*Al-Akhlaq* [Character]: An Illustrated Arabic Magazine, Vol 10, No.1. 1929.
*Al-Hilal* [The Crescent], November 1923
*Al-Hilal* [The Crescent], January 1965
*Al-Hilal* [The Crescent], June 1958

Box 13 Book Tray
Additional untranslated Arabic books (26)
**Box 14** Book Tray  
Ledgers and check books, 1940s-1960s

**Box 15**  
Newspapers and clippings, primarily *As Sameer*, 1940s

**Box 16**  
*The Syrian World*  
- Roll 1: July 1926 – December 1927  
- Roll 2: January 1928 – December 1929  
- Roll 3: January 1930 – June 1932  
- Roll 4: May 1933 – November 1935

2011.01.01: CD, Evelyn Shakir Interview, 2003  
2011.01.06: Award plaque, Arab American Book Award 2007  
2011.01.08: CD, *The Syrian Lebanese Community of Boston*  
2011.01.09: Cassette Tape, *The Syrian Lebanese Community of Boston*  
2011.01.12: Lace fragments  
2011.01.13: Lebanese-Syrian Ladies Aid Society rubber stamp

**Box 17** (2017 addition – Evelyn Shakir personal papers)  
Folder 1. Photographs, n.d.  
Folder 2. Academic papers, 1957-1959  
Folder 3. Academic papers, 1960-1961  
Folder 5. Academic awards and achievements, 1956, 1972  
Folder 6. Correspondence, 1969-1978  
Folder 8. Draft copies - *Teaching Arabs, Writing Self: Memoirs of an Arab American Woman*  
Folder 9. Draft copies - *Teaching Arabs, Writing Self: Memoirs of an Arab American Woman*

**Box 18** (2018 addition – correspondence and collected articles and theses)  
Folder 1. Abu-Jaber, Diana  
Folder 2. Abinader, Elmaz  
Folder 3. ACCESS  
Folder 4. Ansara, James  
Folder 5. Arab Americans  
Folder 6. Arab American Literature  
Folder 7. Arab American Women  
Folder 8. Awad Joseph  
Folder 9. Bedway, Barbara  
Folder 10. Bourjaily, Vance  
Folder 11. Bushnaq, Inea  
Folder 12. Dajani, Souad  
Folder 13. Geha, Joseph  
Folder 14. Gibran, Kahlil

Edited November 2018
Folder 15. Haddad, Carol
Folder 16. Hajar, Paula
Folder 17. Joseph, Larry
Folder 18. Kahf, Mohja
Folder 19. Karam, Afifa
Folder 20. Melhem, D.H.
Folder 21. Menconi, Evelyn
Folder 22. Naff, Alixa
Folder 23. Nasser, Eugene Paul
Folder 24. Nye, Naomi Shehab
Folder 25. Rihbany, Abraham
Folder 26. Said, Edward
Folder 27. Suleiman, Michael
Folder 28. Tannous, Afif
Folder 29. Thabit, Shukrie
Folder 30. Vecoli, Rudy
Folder 31. Younis, Adele
Folder 32. Corey, Sheila. *The Women from the Levant: A Study in Cultural Adaptation*
Folder 34. Lahaj, Mary. *Building an Islamic Community in America*
Folder 35. Tannous, Afif. *Trends of Social and Cultural Change in Bishmizzeen, an Arab Village of North Lebanon*
Folder 36. Articles on mental health in Arab American communities
Folder 37. Additional articles

**Box 19 Oversize**

Photograph, Golden Jubilee Banquet – St. George’s Syrian Orthodox Church, 1900-1950
John Hancock Hall, Boston, MA, November 19, 1950

Photograph, St. George’s Syrian Orthodox Church, Farewell dinner to Rev. H.R. Upson, July 1951 (2 copies)