

Arab American National Museum Archives
13624 Michigan Ave., Dearborn, MI 48126



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
Accruals: Additional material added in 2015, 2017 and 2018.
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 aanm.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

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 Phillip 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
- [Harvard University: Lebanese Syrian Ladies' Aid Society \(Boston, Mass.\). Records of the Lebanese Syrian Ladies' Aid Society, 1917-2005](#)

Contents

Box 1

- Folder 1. Sabbagh Bros.
- Folder 2. Sabbagh Bros.
- Folder 3. Sabbagh Bros.
- Folder 4. Sabbagh family reunion book, 1983
- 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. Ephemera/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
Dalal K. Safadi, ed. "Echo of the East," Highland Park, MI, February 1948.
Khoury, Antoine. "The Voice of Yesterday," 1939.
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*
- Folder 3. Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston ledger photocopies, 1957-1989

Syrian Ladies Aid Society, Boston ledgers:

- 1934-1936
- 1936-1938
- 1931?
- 1932
- 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

Fosdick, Harry Emerson. *A Pilgrimage to Palestine*, 1927.
 Gibran, Kahlil. *The Madman*, 1918.
 Rihbany, Abraham Mitre. *America Save the Near East*, 1918.
 Rizk, Salom. *Syrian Yankee*, 1954. Signed by author

Arabic Language Books

Abu Madi, Elia. *Al-Jadawil* [The Streams], 1927.
 Abu Madi, Elia. *Al-Khama'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.
 Fares, Felix and Jean Debs. *The Guide*.
 Gibran, Kahlil. *Al-Musiqqa* [Music], 1905.
 Gibran, Kahlil. *Al-Sanabil* (selected works), 1929.
 Gibran, Kahlil. *Ara'is al-Muruj* [Spirit Brides], 1906.
 Gibran, Kahlil. *Ramal wa Zubd* [Sand and Foam], 1927.
 Gibran, Kahlil. *Al-Arwah al-mutamarrida* [Spirits Rebellious], 1908.
 Gibran, Kahlil (trans. by Bishop Anthony Bashir). *Prior Proverbs and Poetry*, 1924.
 Istvan, Abdallah Marin. *Tuhfat al-ataba* [The Masterpiece of Al-Ataba]. (Poetry printed by the Syrian press of Wadie Shakir in Boston). 2 copies.
 Kassab, Saleem. *Kitaab Al-Dura Al-Faridah* [The Book of the Precious Pearl], 1883.
 Rihani, 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-Funoon [The Arts]: An Arabic Review of Literature and Arts. Vol I, No. 9. December 1913.
Al-Funoon [The Arts]: An Arabic Review of Literature and Arts. Vol III, No. 2. September 1917.
Al-Hilal [The Crescent], Vol. 19. 1910.
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

Microfilm, *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 4. Academic papers, 1966-1968 and n.d.

Folder 5. Academic awards and achievements, 1956, 1972

Folder 6. Correspondence, 1969-1978

Folder 7. Publications, 1978-1998

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

- 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 33. Kazaleh, Fadwa Ann. *Biculturalism and Adjustment: A study of Ramallah-American Adolescents in Jacksonville, FL.*
- 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)