

Register of the
Racine Street Project
Collection

Collection 329

Center for Adventist Research
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Andrews University
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Racine Street Project Collection (Collection 329)

Introduction

The Racine Street Project begun in the late 1970s, by the Lake Region Conference (LRC) under the leadership of Dr. Charles D. Joseph, was located at the intersection of Racine and 76th Street in Chicago. The projects goals were to provide low-income housing for senior citizen church members, a school for the Shiloh Seventh-day Adventist Church, and a shopping plaza. The shopping plaza was to produce income to sustain the other two endeavors.

In the late 1970s, the LRC was in good financial standing. However, they still lacked funds to provide their constituents with important services such as suitable housing for the elderly and Adventist education for the youth. This led to the decision by the LRC Executive Committee to proceed with this project. The LRC leadership told the members of the Conference that this land would indeed be used for housing, a school, and shopping center. Further, they led the membership to believe this would be paid for by the government and not by the Conference. In 1977, the LRC Executive Committee voted to form a separate non-profit corporation called Full Life, Inc. (Full Life) to shield the LRC from liability while maintaining the same leadership in both organizations.

The Racine Street site consisted of four parcels of land that originally were to be developed into three housing buildings and the Shiloh Academy. The plan was later changed to be two housing buildings, the Shiloh Academy, and a commercial building. Loyola University was the owner of these four parcels of land. Talks began to acquire the land from them. After several failed attempts, Full Life entered into several partnerships with various groups to enable Full Life to acquire the funding needed to buy the properties. These partnerships caused a relatively simple project by the LRC to transform into a complex one with several other parties involved, some of whom were not connected to the Adventist church.

Due to the financial drain on the LRC brought on by this project, by the early 1980s the Conference was behind in to tithe and offering remittance to the Lake Union. This caused the Union to become concerned for the stability of the LRC. Additionally, early 1986, the Union became aware that the Shiloh Seventh-day Adventist Church had been recently mortgaged to raise funds without the consent of the LRC Executive Committee or the Shiloh Church members. In light of these and other information, the Lake Union and the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists opened a formal investigation into the affairs and dealings of the LRC.

In 1986 the North American Division requested special counsel to present a report of the North American Division Survey of the Lake Region Conference. After delays from the LRC, a meeting was finally held on February 8, 1987, at Kellogg Memorial Auditorium in Battle Creek, Michigan to share the investigation and report to the constituents of the LRC. The report found that the leadership of the LRC failed to

follow church policy and committed fraud in the process of building this project. Elders Charles D. Joseph and R. C. Brown, Sr., were requested to resign.

The following years were spent fixing the financial and legal issues that were made during the Racine Street Project. There were also issues within the church itself that needed to be addressed from the new administration in the LRC and the Lake Union.

In the end, a shopping plaza was eventually built but apparently went bankrupt fairly soon; some apartments were built by one of the partners, but the leader of that project ended up in jail for fraud; and the Shiloh Academy was not built.

Scope and Content

This collection documents the Racine Street Project of the Lake Region Conference through a collection of various legal and financial documents, newspaper clippings, and the report prepared by the North American Division. Included also are some correspondence from church leaders as well as concerned lay members and minutes that pertain to this project.

The collection begins in 1977, but the majority of the construction and subsequent investigation of the project is from 1980-1987. The years after 1988 deal with the aftermath and corresponding consequences to the Racine Street Project.

Arrangement

This collection is in chronological order from the preparations (late 1970s to early 1980s) to the involvement of the Lake Union and General Conference (mid 1980s) until the corresponding aftermaths that ended in the early 1990s. The donor, Vern Alger, arranged this collection by a mix of events and dates which were meaningful to one working on the case. However, the Center for Adventist Research felt access would be best if the collection were in chronological order. This will help the researcher progress step by step through the developing project and the subsequent results.

The itemization in the following register is rather brief. We felt a detailed listing would take a long time to compile, we may not describe some technical documents correctly, and it would be very tedious for anyone to work through. Therefore, we employed several general terms detailed below. Anyone working through this collection should find these descriptive enough within the chronological framework to find the general area they wish to see.

Construction Documents are those which had to do with the acquiring and building of the Racine Street Project. The Crane Construction Company was the main company the project used. There are also documents from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Bank Documents are those from the banks that were used to acquire loans for the project. The banks involved are: Independence Bank of Chicago, Continental Bank, Lloyds Bank, and American National Bank.

Financial Documents are either the financial plans of the project or the various financial information from the LRC.

Partnership Agreements are the documents of the various partnerships that were formed between the LRC with other entities. The partners include: Full Life, Inc., Urban Services Realty, South Shore Ltd., Neighborhood Fund, Continental Plaza Associates, Continental Commercial Partners, and LSM Venture Associates.

Mortgage Documents are the documents of the land and building mortgages from the banks.

North American Division Survey Documents are the documents which were used for the investigation that was conducted by the North American Division on the actions of the LRC.

North American Division Survey Report Meeting are the documents that dealt with the meeting that the North American Division held for the constituents of the LRC to discuss the findings of their investigation.

Provenance

Vernon L. Alger was a lawyer, employed by the Lake Union Conference and also working for the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, and assigned to the Racine Street Project case. He donated this collection to the Center for Adventist Research in November 2014.

Extant

4.0 linear feet.

Use

All users of this collection will complete the "Application to Use Unpublished Records," and observe the regulation specified in the "Patron's Agreement" and "Researcher's Code of Conduct." All records in this collection are open and available for research. Suggested citation for this collection:

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Racine Street Project Collection (Collection 329)

1977-1978

Box 1 Fld 1 1977-1978.
Minutes of Lake Region Conference Executive
Committee.
Full Life, Inc. Documents.

1980

Box 1 Fld 2 1980.
Construction Documents.
Minutes of Lake Region Conference Executive
Committee.

1981

Box 1 Fld 3 1981.
Partnership with South Shore Partners, LTD.

1982

Box 1 Fld 4 1982.
Construction Documents.
Housing and Urban Development

Box 1 Fld 5 March, 1982.
Construction Documents.
Crane Construction Company

Box 1 Fld 6 June 1-11, 1982.
Construction Documents.
Housing and Urban Development
Legal Documents.

Box 1 Fld 7 June 15, 1982.
Bank Documents.

Box 1 Fld 8 June 15, 1982.
Construction Documents.

Box 1 Fld 9 June 15, 1982.
Partnership Agreement.

Box 1 Fld 10 June 16-21, 1982.
Construction Documents.

- Box 1 Fld 11 June 22-30, 1982.
Construction Documents.
- Box 1 Fld 12 August, 1982.
Construction Documents.
Certificate of Limited Partnership.
- Box 1 Fld 13 September 1, 1982.
Financial Documents.
- Box 1 Fld 14 September 1, 1982.
Plat Act Affidavit.
Deed.
- Box 1 Fld 15 September 1, 1982.
Mortgage Documents.
- Box 1 Fld 16 September 14, 1982.
Construction Documents.
Partnership Agreements.
- Box 1 Fld 17 September 15, 1982.
Agreement and Certificate of Limited partnership for
Continental Plaza Associates.
- Box 1 Fld 18 September 17, 1982.
Financial Documents.
- Box 1 Fld 19 September 23, 1982.
Construction Documents.
- Box 1 Fld 20 September 23, 1982.
Financial Documents.
- Box 1 Fld 21 September 24-25, 1982.
Construction Documents.
Financial Documents.
Donation Form from Loyola University.
- Box 1 Fld 22 September 27, 1982.
Construction Documents.
Real Estates
Department of Housing and Urban
Development
Mortgage Documents.
Insurance Documents.

Box 1 Fld 23 September 27, 1982.
Partnerships.

Box 1 Fld 24 September 28, 1982.
Loyola University.
Correspondence
Deeds
Contracts

Box 1 Fld 25 September 28-29, 1982.
Construction Documents.

Box 1 Fld 26 September 30, 1982.
Construction Documents.

Box 1 Fld 27 December, 1982.
Lake Region Conference Financial Statements.
Construction Documents.
Partnership Agreements.

1983

Box 1 Fld 28 March-September, 1983.
Construction Documents.

Box 1 Fld 29 October-December, 1983.
Financial Documents.

1984

Box 1 Fld 30 January-July, 1984.
Construction Documents.
Insurance Claim.

Box 1 Fld 31 August-December, 1984.
Correspondence.
Charles E. Bradford, North American Division
Department of Housing and Urban Development
Documents.
Lake Region Conference Minutes.

1985

Box 1 Fld 32 November-December, 1985.
Financial Documents.

Box 1 Fld 33 December 31, 1985.
Executive Committee Members of Lake Region
Conference.
Financial Documents.

Box 1 Fld 34 December 31, 1985.
Continental Commercial Partners Ltd. Project
Volume I

Box 1 Fld 35 December 31, 1985.
Continental Commercial Partners Ltd. Project
Volume II

1986

Box 2 Fld 1 1986.
Miscellaneous.

Box 2 Fld 2 1986.
Statement of Assets.
LaSalle National Bank Documents.

Box 2 Fld 3 January-February, 1986.
Construction Documents.
Correspondence
Charles E. Dickerson III

Box 2 Fld 4 March, 1986.
Financial Documents.
Lake Union Conference Agenda.

Box 2 Fld 5 April-June, 1986.
North American Division Survey Documents.

Box 2 Fld 6 July, 1986.
North American Division Survey Documents.
Minutes of Lake Region Conference.

Box 2 Fld 7 August, 1986.
North American Division Survey Documents.

Box 2 Fld 8 September, 1986.
North American Division Survey Report Draft.

- Box 2 Fld 9 September 1-9, 1986.
North American Division Survey Documents.
Correspondence.
Vernon L. Alger
Fred G. Thomas, North American Division
Josiah L. Person
Lake Region Conference Laymen Movement
- Box 2 Fld 10 September 15, 1986.
North American Division Survey Report
Meeting Transcript.
- Box 2 Fld 11 September 12-21, 1986.
North American Division Survey Documents.
Agreement to Reimburse.
Correspondence.
Vicki L. Caputo
Charles E. Dickerson III
- Box 2 Fld 12 September 24-30, 1986.
North American Division Survey Documents.
Correspondence.
Charles E. Dickerson III
Vernon L. Alger
Michael McMahon, Department of Housing and
Urban Development
- Box 2 Fld 13 October, 1986.
North American Division Survey Documents.
Correspondence.
Vernon L. Alger
H. W. Redding, Lloyds Bank
- Box 2 Fld 14 October 7, 1986.
North American Division Survey Documents.
- Box 2 Fld 15 October 9, 1986.
Pictures of Racine St.
- Box 2 Fld 16 October 28, 1986.
North American Division Survey Report Draft.
- Box 2 Fld 17 October 31, 1986.
Lake Region Conference Financial Documents.

Box 2 Fld 18 November, 1986.

North American Division survey Documents.
Newspaper Articles.
Correspondence.
The Guardian
Vernon L. Alger
Lake Region Conference Laymen Movement
Charles E. Dickerson III

Box 2 Fld 19 December 1-5, 1986.

North American Division Survey Documents.
Flyers
Correspondence.
C. E. Bradford
H. W. Pritchard, Lake Union Conference
Fred G. Thomas, North American Division
Robert H. Carter, Lake Union Conference

Box 2 Fld 20 December 8-17, 1986.

North American Division Survey Documents.
Correspondence.
Charles E. Dickerson III
Vernon L. Alger
Caleb Rosado

Box 2 Fld 21 December 21-31, 1986.

North American Division Survey Documents.
Correspondence.
Lake Region Conference Laymen Movement
H. Nasif Mahmoud
Fred G. Thomas, North American Division
Anthony Lewis, CAUTION

Box 2 Fld 22 December, 1986.

Response to North American Division Report by Lake
Region Conference.

1987

Box 2 Fld 23 1987.

Miscellaneous.

Box 2 Fld 24 January, 1987.

Newspaper Articles.

Box 2 Fld 25 January, 1987.

North American Division Survey Documents.

Newspaper Articles.

General Conference Officer's Statement to Lake
Union Conference Executive Committee.

Correspondence.

Herb Pritchard, Lake Union Conference

James T. Easterling

Charles E. Dickerson III

Charles E. Bradford, North American Division

Ronald M. DeHaan

Box 2 Fld 26 February, 1987.

Newspaper Articles.

Box 2 Fld 27 February 1-7, 1987.

Minutes of Lake Region Conference Executive
Committee.

Box 2 Fld 28 February 8, 1987.

North American Division Survey Report Meeting.

Box 3 Fld 1 February 8, 1987.

Audio of North American Division Report Meeting.

Box 3 Fld 2 February 9-28, 1987.

Invoices.

Correspondence.

Devereux Bowly

Charles E. Dickerson III

Peter L. Easterling, Lloyds Bank

H. W. Redding, Lloyds Bank

C. E. Bradford, North American Division

James B. Smith

Box 3 Fld 3 March, 1987.

Newspaper Articles.

Box 3 Fld 4 March, 1987.

Financial Report of Lake Region Conference.

Correspondence.

Charles D. Joseph, Lake Region Conference

Charles E. Dickerson III

John Hayward, Lake Union Conference

C. E. Bradford, North American Division

Lake Region Conference Layman Movement
Daniel E. Herzel, General Conference Auditing
Service
Milton A. Curry
Vernon L. Alger

Box 3 Fld 5 April, 1987.

Newspaper Article.

Correspondence.

Herb Pritchard, Lake Union Conference

Irving E. Gray

Lake Region Conference Layman Movement

Box 3 Fld 6 May-June, 1987.

Notes.

Newspaper Articles.

Correspondence.

Vernon L. Alger

Herb Pritchard, Lake Union Conference

Box 3 Fld 7 June 30, 1987.

Final Report of North American Division Survey Vol. I

Box 3 Fld 8 June 30, 1987.

Final Report of North American Division Survey Vol. II

Box 3 Fld 9 June 30, 1987.

North American Division Survey Supporting
Documents Vol. I

Box 3 Fld 10 June 30, 1987.

North American Division Survey Supporting
Documents Vol. II

Box 3 Fld 11 June 30, 1987.

North American Division Survey Supporting
Documents Vol. III

Box 3 Fld 12 June 30, 1987.

North American Division Survey Supporting
Documents Vol. IV

Box 3 Fld 13 June 30, 1987.

North American Division Survey Supporting
Documents Vol. V

Box 3 Fld 14 June 30, 1987.

North American Division Survey Supporting
Documents
Land Title Documents

Box 4 Fld 1 July-August, 1987.

Newspaper Articles.
Financial Documents.
Correspondence.
Thomas E. Wetmore
Simon H. Aronson

Box 4 Fld 2 October-November, 1987.

Financial Documents.
Notes.
Calendar of Events.
Correspondence.
Lake Region Conference Layman Movement.

1988

Box 4 Fld 3 July 18, 1988.

Lake Region Conference Financial Statement
Review.

1989

Box 4 Fld 4 May, 1988-1989.

Newspaper Articles.
Correspondence.
Lake Region Conference Laymen Movement
Joshiah Person, Shiloh Vanguard

1990

Box 4 Fld 5 1990.

Law Suit.
Josiah L. Person, Shiloh Vanguard v. Lake
Region Conference
Financial Statements.
Newspaper Articles.
Correspondence.
Edward R. Vrdolyak
Shiloh Vangaurd.

1991

Box 4 Fld 6 1991.
Newspaper Article.
Correspondence.
Shiloh Vanguard.

1992

Box 4 Fld 7 1992.
Law Suit.
Cole Taylor Bank v. Lake Region Conference
The Daiwa Bank v. American National Bank
and Trust Company of Chicago, Lake
Region Conference
Newspaper Articles.

1993

Box 4 Fld 8 1993.
North American Division Committee Agenda.
Correspondence.
Shiloh Vanguard.
Keith L. Moore

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