



## Southwestern Writers Collection

Special Collections at the Alkek Library  
Texas State University-San Marcos

# A Guide to the Older Women's Legacy Circle (OWL) Collection

1999-2004

Collection 073

## Descriptive Summary

<b>Creator:</b>	Older Women's Legacy Circle
<b>Title:</b>	Older Women's Legacy Circle Collection
<b>Dates:</b>	1999-2004
<b>Abstract:</b>	The majority of this collection consists of drafts of short stories written by participants in the Older Women's Legacy Circle Workshop and their final typed copies bound in booklet form. The stories were generated through workshops that took place in locations across Texas from 1999 through 2004. In addition to the stories, the collection includes the Older Women's Legacy Circle Workbook and Facilitator's Manual.
<b>Identification:</b>	Collection 073
<b>Extent:</b>	4 boxes (2 linear feet)
<b>Language:</b>	English.
<b>Repository:</b>	Southwestern Writers Collections, The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University-San Marcos

## Background Sketch

Author Susan Wittig Albert and twelve other women founded the nonprofit organization, the Story Circle Network, in Austin, Texas in 1997 with the purpose to “empower women to create their own stories, discover their own stories, and choose to be the authors of their lives” ([www.storycircle.org](http://www.storycircle.org)). Albert served as president of the organization until 2003.

In 1999, the Story Circle Network received a grant from the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word for a pilot project to conduct autobiographical writing workshops for older women. Albert served as facilitator and also trained other women as facilitators of the program. The SCN sponsored the Older Women’s Legacy Circle that reached over 500 women in churches, senior residences, senior centers, and various women’s groups across Texas. The women’s stories were collected and published in booklets titled *A Collection of Memoirs: Piecing Together the Fabric of Our Lives*. One hundred of those essays became part of a collection published in *With Courage and Common Sense: Memoirs from the Older Women’s Legacy Circle*, edited by Susan Wittig Albert and Dayna Finet (University of Texas Press, 2003). Even though the original grant has expired, the Older Women’s Legacy Circle is still a vibrant program sponsored by the SCN. Susan Wittig Albert was born in 1940 in Illinois. She began her writing career as a young mother by writing children’s stories for magazines such as *Children’s Highlights* and *Girl’s Life*. Albert earned a degree in English from the University of Illinois (1968) and a Ph.D from the University of California at Berkley (1972). She taught English at the University of Texas and became the first woman vice-president at Southwest Texas State University (renamed Texas State University) in 1982. By 1985, Albert’s desire to return to writing inspired her to resign from her position as Vice-President of Academic Affairs and pursue her personal passion.

Susan Albert began her writing career by writing novels for adolescents. Under the pseudonyms of Carol Keene and Franklin W. Dixon, Albert contributed to the Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys Mysteries. In 1992, she published the first in her current series of fifteen mystery stories featuring amateur detective China Bayles, a former criminal defense attorney from Houston turned country herbalist. The series' signature feature is the different herbal theme in each story. Albert has expanded her serial writing to the life and adventures of the author and illustrator Beatrix Potter in *The Cottage Tails of Beatrix Potter*. Bill Albert, Susan's husband joined her to co-author another mystery series *The Robin Paige Victorian Mysteries* and numerous articles pertaining to writing mysteries and the writing profession. Susan Albert's most recent publication, *What Wilderness is This: Women Write About the Southwest* (University of Texas Press, March 2007) is an anthology of 150 essays professional authors and women contributors about how geography shapes the way we live. Future writing projects will include Susan Albert's own memoir and exploration of themes related to aging.

In addition to writing, Susan Albert taught journaling and memoir writing in Austin, Texas. The result of her experiences in teaching and her own journaling was the publication of *Writing from Life: Telling Your Soul's Story* (1996, with an updated forward 2004). The book was the seed that grew into a larger idea to encourage women to tell their own stories.

## Scope and Content Note

The majority of this collection consists of drafts of short stories written by participants in the Older Women's Legacy Circle Workshop and their final typed copies bound in booklet form. The stories were generated through workshops that took place in locations across Texas from 1999 through 2004. In addition to the stories, the collection includes the Older Women's Legacy Circle Workbook and Facilitator's Manual. The entire collection is housed in four half boxes (two linear feet).

The folders containing the drafts of stories and the booklets were rearranged alphabetically according to the name of the location of the workshop and within the year that it took place. Within the folders, the drafts of the stories were also filed alphabetically according to the participants' last names. A few workshop events for the same location are filed separately according to chronology. Since this workshop is an ongoing project sponsored through the Story Circle Network, it does not represent all possible workshops.

The collection is arranged in two series. The first series, and the largest of the collection, consists of the Older Women's Legacy Circle Workshop stories. The second series is the Workbook and Facilitator's manual.

## **Administrative Information**

### **Access Restrictions**

Open for Research.

### **Preferred Citation**

Older Women's Legacy Collection, Southwestern Writers Collection, Texas State University-San Marcos

### **Acquisition Information**

Donated by Susan Wittig Albert in 2004

### **Processing Information**

Processed by Anna Ables and Barbara Thibodeaux, 2007

# Detailed Description of the Collection

## SERIES I: OWL Workshops, 1999-2004

Box	Folder	
1	1	Avon-Washington Township Public Library & the Hendricks County Senior Services Center, Summer 2003. Published journal
		Congregation Beth Israel, Spring 1999.
1	2	Published journal
1	3	Drafts & participant roster
		Congregation Beth Israel, Fall 1999.
1	4	Published journal (2)
		Congregation Beth Israel, Summer 2000.
1	5	Published journal.
1	6	Conley-Guerrero Activity Center, Fall 1999. Published journals (2)
		Dallas, Spring 1999.
1	7	Drafts.
		Dallas, Fall 1999.
1	8	Drafts
		Dottie Jordan Center, Spring 1999.
1	9	Drafts and participation roster
1	10	Published journals (2)
		Englewood Estates, Spring 2000
1	11	Drafts, participant roster, facilitator comments
		First Unitarian Church, Spring 1999
1	12	Drafts and participation roster
1	13	Published journals (2)
		First United Methodist Church, Georgetown, Spring 2004
1	14	Published journals (2)
		First United Methodist Church, Georgetown, Summer 2004
1	15	Published journal
		French Quarter Apartments, Spring 1999
2	1	Published journal

## Series I: Workshops-continued

Box	Folder	
		French Quarter Apartment, Spring 2000
2	2	Drafts, participant roster, editor's comments
2	3	Published journals (2)
		Georgetown, October 1999
2	4	Drafts
2	5	Published journals (2)
		Georgetown, November 1999
2	6	Drafts
2	7	Published journals (2)
		Georgetown, December 1999
2	8	Drafts, participant roster, participant photograph
2	9	Published journals (2)
3	1	Golden Age Retirement Center, Lockhart, Spring 2000 Published journals
3	2	Grand Court Retirement Center, Summer 2000 Published journals
3	3	Heartland Health Care Center, Spring 2000 Published journals (2)
3	4	Rebecca Baines Johnson Residential Tower, Spring 1999 Published journal
3	5	St. Ignatius Catholic Church, Spring 1999 Published journal
3	6	St. John Neumann Church Group #1, Winter 2002 Published journal
3	7	St. John Neumann Church Group #2, Winter 2002 Published journal
3	8	St. Louis Catholic Church, Spring 1999 Published journals
3	9	St. Louis Catholic Church, Fall 1999 Drafts & participant roster
		St. Mary's Catholic Church-Wimberley, Fall 1999
3	10	Drafts & participant roster
3	11	Published journals

## **Series I: Workshops-continued**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
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		St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Fall 1999
3	12	Drafts & participant roster
3	12	Published journals (2)
		St. Theresa's Catholic Church, Spring 1999
3	14	Drafts, participant roster, & personal notes
3	15	Published journals (2)
		Seton Good Health Central I, Spring 1999
4	1	Drafts & participant roster
4	2	Published journals
		Seton Good Health Central II, Spring 1999
4	3	Drafts & participant roster
4	4	Published journals
		Seton Good Health-Lakeline, Spring 1999
4	5	Drafts
4	6	Published journals
4	7	Seton Senior Health Center-Lakeway, Spring 2000 Published journals (2)
4	8	Seton Southwest & St. John Neumann Church, Fall 2002 Published journal
4	9	Summit, Spring 1999 Published journals (2)

## **SERIES II: Workshop & Facilitator Manual**

4	Binders (2)
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