

# Basic Detail Report

## **Title Interview with Antonina P. Uccello**

Date 2006 October 23

Primary Maker Mayor Antonina P. Uccello

Medium digitized audio cassette tape

Description Audio cassette tape of an interview with Antonina "Ann" P. Uccello.

She was interviewed on October 23, 2006 by Bruce M. Stave and Sondra Astor

Stave at her home in West Hartford, Connecticut. Ann Uccello was born in May

19, 1922 in Hartford, Connecticut. She was the second daughter of five children.

Her father immigrated to the United States from Italy and was a shoe maker by

trade. Her family lived on Garden Street in Hartford. Her parents spoke Italian,

and she and her sisters learned Italian while growing up. The family lived in Italy

for a year-and-a-half before returning to Hartford. Ann attended Northwest

School, Cathedral School, and St. Joseph Cathedral School. She graduated from

Weaver High School in 1940, then attended St. Joseph College. She majored in

Political Science and History. She discusses the discrimination against Italians and

how she would have a difficult time finding a teaching job. In 1944, she was able

to get a teaching position at East Hampton High School and taught World

History. Bill O'Neill, a Connecticut governor, was a student at East Hampton

High School. In 1945, after a year, she left teaching and began working at G. Fox

& Company. She worked at G. Fox until 1968. Her first part-time job at G. Fox was

in the Foundation Department. When Ann left teaching, she was hired at G. Fox

as the assistant to the supervisor of Unit Control, who was Dan Feldman. Ann

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volunteered with a number of local organizations, such as the Hartford

Graduate's Club of Greater Hartford, St. Agnes' Home, the Women's Guild of the

Hartford Symphony, the Women's Republican Club, the Pilot Club of Hartford,

and Young Republicans. She discusses the Connecticut Republican Party and

how she was involved. When she was interested in running for Hartford City

Council she asked the G. Fox leadership if they were alright with her running for

political office, and they gave her permission. Her friends from G. Fox, George

Ducharme and Mary Barry, helped her get enough petition signatures to run for

City Council, and Ann won a seat. Ann was elected Mayor of Hartford in 1967.

She discusses her relationship with Beatrice Fox Auerbach and BFA's thoughts

on being under-sold by other stores. Ann purchased the dress she wore to

President Richard Nixon's inauguration at the G. Fox Specialty Shop. Ann

discusses how Hartford changed over time. In the 1940s, she felt Hartford was

safe. She lived on Garden Street, then Blue Hills Avenue, then moved to Branford

Street after becoming Mayor. She states the neighborhood began to change in

the 1960s when the riots started. After she was elected to City Council, she came

up with the idea of the Infomobile, which was a bus with staff for social services

to help people get jobs and refer them to health agencies. The Infomobile was

stationed at street corners in the North End of Hartford. She describes the racial

discrimination she saw against Black people. She mentions how the welfare

system worked. She discusses the Connecticut Room at G. Fox and the staff

luncheons with Beatrice Fox Auerbach.

Dimensions Duration: 1 Hour, 32 Minutes, 58 Seconds