

Ola Maie Suttentfield Foushee Collection

- Repository:** Rockingham Co. Historical Collections
Gerald B. James Library
Rockingham Community College
P. O. Box 38
Wentworth, NC 27375
- Title:** Ola Maie Suttentfield Foushee Collection
- Accession No.:** 91-086
- Extent:** 2 boxes, 1 binder
- Provenance:** Donated by Ola Maie Foushee in 1991
- Inclusive Dates:** Approximately 1967-1977
- Subject Headings:** Avalon (N. C.) – History
Clarvoe, Frank A.
Foushee, John M., 1902-1989
Foushee, Ola Maie, 1905-1999
Fries family – Genealogy
Fries, Francis Henry, 1855-1931
Moravian Church – History – Rockingham County (N. C.)
Suttentfield, Emmett R., 1883-1966
Suttentfield, Rufus R.
Suttentfield family
Textile industry – Rockingham County (N. C.)
- Items Separated:** Ola Maie Suttentfield Foushee Photograph Collection
- Related Collections:**
- Preferred Citation:** *Ola Maie Suttentfield Foushee Collection. 91-086. Rockingham Co. Historical Collections, Gerald B. James Library, Rockingham Community College.*
- Descriptive Note:** Ola Maie Suttentfield Foushee was born in Avalon, NC in Rockingham County on May 8, 1905. She was the eldest of eight children born to Emmett R. Suttentfield (1883-1966) and Callie Keaton Suttentfield (d. 1962). The Suttentfields lived in the

small textile mill village of Avalon, some two miles north of Mayodan, North Carolina on the Mayo River. Emmett Suttentfield was employed as an overseer at the Avalon Mill, which was the community's only means of employment.

Following the destruction of the Avalon Mill by fire in 1911 and the subsequent removal of nearly all of Avalon's buildings and homes to Mayodan, the Suttentfields moved according to the needs of the family. For a while they resided in Mayodan and Leaksville and at both places many bonds of friendship were forged.

Ola Maie Suttentfield married John McIver Foushee on September 5, 1931 at First Moravian Church in Greensboro, North Carolina. John served as town manager and mayor of Chapel Hill before settling down into a successful real estate practice. They had two children, John Jr. and June.

Ola Maie, while yet a child, demonstrated an artistic flair which intensified and blossomed over the ensuing years. She studied art at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Greensboro and taught privately for a number of years. Her paintings (mostly abstracts) were exhibited in several states. She was a charter member of the Associated Artists of North Carolina, the Chapel Hill School Art Group and the Durham Creative Art Group. She was a popular lecturer and during the 1950s and 1960s she penned a regular Sunday column "Art in North Carolina," which was carried by a large number of newspapers.

In addition to her talent as an artist, Ola Maie was also an author. Her most acclaimed work, *Art in North Carolina: Episodes and Developments* (1970) was for many years considered the definitive work on the topic. Her other publications included *The Suttentfield Family: A Sentimental Journey* (1974), *Avalon: a North Carolina Town of Joy and Tragedy* (1977), *Katherine Clark Pendleton Arrington: North Carolina's Lady of the Arts* (1986), and a chapter in John Franklin White's *Art in Action: American Art Centers and the New Deal* (1987).

Ola Maie Suttentfield Foushee died in 1999 at the age of 93 at her home, Forty Oaks, an 1850 plantation home near New Hope Creek on Farrington Road between Chapel Hill and Durham.

Contents:

The materials in this collection relate almost exclusively to Ola Maie Foushee's lifelong interest in and research on her native village, Avalon. This information formed the basis for her book, *Avalon: a North Carolina Town of Joy and Tragedy* (1977) in which she recounted the origins, everyday life, and demise of the textile mill village. Rough drafts and manuscripts for this particular book can be found in this collection. Historical data on the Roanoke & Southern (later Norfolk & Western) Railroad, which promoted the development of the mill villages of Mayodan and Avalon, is also included. There are also separate files on the Avalon Mill and the Moravian Church (the Avalon Church being an outgrowth mission of the Mayodan Moravian Church). Other files contain information on Ola Maie and her family, as well as the Fries family who were the guiding forces behind the development of textile mills along the Mayo River valley.

Box (1 of 3)Folder 1:

Town of Avalon: Maps, Plats, etc., Miscellaneous

Folder 2:

Avalon Mill – miscellaneous information on the mill and the fire

Folders 3 and 4:

Original manuscript for *Avalon: a North Carolina Town of Joy and Tragedy*

Folder 5:

Avalon Moravian Church and Mayodan Moravian Church

Folder 6:

Notes used for *Avalon: a North Carolina Town of Joy and Tragedy*

Binder (2 of 3)

Paste-up of *Avalon: a North Carolina Town of Joy and Tragedy* with photographs

Box (3 of 3)Folders 7 and 8:

Mock-up copy of *Avalon: a North Carolina Town of Joy and Tragedy*

Folder 9:

Railroads (Roanoke & Southern, Norfolk & Western)

Folder 10:

Recreation in Avalon

Folder 11:

Avalon and Mayodan – miscellaneous newspaper clippings

Folder 12:

Biographical information on Ola Maie Foushee

Folder 13:

Fries family information

Folder 14:

Rufus R. Suttentfield marriage record book. Names of couples married by Rufus R. Suttentfield from 1896-1913. (photocopy)

Folder 15:

Correspondence. Ola Maie Foushee and Frank A. Clarvoe, author of *The Wonderful Way*. Ola Maie Foushee to Vera W. Dillon, author of *Avalon: A Brief History of a Fateful Town*.

Books donated: (all shelved in the Historical Collections Room)

Foushee, Ola Maie. *Avalon: a North Carolina Town of Joy and Tragedy*. (HCR NC975.663 Fou)

Foushee, Ola Maie. *A Biographical Sketch of Katherine Clark Pendleton Arrington: North Carolina's Lady of the Arts*. (HCR NC923.675 Arr)

Foushee, Ola Maie. *The Suttentfield Family: A Sentimental Journey*. (HCR NC929.2 Sut)

Rondthaler, Edward. *Memorabilia of 50 Years, 1877-1927*. (HCR NC284.675 Ron)