

Collection #  
SC 3437  
DVD 1390–1391

**JUDGE V. SUE SHIELDS  
INDIANAPOLIS AMERICAN INN OF COURT ORAL HISTORY, 2006**

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Processed by

Courtney Rookard  
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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department  
William Henry Smith Memorial Library  
Indiana Historical Society  
450 West Ohio Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)

## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

**VOLUME OF COLLECTION:** 1 manuscript folder  
2 DVDs

**COLLECTION DATES:** 2006

**PROVENANCE:** Judge V. Sue Shields through ClearPoint Legal Services

**RESTRICTIONS:** None

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**ALTERNATE FORMATS:** The transcript will be available online in the Indiana Historical Society Digital Collection.

**RELATED HOLDINGS:** Betty Scales Barteau Research Papers, M 0716; Indianapolis American Inn of Court Oral Histories, M 0871; Judge V. Sue Shields Southern District of Indiana Court Oral History SC3438; Norman Lefstein Oral History SC 3422

**ACCESSION NUMBER:** 2007.0003m0001

**NOTES:**

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Vivian Sue (Blodgett) Shields was born in Wilmore, Jessamine County, Kentucky, on 17 January 1939 to Ralph and Virginia Blodgett. Her father was a chaplain in the military, so she moved many times during her childhood. She lived in Indiana, California, Virginia, and Florida before spending the late 1940s and early 1950s in Germany, after the airlift. She finished school in central Indiana and graduated from New Palestine High School in 1955. Shields attended Ball State Teachers College (now Ball State University) and graduated with a B.A. degree in 1958. In 1961 she graduated from Indiana University School of Law (Bloomington) with an LL.B., as Order of the Coif, and as the only female in her class. V. Sue Blodgett married Bill Shields on 30 September 1961, and they had two sons.

After spending a year as an attorney and regional counsel for the Internal Revenue Service in Ohio, Shields became the Deputy Attorney General for the state of Indiana in 1962. At age 25, she was elected to the Hamilton County Superior Court in 1964 and became the first female elected to an Indiana general jurisdiction judgeship. Shields served until 1978 when she became the first woman appointed to the Indiana Court of Appeals. She remained in that position until 1994, when she was chosen as a U.S. Magistrate Judge for the Southern District of Indiana, the first female magistrate judge in Indiana's district courts. She retired in January 2007.

Additionally, Shields served on the Indianapolis Bar Association's commission on Marion County Courts, as secretary and director of the Indiana Lawyers Commissions Section on sentencing appeals, and on various committees of the Hamilton County Bar Association. She received the Indianapolis Bar Association's first Antoinette Dakin Leach Award in 1990 and the Buchanan Award for Excellence. Shields served on the Law School's Board of Visitors twice (1976–1988 and 1994–1996), including as chair in 1994–1995. V. Sue Shields was inducted into the Indiana University Maurer School of Law Academy of Law Alumni Fellows in 1994 and received Indiana University's Distinguished Alumni Service Award in 2006.

### Sources:

#### Material in collection

Betty Scales Barteau Research Papers (M 0716), Indiana Historical Society

Honorable Betty Barteau. "Thirty Years of the Journey of Indiana's Women Judges, 1964-1994." *Indiana Law Review* 30, No. 1, 1997. 43-204.

Indiana University. "University Honors & Awards Honoree: V. Sue Shields." Accessed 23 May 2018. <https://honorsandawards.iu.edu/search-awards/honoree.shtml?honoreeID=2437>

Maurer School of Law, Indiana University. "Notable Alumni: Vivian Sue (Blodgett) Shields." Accessed 23 May 2018. <https://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/notablealumni/93/>

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection contains the video and transcript of an oral history interview conducted with Judge V. Sue Shields, by Douglas J. Hill, on 19 July 2006 for the Indianapolis American Inn of Court. The interview was filmed and transcribed by ClearPoint Legal Services.

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