

Collection #
SC3681

**SALLIE W. ROWLAND
ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW, 3 JUNE 2013**

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January 2026

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 manuscript folder, 1 digital file
COLLECTION DATES:	13 June 2013
PROVENANCE:	Sallie W. (Sarah Alice) Rowland, Zionsville, IN
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ACCESSION NUMBER:	2021.0032
NOTES:	This forms part of the Indianapolis Women's Oral History Project Archives

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Sarah “Sallie” Alice (Wilkens) Rowland (November 14, 1932-May 2, 2024) was born in Baltimore, Maryland to Jacob Howard Wilkens (1892-1975) and Cleo Ora (Goff) Wilkens (1896-1989). She spent much of her childhood in Hagerstown, Maryland, and Baltimore, but relocated to Fort Wayne, Indiana when she was a teenager and her parents moved the family back to their hometown. She graduated from Fort Wayne South Side High School in 1950 and then attended Indiana University, receiving a Bachelor of Science degree from the School of Business with a minor in design in 1954. After finishing college, she accepted a position with Business Furniture Company in Indianapolis and ultimately developed the design department there. In 1968, she co-founded Rowland Associates, a commercial interior design firm in Indianapolis, with William B. Hawkins and later became the CEO of Rowland Design in 1975. In the 1990s, Rowland Design was the fifth largest interior design firm in North America. She retired from Rowland Design in 2003. Ms. Rowland was also interested in historic preservation and served as president of the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission. In addition, she was involved in a variety of other non-profits and corporate boards such as: Indianapolis Power & Light, Walker Research, Indiana National Bank, Central Indiana Corporate Partnership, Christian Theological Seminary, and the Brendonwood Historic District Foundation, among others. She was named a Sagamore of the Wabash and a laureate of the Indiana Business Hall of Fame.

Ms. Rowland was married to Richard “Dick” H. Rowland (1931-2000) in 1960. They had two sons, Eric J. Rowland and Jacob H. Rowland.

Sources:

Materials in the collection.

“Sarah ‘Sallie’ Alice (Wilkens) Rowland.”

<https://www.flannerbuchanan.com/obituaries/sarah-sallie-rowland>

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The following interview is one of a collection of oral history interviews devoted to collecting life stories of prominent Indiana women involved in business, education, law, philanthropy, politics, and religion. All of the women interviewed for this project were selected from within the membership of The Gathering, an informal networking group of approximately 175 Indiana women leaders that began around 1990. The Indianapolis Women's Oral History Project (initially known as The Gathering Oral History Project) was organized in 2013 by the members of The Gathering and conducted with the assistance and supervision of the Indiana Historical Society (IHS).

This manuscript was transcribed from a digitally recorded interview conducted on June 3, 2013, at the home of Ms. Rowland in Indianapolis, Indiana, by Sara Evans Barker, a member of The Gathering. Data Logistics Control, INC, located in Indianapolis, Indiana, transcribed the interview in 2015, and Wendy L. Adams, director of oral history at IHS, lightly edited the transcript in 2020. The interview, which includes the audio recording and transcript, is housed at the William H. Smith Memorial Library, Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana History Center, Indianapolis, Indiana

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Oral History Interview Transcript, 3 June 2013

Oral History Interview Audio, 3 June 2013

CONTAINER

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[See digital file]