AMERICAN BUSINESS WOMEN’S ASSOCIATION COLLECTION, 1959–2000

Collection Information

Biographical Sketch

Scope and Content Note

Series Contents

Cataloging Information

Processed by

Emily Castle
September 2006

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

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 7 manuscript boxes, 1 OM folder, 1 box color photographs, 3 folders, black and white photographs.

COLLECTION DATES: 1959–2000

PROVENANCE: American Business Women’s Association, Inc., c/o Carol King,
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

World War II was the first time that American women were recognized as a viable factor in the workforce, to fill the jobs left empty by men going off to war. When men returned, it meant that women were expected to leave their newfound careers and return to their homes. However, their desire to seek fulfillment as part of the working world was not easily suppressed, and Kansas City, Missouri, businessman Hilary A. Bufton Jr. recognized the positive impact women had been having upon the economy. He also realized what a widespread loss it would be to let women fade quietly out of the workforce. In September, 1949, Bufton incorporated the American Business Women's Association (ABWA).

The first ABWA chapter in Indiana was the Indianapolis Charter Chapter, formed in March, 1952, with twenty-seven members. Since the Charter Chapter was formed, the membership increased to over 100 on several occasions. At that time the chapter would split and form a new chapter. Over the years interest in this type of organization increased, and in the 1970’s there were thirty-six chapters of ABWA in the Indianapolis area. It formed Amigas Siempre in 1957, James Whitcomb Riley Chapter in 1963, Indy ’67 Chapter in 1967, New Hope Chapter in 1971, Lucky 13 Chapter in 1972, Circle City Chapter in 1973, and Nu Da ’75 Chapter in 1975. Chapters were also formed in Shelbyville and Huntington, Indiana, and the Charter Chapter helped with the formation of a chapter in the Mooresville/Plainfield area. As of 1997 the number of chapters in the Indianapolis area had dropped to eighteen.

Chapters sponsored several fundraising activities each year to make money for the scholarships they presented to students. Activities would include two bus trips a year, in April and November, to Chicago for shopping. They also would have a booth at races at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, and sold baked goods and crafts. Chapters held other activities during the year, just for fun, including picnics, white elephant sales, and Christmas parties. Elections were held once a year in each chapter for Woman of the Year. The woman elected would represent her chapter at the National Convention and any local functions during the year.

In 1987 Indianapolis Area Council was formed with each participating chapter sending a delegate and alternate delegate to the bi-monthly meetings to represent their chapter. The purpose of the council was to promote the networking of the chapters, and to sponsor activities to gain local recognition of the ABWA. This coordination led to the holding of the National Convention of ABWA in Indianapolis in 1993. The council also sponsored the annual
Woman of the Year Luncheon to honor each chapter’s recipient, and they sponsored the annual ABW Day Celebration which allowed members of all local chapters to meet in one group to celebrate the anniversary of the founding of the ABWA.

Sources:
Materials in collection

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists mainly of papers from the Charter Chapter of the ABWA. The collection is separated into five series’ by chapter, and within each series the folders are arranged in alphabetical order.

Items from the Charter Chapter include folders of yearly activities, put together by the chapter, meeting minutes, member rosters, and chapter newsletters, The Grapevine, from 1961 to 1984. There are also notes about programs from various events the chapter had, and papers from the Indianapolis Area Council. There are several folders of photographs of chapter activities, including bus trips, picnics, meetings, and luncheons.

The other chapters include: Amigas Siempre, Cloud 9, Delta Flame, and James Whitcomb Riley. Each chapter only has a few folders, including information about activities the chapters participated in, and chapter newsletters. There are also a few photographs from these chapters’ activities.

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May 1967

APPA luncheons, 1981–92 Color Photographs,
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APPA member lists and programs, 1983–95 Box 1, Folder 3

*ABWA 50th Anniversary Commemorative Book, 1999* Box 1, Folder 4
Awards and citations, 1959–78
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Boss’ Night, 1974–95
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Boss’ Night programs, 1961–84
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Central district roster, 1961
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Central Regional Meeting, District II, program, 1974
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*Chapter Officer and Committee Guide*, booklets,
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Charter rules and guidelines, 1984–90
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Clippings, 1962–92
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Committee guides, 1962–91
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*The Grapevine*, chapter newsletter, 1970–72
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Spirit of Indiana Chapter, membership roster, 1983–84 Box 7, Folder 15

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0882).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.