

**Collection #**  
**M 0999**

**BACHELOR BENEDICT CLUB OF INDIANAPOLIS, INC.**  
**RECORDS, 1925–2010**

[Collection Information](#)

[Historical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Contents](#)

Processed by

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## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 manuscript box; 3 photograph folders, 4 color photograph folders.

COLLECTION DATES: 1925–2010

PROVENANCE: Bachelor Benedict Club of Indianapolis, Inc.

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2011.0029

NOTES:

## **HISTORICAL SKETCH**

Bachelor Clubs known for their lavish entertainment were established throughout black communities in the Midwest and the East during the early 1900s. The Bachelor Club was established by a group of African American men in Indianapolis in 1902. During the second decade of the club's existence many of the members changed their marital status from being a bachelor to benedict (married). Around 1914, the organization changed its name to Bachelor Benedict Club. The club incorporated in 2011 and became the Bachelor Benedict Club of Indianapolis, Inc.

In his 1974 unbound, typewritten history of the club, J. Wallace Hall, club-historian, who also served as president for three decades, list the following people as charter members of the organization: Daniel Allen, Charles Baughman, Richard A. Chavers, William Fielding, Lafayette Hodge, William Viney, and Harry Wyatt. Its membership has generally has included highly successful doctors, attorneys, businessmen, and other professionals.

Early club events were held at the Odd Fellows Hall on Indiana Avenue and the Knights of Pythians Lodge located on North Senate Avenue. Traditionally, meetings and social affairs have been conducted during the school year. Hall's history provides a tone for these early aristocrats of color, by describing an evening affair: "When the appointed hour had arrived, the members and their guest would arrive in style in their fringed carriages, drawn by prancing steeds, and driven by coachmen. The members and their guest would step out dresses (sic) in tails, capes, top hats, and white gloves." He goes on to mention that it was the "romantic era of womanhood and virtue" and that it was proper and ethical for the gentlemen to send a corsage in the afternoon to a woman that he planned to escort to an evening affair.

For several years, the organization has sponsored an annual dinner dance in May. It has been held at various venues including the Indiana State Teacher's Association, Indianapolis Convention Center, Indiana Roof Ballroom and the Ritz Charles Hotel in Carmel. It has also regularly held a Valentine Day Dance and a Fall dinner event. The group has given out baskets at Christmas and has supported charitable causes.

Sources: Materials in the collection

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The collection contains the records of the Bachelor Benedict Club of Indianapolis, Inc. It includes membership rosters; information about club committees, history, and events and photographs. The club's constitution is within the Report of Committee on Purpose and Object located in Folder 12. There are several photographs of members and their guests at formal gatherings.

## CONTENTS

### CONTENTS

Correspondence, 2002–2009

Club History, 1902–ca. 2005

Membership Certificate

Membership Attendance, 1989

Membership Notices, 1993

Membership Rosters, 1981–1996

Membership Rosters, 2001–2003

25+-year Member List, 2006

Officer Nominations, 1987–2001

Club Members, 1983–84

Club Members, 1993

Committee: Christmas Cheer, 1978

Committee: Entertainment, 2005

Committee: Long Range Planning, 1987

Committee on Purpose and Object, 1986

Format Event, ca. 1925

Formal Event, ca. 2000

Celebration of 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (observed in 1968)

Anniversary Ball, 75<sup>th</sup> year, 1977

### CONTAINER

Box 1 , Folder 1

Box 1, Folder 2

Box 1, Folder 3

Box 1, Folder 4

Box 1, Folder 5

Box 1, Folder 6

Box 1, Folder 7

Box 1, Folder 8

Box 1, Folder 9

Color Photographs  
Folder 1

Color Photographs  
Folder 2

Photographs  
Folder 1

Box 1, Folder 10

Box 1, Folder 11

Box 1, Folder 12

Photographs  
Folder 2

Color Photographs  
Folder 3

Box 1, Folder 13

Box 1, Folder 14

Anniversary Dinner Dance, 100 <sup>th</sup> year, 2002	Box 1, Folder 15
Anniversary Program Booklet, 2002	Box 1, Folder 16
May Dance Invitations, 1975–2010	Box 1, Folder 17
May Dance Guest List, 1992–1993	Box 1, Folder 18
Sweetheart Ball, 1977	Photographs Folder 3
Valentine Dance, 1993	Color Photographs Folder 4
Memorial Service, 1982	Box 1, Folder 19
Memorial Service, 2002	Box 1, Folder 20
Manuscript for article by Kathleen Schuckel	Box 1, Folder 21