

Collection #  
SC 3254

**INDIANAPOLIS GARDEN CLUB  
RECORDS ADDITION, 1998-2003**

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## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

**VOLUME OF COLLECTION:** 1 manuscript folder

**COLLECTION DATES:** Ca. 2000s

**PROVENANCE:** Mary Jane Baxter, Indianapolis, IN; August 2005

**RESTRICTIONS:** None

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**ALTERNATE FORMATS:**

**RELATED HOLDINGS:** Indianapolis Garden Club Records M 0672

**ACCESSION NUMBER:** 2005.0322

**NOTES:**

## HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Indianapolis Garden Club was formed in 1930 by a group of Northside Indianapolis ladies led by Mrs. John N. Carey. Mrs. Booth Tarkington was a vice president. The group at its genesis showed that it had in mind far more than social meetings and home gardens. Committees were immediately appointed for "conservation of wild flowers, plants and trees," for billboard and roadside improvement, and for spring and fall horticultural shows. The original 35 members increased to 44 by 1932, and membership eventually evened out at between 55 and 70.

The Garden Club became a charter member of the Indiana Federation of Garden Clubs in 1932, and was admitted to the Garden Club of America in 1940. From that time on, individual members have served as national officers and on national committees. Ten members have had their gardens listed in a national "garden locator," and several members, notably Mrs. Perry O'Neal and Mrs. Bowman Elder, did nationally recognized work as horticulturists.

Early on the club sponsored scholarships to gardening and conservation schools, sponsored lectures on gardening and related subjects, and ran and participated in flower shows. The club worked for roadside improvement and against billboards, and members appeared when necessary before City Council and before committees of the Indiana General Assembly. During World War II members worked hard at canning fruits and vegetables, and donated time and money to improve Fort Benjamin Harrison, Billings Hospital, and the Wabash Service Men's Center. Successful efforts were made to preserve Cox Forest at Paoli and Shades State Park.

Records of the early decades of the Garden Club are incomplete. From 1965 on, records show a highly organized and active group. Meetings are held monthly except in the summer, and each general meeting is preceded by a board meeting. In addition to maintaining gardens, having annual flower shows, hearing speakers, and serving on active committees, the members have taken on a number of ambitious projects in the fields of civic beautification, education, and conservation. Beautification efforts have included planting along the Central Canal and Fall Creek Parkway, in planters downtown, and in Pan-Am Plaza. Gardens have been planted at Herron Art School, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Historic Landmarks headquarters, Lockerbie Square, Riley Hospital, the Indianapolis Zoo, and the Governor's mansion. As one form of education, greenhouses or greenhouse equipment have been given to the Girls' School, Manual Training High School, Children's Museum, Goodwill Industries, and IPS #56. Garden Club of America zone meetings have been held stressing landscaping, conservation, and water conservation.

Some of these projects have been financially ambitious, and the club has raised money by personal donations, by giving garden parties, by making and selling a needlepoint rug, and by auctions and garage sales. Over \$20,000 was raised for the Lockerbie project, and \$137,000 for the Goodwill project. For these efforts, the club and its members have received numerous local and national awards.

Sources:

Original collection guide.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

This collection addition contains a seven page paper, titled "Indianapolis Garden Club: the years of 1998–2003" by Mary Jane Baxter, the club's historian. The papers discusses the club's community involvement and projects, flower shows, educational programs, awards, and national appointments of club members.

## **CONTENTS**

### CONTENTS

"Indianapolis Garden Club: the years of 1998–2003,"  
ca. 2000s

### CONTAINER

Folder 1