

Collection #
M 1207

THURSDAY NIGHT WHIST CLUB RECORDS, 1930–2014

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Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 manuscript box, 1 folder color photographs

COLLECTION DATES: 1930–2014

PROVENANCE: Thursday Night Whist Club

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2014.0209; 2015.0347

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Thursday Night Whist Club (TNWC) began as a social organization. Oral history maintains that the club started in 1927. Its first ledger book recording the bi weekly card games date from April 3, 1930. The club began at a time when Indianapolis African American men were beginning to identify more group leisure options. The first recorded meeting was hosted by Dr. E. Roberts at the Howard Hotel. The other attendees were Dr. _____ Bate, Dr. Charleston Cox, Bowling Gordon, _____ Grant, Sam Grizzle, Robert Marbury, Dr. Sirdastian Meriwether, Fred Smith, M. L. Stevenson, Morris Taylor, and Wallace Waugh.

The club has maintained a membership roster of twelve. Members meet bi weekly (with the exception of the summer months) to play the card game, whist. (In its simplest description, whist has been portrayed as an early form of bridge without bidding.) The game, which the TNWC usually plays in eight rounds, is preceded by dinner and lively discussion about a variety of topics. In addition to the twelve members, the club maintains a roster of substitutes that is called upon when a member is unable to attend.

Over the years the club has met at various venues including the Howard Hotel, Coffee Pot, Ocean Café, and the Monte Grill. Members have traditionally met at each other homes where their wives prepared large meals. Earlier in the club's history members mostly lived on the near north and near northwest side of Indianapolis. Reflecting the loosening of segregated real estate patterns and practices within the city, member residences tend to have been located further north as time has progressed. For the past few years games have been held at a north side restaurant. Many of the members have been in the club for decades.

In 1983, the club launched a traveling trophy to be engraved and retained by the annual winner. (This is the person who has scored the most points at the end of the calendar year.) The "Armstrong Trophy" was named in honor of Irvan Armstrong, a former 48-year member and president.

The current president is Andrew Bowman and Guy Miller, III serves as secretary/treasurer. Oscar O. Grundy maintains the club's score keeping ledgers, a role that he has had for over fifty years.

Sources:

Materials in the collection.

Processor's interview with club member, Andrew Bowman, September 4, 2014

Processor's interview with club member, Oscar O. Grundy, November 3, 2015

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The records of the *Thursday Night Whist Club* include four ledgers that date from 1930 through 1993. These ledgers contain the member scores from the whist card games that were usually held biweekly. Additionally, they identify the host for a particular Thursday evening, sometime with the name of the venue for the card games. Folder 7 contains a single sheet that provides a 1982–83 roster of club members for the Thursday Night Whist Club, Wednesday Men's Duplicate Bridge Club, and the Wyle-A-Way Bridge Club.

Additionally, the collection contains score sheets; weekly reports that provide member scores for each of the evening's eight rounds of whist games; and annual reports that provide yearly data including number of meetings attended, average weekly score, total score, numbers of time member placed and what place, low and high score for the year; and any specific feats (for example, running a Boston).

The Whist Newsletter (1977–2002), chockfull of tidbits and facts, was an annual single sheet usually appearing in December that announced the scores, meetings attended, winners, and other stats from the activities of club members. (During 2001 and 2002, the newsletter appeared in January.) Many issues also included a list of members and substitutes and a calendar that listed club hosts for the following year. The circular also included information about new members, member resignation letters, and death announcements.

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Thursday N Whist Club Ledger, 9-28-1967–12-13-1984	Box 1, Folder 3
Thursday N Whist Club Ledger, 1-10-1985–9-16-1993	Box 1, Folder 4
Oscar O. Grundy and Club Ledger, 2014	Color Photographs: Folder 1
Earl M. Roberts Sympathy thank you card, 1935	Box 1, Folder 5
Membership Offer Letter, 1969	Box 1, Folder 6
Card Club Rosters, 1982–1983	Box 1, Folder 7
Weekly Score Sheets, 1967, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 8
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Whist Newsletter, 1976–2002	Box 1, Folder 13