

Collection #
M 1189
BV 5050–5104
OMB 0153

WOMAN'S DEPARTMENT CLUB RECORDS 1912–2010

[Collection Information](#)

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Processed by

Jenny Holly
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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: 38 manuscript boxes; 55 bound volumes; 3 oversized manuscript boxes; 1 flat file manuscript; 1 half box color photos; 1 folder black and white photos; 1 OVB photograph folder.

COLLECTION DATES: 1912–2010

PROVENANCE: Woman's Department Club of Indianapolis, c/o Jean Jose, Indianapolis, IN, 2015

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2015.0148

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Organized by Mrs. Luella McWhirter in 1912, the Woman's Department Club remains active in community service, arts, and education projects throughout Indianapolis. In 1912, McWhirter gathered support from interested women to form the club. Inspired by the Mishawaka Woman's Club, McWhirter adopted their departmental organization. Department Clubs, like Mishawaka, were divided into sections, or departments. The Indianapolis Woman's Department Club had a number of these divisions such as the Art Department; Home, Literature, and Drama Department; and Community Service Department. The club originally met in the rooftop garden of the Hume-Mansur Building, but, in 1917, the club purchased a home at 1702 North Meridian Street. This building would serve as the clubhouse until 1964.

The club has had a number of functions in the Indianapolis community and has been involved in service work, education, and the arts. Their motto was and is, "Service means growth; growth means life; let us live." The Community Service Department, Visiting Nurse Auxiliary Association, and the Monday Guild (an organization for sightless women) are examples of the community service work the club participated and continues to participate in.

The club has offered scholarships and educational loans for Indianapolis students planning to continue their education. Throughout their history, they offered educational courses and activities for the general community such as the Mothers Round Table and Citizenship Classes.

The Woman's Department Club Art Department purchased artwork for the clubhouse, held exhibitions, and organized the Indiana Federation of Art Clubs. They have been actively involved with Hoosier Salon and have donated works from their collections to the Indianapolis Museum of Art.

In addition to these activities, the club has donated books to the Indianapolis Public Library, and made monetary donations to a number of organizations throughout the community including the Riley Children's Hospital, Indiana State School for the Blind, YWCA, and others. The club's long history reflects its emphasis on service work, arts, and education within the Indianapolis community.

Sources:

Materials in Collection

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains 15 series.

Series 1: History, Bylaws, and Correspondence

This series contains historical accounts of the club written throughout the club history; club etiquette and bylaws (including revisions), and correspondence to and from the club.

Series 2: Minutes

This series contains the minutes of the WDC General Club meetings and Board of Directors meetings from 1912–2010. These minutes have been organized by year.

Series 3: Annual Reports

This series contains the annual reports given each year by the departments and board of the WDC. The reports contained in this series span the years of 1953–99. Occasionally, annual reports were and are incorporated into the Minutes Series of this collection. These annual reports are organized by each club year which runs from June–May of the next year.

Series 4: Yearbooks

This series contains the Woman's Department Club annual yearbooks which include the yearly program and other club information. Also included in this series are the copy materials for annual yearbooks, yearbook ads, and bound volumes spanning multiple years worth of yearbooks.

Series 5: Membership

This series contains ledgers documenting club members, club member information and lists, and membership reports.

Series 6: Departments

This series contains documents related to the individual departments within the WDC. Included in this series are programming documents, scrapbooks related to specific departments, minutes, and financial records.

Series 7: Events and Programs

This series contains planning documents for club programs, special events, and club birthdays and anniversaries.

Series 8: Long Range Planning

This series contains minutes and surveys produced by the Long Range Planning Committee of the WDC.

Series 9: Property and Real Estate

This series contains documents related to the WDC search for a permanent club house, real estate, furnishings owned by the club, and artworks in the club's collection. This series also contains documents related to artworks donated to the Indianapolis Museum of Art.

Series 10: Educational Funds

The Educational Funds series documents the numerous educational loans granted to students by the WDC. Included in this series are financial ledgers, the history of the funds, and correspondence to and from grantees of loans.

Series 11: Financial

This series contains treasurer's reports, financial ledgers, bills, tax documents, and other miscellaneous financial documents.

Series 12: Investments

The Investments series contains financial documents and ledgers related to the club investments.

Series 13: Clippings

This series contains numerous clippings related to the club and club activities, organized chronologically, from 1910s–1990s.

Series 14: Club Scrapbooks

This series contains 45 general club scrapbooks that contain program documents, clippings, and photographs from the club's history.

Series 15: Miscellaneous

This series contains a number of miscellaneous and undated materials including notes, brochures, newsletters, guest books, census records, and obituaries.

Series 16: Photographs

The Photographs series contains black and white and color photographs, organized chronologically, of club events, the clubhouse, and club members. These photographs are in addition to those found in the Club Scrapbooks series.

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