

Watertown Free Public Library

123 Main Street

Watertown, Massachusetts 02472

Local History Collection

**Watertown Woman's Club records,
1894-1994 (inclusive)**

SC101

Summary

Collection name: Watertown Woman's Club records, 1894-1994 (inclusive)

Collection number: SC101

Repository: Watertown Free Public Library (Watertown, Massachusetts)

Creator: Watertown Woman's Club

Extent: 4.46 cubic feet (3 Paige boxes, 1 oversize box, 1 legal size document box, 1 letter size document box)

Language: English

Provenance: The immediate source of this collection is unknown.

Processing information: Indexed and processed by WFPL Staff. Bound items previously catalogued under HIST 367.9 WAT. The source of most folder titles is unknown. Finding aid created by Caroline Littlewood in 2020.

Conditions governing access: Collection is open for use in the Local History Room, Watertown Free Public Library.

Preferred citation: Watertown Woman's Club records, SC101, Watertown Free Public Library Local History Collection, Watertown, Mass.

Historical Note

The Watertown Woman's Club was founded by Alice M. Potter Silsbee in 1894 "to stimulate literary effort, and promote the social life of the members." Silsbee and other club founders invited members from all church denominations, though the club size was restricted to 150 women. The Club held regular literary exercises, organized classes in the fine and domestic arts and current events, and hosted lectures by subject experts. Members also established a choral group and gave an annual reception or musical entertainment. By the early 1900s, club activities expanded to include community service and fundraising.

Watertown Woman's Club activities timeline:

- 1894 – Watertown Woman's Club founded
- 1894 – Joined the State and General Federations of Woman's Clubs
- 1901 – Withdrew from the General Federation of Woman's Clubs
- 1903 – Held Federation of Woman's Clubs event with 1,000 attendees
- 1908 – Rejoined the General Federation of Woman's Clubs

- 1922 - Established Old Folks' Home Fund
- 1925 - Approved Club Seal
- 1925 - Built Club House on Common Street
- 1926 - Reached 500 members
- 1926 - Established scholarship fund
- 1932 - Opened new Club House
- 1934 - Established Garden Club
- 1940 - Held Industrial Fair at the High School
- 1946 - Sold Club House
- 1951 - Established Civil Defense Committee
- 1960s - Established Mary Lulu Cleveland Scholarship Fund
- 1980s - Collected food for women's shelter, donated to veterans' home

Organization and Arrangement

This collection consists of five series. It is arranged as follows:

Series I. Meeting Minutes, 1894-1972 (inclusive)

Series II. Scrapbooks, 1936-1958 (inclusive)

Series III. Yearbooks, 1931-1985 (inclusive)

Series IV. Presidents' files, 1903-1994 (inclusive)

Series V. Special programs records, committee records, press clippings and early organizational records, 1894-1944 (inclusive)

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains Watertown Woman's Club organizational and administrative records including meeting minutes, yearbooks, scrapbooks, internal committee records and officers' reports, and special program and event files.

Series I consists of Watertown's Woman's Club meeting minutes, Executive Board meeting minutes, and Trustees meeting minutes. Some books include both Executive Board and Regular meeting minutes, and other books only contain one or the other.

Series II consists of Watertown Woman's Club scrapbooks. Scrapbooks contain a variety of material, including photographs of club members, newspaper articles about the club, and notes and programs from the Massachusetts State Federation of Women's Clubs.

Series III consists of Watertown Woman’s Club yearbooks. Each yearbook includes a list of officers, calendar, standing committee members, and a member directory. Additional yearbooks (not listed in this inventory) may be found taped into the scrapbooks of Series II.

Series IV contains organizational records—including annual and monthly reports by club officers, special committee reports, official ballots, club statements and resolutions—presumably previously in the keeping of club presidents. Some files also include correspondence, clippings, and Massachusetts State Federation of Women’s Club records. Folders are arranged chronologically, by presidential terms.

Series V contains special program records, committee records, press clippings and early organizational records. It includes internal committee records, include records of the Committee on the Club Seal, the Garden Club, the Trustees Club House Ways and Means Committee, and the Committee for Remodeling of Club Property and Club Property Committee. This series also contains Watertown Woman’s Club grant and national contest applications, citations of achievement from state and national foundations, scholarship recipient files (1983 to 1990), and programs and pamphlets for special events including the Historic Watertown Community Pageant (1919), the Northeastern Massachusetts Music Festival (1956), Philanthropy Day (1953), Valentine card Party and Fashion Show (1955), and various 60th and 100th club anniversary events. Other records include early club membership lists (1903 to 1924) and annotated waiting lists (1909 to 1914). A bound volume labeled *Watertown Woman’s Club Press Notices, 1931-32, 1932-33*, contains local newspaper articles about the club compiled by Minnie H. Gulesian, Club Press Correspondent, as well as instructions regarding press releases and some club programs. All items are dated and labeled.

Inventory

Series I. Meeting minutes, 1894-1972 (inclusive)

Extent: 23 bound volumes

Box	Title	Dates
6	No. 1 1894-1898 Executive Board and Regular Meetings March 20, 1894 – April 18, 1898	1894- 1898
1	No. 2 1898-1903 Executive Board May 2, 1898 – May 21, 1903 and Regular Meetings October 17, 1898 – April 27, 1903	1898- 1903
1	No. 3 1903-1910 Regular Meetings October 19, 1903 – April 4, 1910 Executive Board June 4, 1903 – September 26, 1910.	1903- 1910
1	No. 4 1910 to Ex. Board February 1914 Regular October 1916 Executive Board October 17, 1910 – February 25, 1914	1910- 1916

	Regular Meetings October 17, 1910-October 30-1916	
6	No. 8 Ex Board 1914-1919 Executive Board, March 19, 1914 – March 27, 1919	1914- 1919
3	No. 5 Regular Meetings 1916-1929 Regular Meetings November 13, 1916 – April 1, 1929	1916- 1929
6	No. 9 Ex Board 1919-1922 Executive Board of the Watertown Woman’s Club, April 14, 1919 – June 9, 1922	1919- 1922
2	No. 10 Ex Board 1922-1925 Executive Board June 12, 1922—June 15, 1925	1922- 1925
2	N. 11 Ex Board 1925-1929 Executive Board June 22, 1925 – May 29, 1929	1925- 1929
2	No. 12 Ex Board 1929-1933 Executive Board June 3, 1929 – March 27, 1933	1929- 1933
3	No. 6 Regular Meetings 1929-1937 Regular Meetings April 15, 1929 through March 1, 1937	1929- 1937
1	No. 13 Ex. Board 1933-1940 Executive Board of Watertown Woman’s Club April 24, 1933—June 10, 1940	1933- 1940
2	Records of the Watertown Board of Trustees, 1936-1938	1936- 1938
1	No. 7 Regular Meetings 1937-1943 Records of Regular Meetings [March 15, 1937 – May 3, 1943.]	1937- 1943
1	Board Meeting Notes, starting June 18, 1940, ending February 25, 1946	1940- 1946
1	Records of Regular Meetings beginning October 18, 1943 ending May 2, 1944. Records of Regular Meetings beginning October 16, 1944 ending May 6, 1946. Records of Regular Meetings beginning October 14, 1946 ending March 17, 1947.	1943- 1947
1	Records of Board Meetings, March 19, 1946—April 22, 1946 April 11, 1946-April 28, 1947 May 12, 1947—April 23, 1948 May 12, 1948—April 25, 1949 May 23, 1949—April 24, 1950 May 11-1950—April 30, 1951 May 9, 1951—June 7, 1951 Includes a copy of the Club’s by-laws	1946- 1951
1	Records of Regular Meetings beginning April 7, 1947 through March 17, 1952	1947- 1952

1	Records of Board Meetings, June 25, 1951—April 28, 1952 May 15, 1952—November 2, 1952 January 26, 1953—April 26, 1954 April 1954-April 1956 April 1956-1958 April 1958 through October 27, 1958 1960	1951- 1958
1	Records of Regular Meetings beginning April 7, 1952...through February 16, 1959	1952- 1959
1	Records of Board Meetings, Beginning November 24, 1958...—1966	1958- 1966
3	Records of Regular Meetings beginning March 2, 1959...ending April 26, 1965	1959- 1965
1	Records of Regular Meetings from October 18, 1965 - ...1972	1965- 1972

Series II. Scrapbooks, 1936-1958 (inclusive)

Extent: 15 bound scrapbooks

Box	Title
4	1936-1937
5	1940-1941
4	1941-1942
5	1942-1943
4	1944-1945
4	1945-1946
4	1946-1947
5	1947-1948
2	1948-1949
2	1949-1950
2	1950-1951
2	Scrapbook of Gen. Douglas MacArthur's 1951 visit to Watertown
2	1954-1956
2	1958-1959
5	1956-1958

Series III. Yearbooks, 1931-1985 (inclusive)

Extent: 9 booklets

Box	Yearbook title
6	1931-1932 annotated by Minnie H. Gulesian, Club Press Correspondent
6	1932-1933 annotated by Minnie H. Gulesian, Club Press Correspondent
6	1945-1946
6	1979-1980
6	1980-1981
6	1981-1982
6	1982-1983
6	1983-1984
6	1984-1985

Series IV. Presidents' files, 1894-1944 (inclusive)

Item-level inventory available upon request.

Extent: 22 folders

Box	Folder	
3	1	Alice M. Silsbee 1894-1897
3	2	H. Adelaide Coolidge 1897-1900
3	3	M. Caroline Wilson 1900-1903
3	4	H. Adell Elliot 1903-1905
3	5	Annie E. Davenport 1905-1908
3	6	Etta S. Vaughan 1908-1910
3	7	Emma J. Davenport 1910-1912
3	8	Mabel R. Tabor 1912-1914
3	9	Esther Dimick 1914-1917
3	10	Beatrice Macomber 1917-1920
3	11	Alice H. Robie, M.D. 1920-1922
3	12	Louise V. Hollister 1922-1923
3	13	Eva B. Lovell 1923-1926
3	14	Geneva E. Green 1926-1928
3	15	Grace T. Jones 1928-1930
3	16	Agnes G. Page 1930-1932
3	17	Bernice L. Campbell 1932-1934
3	18	Grace Ames 1934-1936
3	19	Mrs. A. Alonzo Huse 1936-1938
3	20	Mrs. Earl C. Nelson 1938-1940
3	21	Mrs. Ellis 1940-1942
3	22	Pauline A. Johnson 1942-1944

Series V. Special program records, committee records, press clippings and early organizational records, 1903-1994 (inclusive)

Extent: 14 folders and 8 bound volumes

Box	Folder	Folder title
3	32	Trustees Club House Way and Means Committee. 1932-1938. Meeting Minutes.
3		Committee for Remodeling of Club Property & Club Property Committee. Secretary's Report.
4		Committee for Remodeling of Club Property & Club Property Committee records, clippings, and photographs
6		Community Achievement Contest. 1956-1958.
3		Watertown Woman's Club Community Improvement Program Community Service Binder
3	24	Watertown Woman's Club Sixtieth Anniversary Program, 1954
3	25	General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts Guidelines for 1993-1994 ESO Reading List No. 40
3	26	Garden Club monthly and annual reports, including receipts, canceled checks, and Treasurer's reports, 1985-1991
3	27	Official summary report form, acknowledgement of entry, and citation of achievement certificate from the General Federation of Women's Clubs/Sears, Roebuck and Co., 1974
3	28	Certificate of appreciation from the Hugh O'Brian Youth Foundation, 1993
3	30	Report of the Committee on the Club Seal and original drawing of the winning design, 1924
3	31	Scholarship recipients and forms, 1983-1990
3	23	Historic Watertown Community Pageant Program, 1919
3	33	Northeastern Massachusetts Music Festival program, held in Watertown on 5/5/1956.
3	35	Philanthropy Day of Watertown Woman's Club booklet, 10/29/1953
3	36	Valentine card Party and Fashion Show booklet, 2/14/1955
3		Guest book from the Watertown Woman's Club Centennial Celebration Open House at the Watertown Public Library on 4/24/1994 and/or the Watertown Woman's Club Annual Meeting, President's Day Centennial Luncheon 4/6/1994.
3	29	Citation from the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts on the 100 th anniversary of the Watertown Woman's Club, 1994
3	34	Watertown Woman's Club, "One Hundred Years." Stories about the Club's history.
2		Watertown Woman's Club Press Notices, 1931-32, 1932-33

6		Constitution and By-Laws and Early Membership List [1903-1924]
2		Watertown Woman's Club Waiting List, 1909-1910

Related Materials

Industrial fair sponsored by The Watertown Women's Club, Senior High School, HIST 659.15209044 IND 1940, Watertown Free Public Library Local History Collection, Watertown, Mass.

Digital copies of Series II materials are available at <https://www.watertownlib.org/485/Womens-Club>. Digital copies of other items in the collection may be viewed upon request.

Access Points

Corporate names:

Watertown Woman's Club

Genre/Form:

Clippings (Books, newspapers, etc.)

Records and correspondence

Scrapbooks

Subjects:

Clubs—Massachusetts—Watertown

General Federation of Women's Clubs

Watertown (Mass.)—History

Watertown (Mass.)—Social life and customs

Women—Societies and clubs

World War, 1939-1945—Civilian participation