

**Watertown Free Public Library**

123 Main Street  
Watertown, Massachusetts 02472

**Local History Collection**

**Ecumenical Life Center scrapbooks,  
1974-1993 (inclusive)**

**HIST 280.042 ECU**

## Summary

**Collection name:** Ecumenical Life Center scrapbooks, 1974-1993 (inclusive)

**Collection number:** HIST 280.042 ECU

**Repository:** Watertown Free Public Library (Watertown, Massachusetts)

**Creator:** Ecumenical Life Center (Watertown, Mass.)

**Extent:** 3.63 cubic feet (17 scrapbooks in 2 oversize lid boxes, 1 oversize document box, 3 clamshell boxes, and 4 unboxed volumes)

**Language:** English

**Provenance:** Scrapbooks may have been assembled by Ecumenical Life Center Historians Eileen Collins, Floris Mansfield, and Sister Rita Clare.

**Processing information:** This collection was processed circa 2009 by Alicia Morris and other library staff. The finding aid was created by Caroline Littlewood with Morris' description in 2021.

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

**Preferred citation:** Ecumenical Life Center scrapbooks, HIST 280.042 ECU, Watertown Free Public Library Local History Collection, Watertown, Mass.

## Historical Note

The Ecumenical Life Center for Elders was a multi-service center for seniors in Watertown, Massachusetts. The Center opened in 1974 and closed in January 1993. Its mission was to provide senior activities and life-long learning opportunities, and to promote the physical and mental health of all seniors in Watertown. The Center operated on the grounds of Rosary Academy, a Watertown Catholic school at 130 Lexington Street. The Dominican sisters who ran the Academy served as the Center's advocates and first directors. Sister Trinita McIsaac, along with Chairman of the Watertown Council on Aging John J. Mantenuto, played a large role in the establishment of the Center. Sister Rita Clare Pineau, O.P., served as founding director from 1974 to 1979. Events sponsored by the Center were mostly non-denominational and included a bowling club, weekly card games, travelogues, day trips, concerts, workshops, craft bazaars, fundraisers, and a thrift store. The Center also held lectures and classes on health, safety, art, and culture, often in partnership with the town, AARP, or local nonprofit organizations.

In 1987, the Center moved into new housing at 2 Rosary Drive when the Rosary Academy became Siena Village, an intergenerational community that includes a retirement center for Dominican sisters and condominiums. The Center ceased operation in January 1993.

## Organization and Arrangement

The collection is arranged chronologically.

## Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of 17 scrapbooks, all but one spanning about a year or year and a half period between 1974 and 1993. Scrapbooks contain a mix of photographs (many labeled, and mostly of events and people), issues of the monthly newsletter "Life Lines," monthly memos or letters from Center Directors, event flyers, calendars, and other ephemera. Scrapbooks also contain many newspaper clippings about Center activities and obituaries for Center members.

## Scrapbook List

### Scrapbook 1: "Life Center Activity Volume 1 July 1974 - July 1976"

- Monthly events calendars and events fliers
- Letters from Sister Rita Clare to all members of the Centers, 1974-1976
- Letter from Sister Ignatius Marie to all members of the Center, 1976
- Photographs of dancing class; 1974 Christmas party; trip to Newport; Pops concert; Delta employees donating money to the Center; First Anniversary celebration; Garage/Handcraft Sale; trip to Sandwich and Plymouth; the Life Center before, during, and after construction; various other events and patrons
- Photographs and newspaper articles about the Center's Open House and Opening Day, and the Center's hydraulic van
- Letter from the Watertown Bicentennial Celebration Committee inviting the Center to participate
- Memo about the Center's First Anniversary
- Nancy Howard Debruyne brochure
- Songs of Camelot flier and ticket
- Vigor in Maturity program flier
- Watertown Public Schools Adult Education brochure
- Essay on the history and philosophy of the Life Center
- Leadership Skills Training Courses flier
- Institute of Lifetime Learning registration cards, class lists, invitation, application form

### **Scrapbook 2: "Life Center Activity Volume 2 August 1976 - December 1977"**

- Monthly events calendars and events fliers
- Letters from Sister Rita Clare to all members of the Center, 1976-1977
- Photographs of dance instructors, Belmont Community Fair, Workshop, Carnival of Fun, Christmas sale and party, ecumenical prayer service and yarn doll workshop, Florence Archibald, humorist, garage sale, Glenn Balian playing the piano, Halloween, Pot Luck Dinner and Stephanie Barker playing the autoharp, square dancing and table tennis, Middlesex County Hospital Lawn Party and Sale, various other events and patrons
- Photographs and newspaper article for Sister Rita Clare's Silver Jubilee surprise tea
- Flier about Liturgy Celebration of Sister Rita Clare's Silver Jubilee
- Flier for Third Anniversary Open House
- Watertown Senior Citizen's Day brochure

### **Scrapbook 3: "Life Center Activity Volume 3 December 1977 - March 1979"**

- Monthly events calendars and events fliers
- Letters from Sister Rita Clare to all members of the Centers, 1978-1979
- Life Center newsletter, March 1979
- Photographs of Delta donation to the Center, Bake Sale, Christmas party and sale, Dinner at Wayside Inn, Garage Sale, Halloween party, Irish Dinner Night, Italian Dinner, Las Vegas afternoon, Loretta McHugh playing piano, Plainville Cookout, Pot Luck Lunch, prayer service, Prizola drawing, Red Sox game, Senior Citizen's Week, travelogue, trip to Edaville Railroad, trip to Sandwich, patrons

### **Scrapbook 4: "Life Center Activity Volume 4 April 1979 - January 1980"**

- Monthly events calendars and events fliers
- Life Center Newsletters, 1979
- Photographs of Center's cherry trees and visitors, Halloween party, Open House, Pot Luck luncheon, trip to Kennebunkport
- Awareness Days brochure
- 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open House brochure
- Letter from David R. Aronson of the Watertown Council for Aging to Sister Trinita
- Newspaper article and photographs of the 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of "Sam" Samuelian's death, trip to the cape, farewell party for Sister Rita Clare
- Program for Christmas concert

### **Scrapbook 5: "Life Center Activity Volume 5 January 1980 - March 1981"**

- Monthly events calendars and events fliers
- Life Center Newsletter, 1980-1981

- Photographs of dancers, Bazaar, bridge tournament, Health Fair, Halloween, Japanese visitors to the Center, luncheon, staff, trip to Plainville, trip to USS Constitution, trips to JFK Museum and USS Constitution, various other activities
- Thank you cards from Michael Bergin, Peg Gandolfo, and Sister Rita Clare
- Letter and photograph of Delta Airlines donation to the Center
- Letter from Betty Hanlon at Middlesex County Hospital to Sister Trinita
- Letters of thanks to Center singers
- Thank you letter from Marilyn Porreca at Middlesex County Hospital to Dorothy Rayne
- Newspaper article, photographs, signed postcard, and program for trip to see Pearl Bailey concert at the Cape Cod Melody Tent
- 1980 Recognition Luncheon brochure
- Birth announcement for Andrew William Bergin
- Fliers for Christmas celebration, Energy Fair, and Autumn Songfest
- Newspaper article and photographs of yard sale
- Red, White, and Blue Sale flier and photographs
- Singing program
- Watertown Board of Selectmen Energy Conservation Day Proclamation

#### **Scrapbook 6: "Life Center Activity Volume 6 April 1981 – Jan 1982"**

- Monthly events fliers
- Life Center Newsletter, 1981
- Fliers for Catskills vacation and Christmas celebration
- Bowler's scores
- Middlesex County Hospital Volunteer Recognition luncheon booklet.
- Obituaries
- Photographs of women singing, bowling, beauty care event, Tony Bennett concert at the Melody Tent, Halloween party, Plainville bazaar trip, members
- Program for New Life Singers concert
- Thank you and sympathy cards

#### **Scrapbook 7: "Life Center Activity Volume 7 January 1982 – January 1983"**

- Monthly events fliers
- Life Center Newsletter, 1982
- Photographs of New Life Singers; someone teaching at the Center; Harbor Day and Lip Reading Class; members' picnic
- Ash Wednesday program
- Biblical Spirituality events flier
- Flier for thank you tea for Middlesex County Hospital senior volunteers
- Letter from Sister Trinita
- Massachusetts Association of Older Americans flier on Senior Citizens Month event
- Thank you letters from the Adult Day Health Center and the Pine Street Inn

### Scrapbook 8: "January 1983 - December 1983"

- Monthly events calendars and events fliers
- Life Center Newsletter, 1983
- Photographs of Life Center events and members, Halloween, Christmas concert, and members standing along the Charles River
- New Life Fashion show fliers and photographs
- Fliers for Christmas concert, Christmas festival, travel to Vermont, "Getting to Know the Bible"
- Obituary and prayer service for deceased members

### Scrapbook 9: "January 1984 - December 1984"

- Monthly events fliers
- Life Center Newsletters, 1984
- Letter from Sister Trinita
- Armenian Memorial Church Ecumenical Service program
- Bowling scores
- Letter and service for Installation of Rev. Frederick F. Rhines
- Rainbow sale and Life Center 10 year anniversary fliers
- Obituaries
- Photographs of Life Center events, members, and grounds
- Tenth Anniversary Dinner and Dance program and photographs

### Scrapbook 10: "1985"

- Monthly events fliers
- Christmas card from President & Mrs. Reagan
- Fliers for Christmas activities and concerts
- Letter from James Bergin to the New Life Singers
- Letter from Life center directors to members RE: Christmas Bazaar
- Obituaries for John J. O'Donnell, Margaret M. Hughes, Marie O. LeBrecque, Monica Doucette, Thomas Tambureno, Ann D. Harvey, Dorothy K. Mantenuto, and Joseph Sheehan
- Bowling scores
- Obituary and photograph of Ann Milmore
- Photographs of Al Feldman, Life Center members playing cards, anniversary party, blood pressure event and Bill and Ann Harvey, Christmas party, Halloween party, Life Center members, Mary Cabozzi and other members, New Year's party, seminarians and Sister Trinita, Sister Trinita and ground-breaking for new floor, Thrift Shop workers Christmas party, trip to Rockport
- Photographs and written piece for Thrift Store humorous show
- Receipt from American Cancer Society to New Life Bowlers

- Thank you letters from Pine Street Inn, Jack O'Donnell's family, and Joseph H. Sheehan's family

### Scrapbook 11: "1986"

- Monthly events fliers
- Newspaper article about Ruth McBride and obituaries for James J. Nicholson Sr., John J. Carver, and Agnes J. Malley
- Obituaries and photographs of William E. Shaughnessy, Laura M. MacLennan, and William M. Harvey
- Newspaper photograph of Life Center members dancing with Joe Kennedy
- Photographs of Will Pouliot; blood pressure event; event with Father Thomas Whelan; Life Center members at dinner, events, playing cards; RSVP luncheon; trip to Sandwich
- Postcard from Sister Trinita to Eunice Connolly
- Thank you card from the Pine Street Inn

### Scrapbook 12: "January - May 1987"

- Monthly events fliers
- Bowling scores
- Letter to Rose Swift from Helen Gigante
- Obituaries for Antonio Conti and Catherine R. Backhoff
- Photographs of Monday Morning Crafts group, New Year's party, Valentine's Day party, renewal of vows service, Life Center members and events
- Siena Village development flier

### Scrapbook 13: "June - December 1987"

- Monthly events fliers
- Life Center Newsletters, Vol. 9
- Action catalogue for Rosary Academy Convent sale
- Newspaper articles, including obituary for Ann Creonte
- Newspaper photograph of John Eberly
- Obituary and photographs of Mary Francis
- Photographs of Life Center members, Life Center emptied for move, Ethel Miranda
- Obituary and tribute to Ethel Miranda from her son John

### Scrapbook 14: "January 1988 - August 1989"

- Monthly events fliers
- Life Center Newsletters, Vol. 10 and 11
- Letter from Sister Trinita to Life Center members
- Letter from Dotty Pouliot of the Drafts Club to Life Center members

- Obituaries for Alice G. Clements, Margaret L. Walsh, Marguerite Hamilton, and Thomas J. DeCosta
- Obituary, photograph, memorial of Alice M. Webb
- Obituary and photographs of Carmelo Insalaco, Ernest Erekson, and Theresa M. Moore
- Photographs of Dick and Rita O'Sullivan, harbor cruise, Mary Francis, Sister Rosaria and Midge McBride, Tom McHugh, bowlers, Executive Board meeting, Life Center members playing bridge, Life Center's new location, monthly meeting, the New Life Singers, trip to Vermont
- Thrift Shop flier

### Scrapbook 15: "September 1989 – November 1990"

- Monthly events fliers
- Life Center Newsletters, Vol. 11 and 12
- Obituaries for Mary Sama, Marie MacDonald, and Helen M. Richards
- Newspaper photograph and article about Philip Norton
- Photographs of Agnes McDonald; Al Azagian; Arts & Crafts club; Eunice Connally; Loretta McHugh; Bazaar; bowlers; December Christmas meeting; Halloween; lecture by Larry Roth, Ophthalmologist; lecture by Richard Mulroy, Orthopedic Surgeon; Life Center meeting; Life Center members at color analysis event
- Programming note

### Scrapbook 16: "December 1990 – December 1992"

- Monthly events fliers
- Life Center Newsletters, 1991-1992
- Bowler's scores
- Obituaries for Lillian Looney, Michael J. Charles, Esther M. Connors Fitzgerald, Eileen Collins, Helen M. O'Brien, John J. Mantenuto, Helen F. Wallace, Madeleine D. McBrine, and Sister Osanna McHugh
- Photographs of Helen Wallace, Madeleine McBrine, bowlers, Life Center members, Sisters Trinita and Mary John
- Watertown Mall holiday entertainment flier

### Scrapbook 17: "Who's Who' Memory Book"

- Life Center Newsletter, 1989
- Photographs of Life Center members and events
- Obituaries for Theresa M. Moore, Viva M. Colburn, Rose V. Nicholson, Sister Sybillina Holloway
- Photographs and obituary of Alice M. Webb
- Letter from John [Seaver?] in the House of Representatives to Sister Trinita



## Administrative Information

Box	Contents	Legacy call number (internal use only)
1	Scrapbook 1: "Life Center Activity Volume 1 July 1974 – July 1976" Scrapbook 3: "Life Center Activity Volume 3 December 1977 – March 1979"	HIST 280.042 ECU 1974-1976 v. 1 HIST 280.042 ECU 1977-1979 v. 3
2	Scrapbook 2: "Life Center Activity Volume 2 August 1976 – December 1977" Scrapbook 6: "Life Center Activity Volume 6 April 1981 – Jan 1982" Scrapbook 7: "Life Center Activity Volume 7 January 1982 – January 1983"	HIST 280.042 ECU 1976-1977 v. 2 HIST 280.042 ECU 1981 v. 6 HIST 280.042 ECU 1982 v. 7
3	Scrapbook 4: "Life Center Activity Volume 4 April 1979 – January 1980" Scrapbook 8: "January 1983 – December 1983" Scrapbook 9: "January 1984 – December 1984"	HIST 280.042 ECU 1979 v. 4 HIST 280.042 ECU 1983 v. 8 HIST 280.042 ECU 1984 v. 9
4	Scrapbook 14: "January 1988 – August 1989" Scrapbook 15: "September 1989 – November 1990 [1/2]"	HIST 280.042 ECU 1988-1989 v. 13 HIST 280.042 ECU 1989-1990 v. 14
5	Scrapbook 15: "September 1989 – November 1990 [2/2]" Scrapbook 16: "December 1990 – December 1992"	HIST 280.042 ECU 1989-1990 v. 14 HIST 280.042 ECU 1990-1992 v. 15
6	Scrapbook 11: "1986" Scrapbook 17: "'Who's Who' Memory Book"	HIST 280.042 ECU 1986 v.11 HIST 280.042 ECU 1989-1993 v. 16
	Scrapbook 12: "January – May 1987"	HIST 280.042 ECU 1987 v. 12 pt.2
	Scrapbook 13: "June – December 1987"	HIST 280.042 ECU 1987 v. 12 pt.1
	Scrapbook 5: "Life Center Activity Volume 5 January 1980 – March 1981"	HIST 280.042 ECU 1980 v. 5
	Scrapbook 10: "1985"	HIST 280.042 ECU 1985 v. 10

## Access Points

### People:

Collins, Eileen M., 1931-1992

Mantenuto, John J., 1911-1992

Mclsaac, M. Trinita, Sr., 1925-2005

Pineau, Lois (Rita Clare), Sr., 1932-2017

**Corporate names:**

AARP (Organization)

Ecumenical Life Center

Town of Watertown—Council on Aging

**Subjects:**

Adult education

Clubs - Massachusetts - Watertown

Ecumenical Life Center

Ecumenical movement

Older people—Recreation

Senior centers

Watertown (Mass.) -- Genealogy

Watertown (Mass.) -- History

Watertown (Mass.) -- Social life and customs

Watertown (Mass.) -- Societies, etc.

**Forms:**

Scrapbooks