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Guide to the Woman's Club of Schenectady Records, 1908-2000 (1996.533)

Creator: The Woman's Club of Schenectady

Accession Number: 1996.533

Extent: 1 cu. foot (3 boxes and 2 oversized scrapbooks)

Source: Helen M. Briggs, 17 June 1996; additional material received ca. 2000.

Inclusive Dates: 1908-2000

Access: Access to this collection is unrestricted.

Abstract: The records of the Woman's Club of Schenectady consist of meeting minutes, year books, scrapbooks, and miscellaneous material including photographs, certificates, and written histories of the club.

Scope and Content Note:

The records of the Woman's Club of Schenectady consist of meeting minutes, year books, scrapbooks, and miscellaneous material including photographs, certificates, and written histories of the club. Ledgers in the collection include meeting minutes and other information pertaining to the club's drama, home economics, and music departments. Scrapbooks contain newspaper clippings.

Organization History:

The Woman's Club of Schenectady was organized after a discussion between two local university women seeking to form a woman's club for "mutual improvement." The first meeting was held at the home of Rebecca Hoffman on the grounds of Union College in 1900. The organization joined the state federation and general federation of women's clubs that year. The first president of the club was Mrs. Louise H. Westover. The club was incorporated in 1908 and joined the Schenectady City Federation in 1915.

The club had its home at 238 State Street for many years before purchasing the house at 56 Washington Avenue in 1920. In 1930, under the presidency of Jessie T. Zoller, over \$4,000 was raised to pay off the mortgage on the building. The club would remain at 56 Washington Avenue until 1977. Meetings were then briefly moved to the fellowship hall of the Eastern Parkway Methodist Church. The club had moved to its new home at 1309 Rugby Road by 1981, where it would remain until the meeting place was moved to

Wynwood Commons, 1786 Union Street. The Women's Club celebrated its 200th anniversary in 2000.

From its earliest inception, the Woman's Club focused on the cultural development of its members as well as projects supporting civic and philanthropic activity in the area. The club organized a number of departments over the years to oversee the group's activities. Departments have included art, civics, drama, first aid, gardening, history, home economics, junior, music, parliamentary law, philanthropy, physical culture, public health, three S (service, success, and satisfaction), and tourism.

In addition to holding frequent social and enrichment activities for its membership, the Woman's Club of Schenectady also engaged in many charitable and community-improvement projects. The Woman's Club raised funds for a number of local, national, and international charitable organizations over the years, founded the first supervised children's playground in the city and advocated for the establishment of night schools. During World War I and World War II, the Women's Club raised funds for soldier care packages and war bonds. In 1925, the organization created a scholarship for local girls, which would come to be known as the Jessie T. Zoller Scholarship in later years.

The Woman's Club of Schenectady also worked to establish organizations that would be active in the community in their own right. In 1901, the Woman's Club was instrumental in the formation of the Humane Society for Neglected Children, which would later become part of Northeast Parent and Child Society. The Public Health Association, a city organization, was first formed within the Woman's Club in 1910. In 1916, the local branch of the Travelers Aid Society was formed under the auspices of the Woman's Club.

Woman's Club mottoes over the years have included: "Service;" "Juncta Juvant" (Joined in fellowship and united in purpose); "To serve the present age;" "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Romans 14:19); "So long as we love, we serve" (Stevenson); "Let us be such as help the life of the future;" "Here's to the greater to-morrow that is born of a great to-day;" "In essentials, unity; in doubtful matters, liberty; in all things, charity;" "Others;" "Coming together means beginning, bringing together means progress; keeping together means success;" "Together let us beat this ample field, try what the open, what the covert yield" (Pope). A song for the Woman's Club of Schenectady was written by Clara Loyd Jones.

Finding Aid Created By/Date: Heidi-Maria Schilling, 15 Mar 2012

Item/Box/Folder Listing:

Box	Folder	Folder Title
1	N/A	Articles of Incorporation 1908-09
1	N/A	Year Book of the Woman's Club Schenectady 1909-1999
1	N/A	Fiftieth Anniversary Luncheon Program 1949-50
2	1	Blue & Gold Quarter Century Remembrance Book, 1925

2	2	Certificates and Citations, 1962-1990
2	3	Club History and Legacy – 1908-1990
2	4	Gift Agreement of Ledgers, Photos, Scrap Books of the Woman’s Club of Schenectady by Helen M. Briggs, dated June 17, 1996
2	5	Miscellaneous – 1935-1998
2	6	Newspaper Clippings, 1971-2000
2	7	Philanthropy, 1958-1972
2	8	Photographs - 1998
2	9	Zoller, Jessie T., Scholarship, 1975-1980
2	N/A	Drama Department Treasurer’s Account 1948-77
2	N/A	Garden Department Meeting Journal with Newspaper Clippings 1936-52
2	N/A	Minutes of Home Economics Department Meetings 1912-1915
3	N/A	Household Efficiency & Home Economics Department Journal, 1916-1926
3	N/A	Minutes of Home Forum Department Journal 1926-45
3	N/A	Music Department Meeting Minutes Journal, 1917-1924
3	N/A	Music Department Meeting Ledger 1924-1931
3	N/A	Music Department Meeting Minutes 1940-1946
N/A	N/A	Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings 1938-1939
N/A	N/A	Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings 1958-1987