

Grand Rapids History & Special Collections

Archives

GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Finding Aid for the

Trades and Labor Council Labor Day. Programs and Directories.

Collection # 038

October 2007 version

Abstract

This is a devised collection of programs originally meant as souvenirs of the Labor Day celebration and picnic. They were issued by the Trades and Labor Council of Grand Rapids, for their annual celebration. These celebrations were an important event in the labor movement in Grand Rapids; union alliances and strength can be measured by guest (political) speakers and unions represented from ca. 1890-1910. The programs include identified images of labor representatives, and/or candidates for office. Advertising is also a large portion of the programs, including engraved or photographic images of some buildings of the period. An index to advertisements is included in some program years. Additionally, one Union Labor Directory, for 1907, has been attached to this collection, containing a similar content to the programs. The Library continues to add holdings to this collection, as items become available.

Collection #: 038

Accession #: 1986.312 ; P2006.003

Donor: Library purchase

Span dates: 1890-1910, incomplete.

Processor: William C. Black, March, 1987; Inventory, Andrea Stadt, December 1999. Box Summary, Marcella Beck, August 23,2000. Revised Feb. 2006, R. Mayne.

Size: 0.3 cu.ft.

Related Collections

See also Coll. 239, the GRPL Scrapbook Collection.

For Photos, see the Staff for assistance in finding possible images in several GRPL archival collections.

Box Summary

Box No.	Description of Contents	Box Description
1	Labor Day Programs	Slim Legal

### History

The Labor Day programs were initiated in 1888 by the Trades and Labor Council of Grand Rapids, an umbrella group for the individual unions that existed at the time. As unions sprang into life or were forced out of existence by management, most were members of the larger organization, the Trades and Labor Council. The Labor Day events were organized as a celebration of union strength and solidarity, to celebrate labor's own day, and to provide an atmosphere of enjoyment for the union workers and their families. As the years passed, politicians and other people seeking help or support from the unions used the event as an opportunity to show their support of the unions or union causes by joining the celebration. Held at Ramona Park, the annual event was always well attended by labor and its supporters.

### Scope and Content

The collection serves as a yearly document of labor's progress and defeats through the descriptions given in the programs of the member unions. Speakers and political figures featured, as well, are an indication of those supportive of labor and thus earning labor's notice. The collection spans the fourth (1890) Labor Day celebration through the twenty-fourth, with several years missing.

Most items were previously part of the book collection, and moved to the archives due to their fragile condition.

An index to the identified images in the various programs is needed. The items also include informative advertising, and may have some unique images of Grand Rapids buildings.

Contents

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
		<b>Programs</b>
1	1	1890. Fourth
	2	1892. Sixth
	3	1893. Seventh
	4	1894. (2) Eighth
	5	1895. (2) Ninth
	6	1896. Tenth. Fragments only. Includes 2 encapsulated tattered pages only; full program needed
	7	1897. Eleventh
	8	1898. [Twelfth]
	9	1900. [Fourteenth]
	10	1902. Sixteenth
	11	1903. Seventeenth
	12	1906. Twentieth
		c. 1
		c. 2 P2006.003      Added 2/15/2006
	13	1910. Twenty-fourth
		<b>Union Labor Directory</b>
1	14	1907. Second Annual.