

Grand Rapids History & Special Collections

Archives

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Finding Aid for the

East Side Ladies Literary Club Papers

Collection # 032

May 2007 Version

Abstract

The East Side Ladies Literary Club papers contain documents of the organization from 1894-2004, although the Club may have stopped meeting by the year 2000. Included are incomplete holdings of minute books, account books, membership records, yearbooks, the original gavel used by the organization, and history & news clippings. The Club was one of several women's groups formed for the purpose of encouraging literary and social culture. The Club was also a long-standing member of the Grand Rapids Federation of Women's Clubs. Also received with the later materials of the Literary Club are a few documents for the Kent County Women's Club, ca. 1980-1993, and the Santa Claus Girls of the Grand Rapids Women's Clubs, 1991-1994. Little is know about the Kent County Women's Club, which appears to have disbanded. See Coll. 180, the Santa Claus Girls Collection, for more information on that organization.

Collection #: 032

Accession #: 1986.012 ; 2005.060

Donor: East Side Ladies Literary Club

Span dates: 1894-2004

Processor: Original Processing by Wendy K. Walker, 1987.

Inventory, Andrea Stadt, November 1999.

Box Summary, Marcie Beck, Aug. 23, 2000.

Updates & corrections, R. Mayne, 2000-2002.

2005.060 Addition & processing, R. Mayne, Aug. 2005.

Size: 1 cu. ft. ; linear ft.

Related Collections

Several other collections in the Archives contain women's club or Ladies Literary Club materials, and may contain items specifically related to the East Side Ladies Literary Club:

Coll. 20      Grand Rapids Federation of Women's Clubs Records.

Coll. 103     Grand Rapids Woman's Club Records

Coll. 275     Ladies Literary Club Collection.

Coll. 180     Santa Claus Girls Collection.

Box Summary

Box No.	Description of Contents	Box Description
1	minutes	Standard
2	minutes	Standard
3	minutes/misc.	Standard
4	Calendars	Standard
Box 5-7 Added 4/5/2005		
5	Account Books, 1936-2000+	Slim
2005.060 Added 8/4/2005		
6	Membership, 1935-1964 Banking & Dues documents.	Standard legal
2005.060 Added 8/4/2005		
7	Kent County Women's Club Santa Claus Girls	Standard

## History

On January 12, 1894, 23 ladies met at the home of Mrs. Cogswell on East Street to discuss the possible formation of a ladies literary society. After studying the organization of the Bay View Reading Circle and the South End Literary Society, the ladies began the action by holding officer elections, writing a constitution, and planning future meetings. Cogswell was elected the first President of the newly formed East Side Ladies Literary Club and the constitution was approved on January 23, 1894.

In 1896 the East Side Ladies Literary Club (ESLLC) became federated under the Grand Rapids Federation of Women's Clubs as one of that organization's twelve original member clubs and remains so today. The ESLLC gained state federation in 1899 and again in 1934 after a brief hiatus.

The ESLLC's original purpose was for the development of literary and social culture among its members. They undertook mental improvement, study of the vital interests of the day and benevolent work within their sphere. Throughout its existence the Club has held a membership level of twenty to just over fifty ladies. While the ESLLC still exists today, it now functions primarily as a social society limiting its charitable work to only a few projects per year.

Also found in this collection are documents for the Kent County Women's Club. Little is known about this club, or how the documents of that organization came to be included with those of this Literary Club. It appears that the Kent County Women's Club disbanded sometime in the 1980's, while the East Side Ladies Literary Club continued to meet until around the year 2000.

## Scope and Content

Basic documents of an organization are found here for the East Side Ladies Literary Club, include some generations of by laws, a long run of minutes from Club's inception until 1984, incomplete membership & attendance records, financial information from 1935 to 2004, and year books for 1902/1903 to 1978/1979, incomplete.

No written or visual information on the clubs activities is found, such as photographs or stories, except for a few isolated newspaper clippings. The scrapbooks often kept by such organizations are missing for this collection.

A bank book from the Convention Account of the Grand Rapids Federation of Women's Clubs, 1948 is the only previous evidence of the club's wider participation in this city wide joint organization. Added with the 2005.060 gift are records of the Kent County Women's Club, from ca. 1880 to 1994.

Contents

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
		<b>Series I. History &amp; General information</b>
4	x	Miscellaneous Clippings / History 1986.012 3 clippings 2005.060 clippings, ephemera, references to additional clippings.
4	x	Constitution & By Laws 2005.060 Search the minute books for possible additional information of this type.
		<b>Series II. Minutes</b>
1	1	1894-Jun 1896.
	2	Oct 1896-Feb 13, 1900.
	3	Feb 20, 1900-Jan. 2, 1906.
	4	Jan 9, 1906-Apr 5, 1910.
	5	Apr 12, 1910-Dec 9, 1913.
	6	Dec 16, 1913-Oct 24, 1916.
2	1	Oct 31, 1916-Nov 4, 1919.
	2	Nov 18, 1919-Dec 19, 1922.
	3	1923-1925.
	4	1926-1931, 1936-Jun 1937.
	5	Oct 1937-Apr 1940.
	6	Oct 1940-Jun 1945.
	7	Oct 1945-Mar 1948.
3	1	Oct 1948-Oct 1952.
	2	Oct 1952-Sept. 1956.
	3	Sept 1956-1965.
3		Dec. 7, 1965 to May 1, 1984. 2005.060 Added 8/4/2005
		<b>Series II. Membership.</b>
6	x	1935/36 to 1963/64. See the "Dues" payment stubs in Box 6 for more membership information 1977-1986.
		<b>Series II. Account Books</b>
5	1	1935/36 – 1956/57
	2	1957/58 – 1967/68
	3	1967/68 - 2000
5	4	Miscellaneous accounting notes, 1994-2003. All of Box 5 = 2005.060 Added 8/4/2005

6 Bank Books, bank account reports & checks, receipt stubs. 1975-2003.  
Unprocessed.

**Series III. East Side Ladies Literary Club Calendars / Yearbooks /  
Directories**

4 1 1902/03 00.[3665].1 Added 4/5/2005  
1903/04  
1904/05  
1905/06  
1906/07  
1907/08  
1908/09  
1909/10  
1910/11  
1911/12  
1912/1913 00.[3665].11

4 2 1926/1927 00.[3665].12  
34  
35  
36  
37 00.[3665].16  
38 00.[3665].17  
39  
40 00.[3665].19

4 3 1934/1935, 41st year 00.[3666].1 Added 4/5/2005  
1935/1936, 42nd year 00.[3666].2  
1936/1937 00.[3665].20  
1937/1938  
1938/1939 00.[3665].21

4 4 1941/42 1948/49.  
These two items have never been cataloged, and were in the collection  
when the MKG's were transferred.

4 5 1941/42 00.[3672].1 Added 4/5/2005  
1942/43  
1943/44  
1956/57 00.[3672].4  
These 4 items were found unprocessed in Box 3 when adding the other  
MKG's to this collection, and processed with the other MKG's.

East Side LL. Papers  
Collection # 032

4	6	1964/1965 1966/1967 1967/1968 1968/1969 1969/1970	2005.060	Added 8/4/2005
4	7	1970/1971 1971/1972 1972/1973 1973/1974 1974/1975 1975/1976 1976/1977 1977/1978	2005.060	Added 8/4/2005
4		1978/1979 (2)	2005.060	Added 8/4/2005
4	x	<b>Series IV. Realia</b> Original Club Gavel		

**Series V. Miscellaneous**

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| 3 | 5  | <b>A. Miscellaneous Documents.</b> [Updated 12/2/2000]   |
|   |    | • [1918] Charter Story. [14 sheets] Regarding proposed Grand Rapids city charter amendments in 1918.     |
|   |    | <b>B. Other Women's Clubs.</b>   |
| 3 |    | June 1924 List of member. West Side Ladies Literary Club   |
| 3 |    | Grand Rapids Federation of Women's Clubs. Convention Account bank booklet, 1948. People's National Bank. |
|   |    | Kent County Women's Club Documents, 1980-1994  |
| 7 | 1  | Meeting materials.   |
| 2 |    | Directory  |
|   | 3  | ByLaws   |
|   | 4  | Minutes / Convention / Executive   |
|   | 5  | Treasurer's Reports  |
| 7 | 6  | Accounts, 1980-1993.   |
|   |    | Navy check book.   |
|   | 7  | Conventions  |
|   | 8  | Meeting Banquet Facilities   |
| 7 | 9  | Miscellaneous correspondence & records, 1988-1991. [Suzanne Johnson]                                     |
| 7 | 10 | Santa Claus Girls miscellaneous materials. (Grand Rapids Women's Clubs).                                 |
|   |    | • Constitution.  |
|   |    | • 1991/1992 Directory.   |
|   |    | • 1992/1993 "Grand Rapids Women's Clubs. 'The Santa Claus Girls'"  |
|   |    | • 1993/1994 "Grand Rapids Women's Clubs. 'The Santa Claus Girls'"  |