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Finding Aid for the Grand Rapids Public Library Woman's Suffrage collection Collection 127

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on March 18, 2019.
Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections
Department

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Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

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URL: <http://www.grpl.org>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Title:	Grand Rapids Public Library Woman's Suffrage collection
ID:	Collection 127
Date [inclusive]:	1899-1970
Physical Description:	0.67 Linear Feet Two boxes
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	This is a small collection that sketches the participation of some Michigan women in the suffrage movement, primarily between 1908-1920. It focuses particular attention on the Grand Rapids area. Included are publications, such as the Michigan Suffragist, correspondence and convention literature.

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Biographical / Historical

The Woman's Suffragist Movement began with the first Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Fall, NY in 1848. It ended in 1920 with the adoption of the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, following Tennessee's ratification. It was a long and difficult struggle. Michigan women had their own struggle until they were granted the right to vote in 1919 by the State Legislature. Women from Grand Rapids were instrumental in bringing about the success in the state.

The Grand Rapids Equal Franchise Club was formed in April 1910. This club spread literature and information about suffrage, which helped build local support for the movement. In 1914 the club sponsored a song and essay contest to further promote their efforts.

Michigan was an early supporter of women's right. Senator Rix Robinson of Ada first proposed a suffrage amendment as early as 1849, perhaps mindful of the leadership of Madeline LaFramboise, who with her husband Joseph founded the first permanent trading post in Ada, Michigan in 1804, continuing it after his death. The State's first bill for women's suffrage came to the floor in 1866, but was defeated. An amendment actually passed in Michigan in 1870, but is vetoed by the Governor. It is proposed and defeated again in 1874 (1872?), the same year that Susan B. Anthony was arrested for trying to vote in Rochester, while Michigan's Sojourner Truth was turned away when she attempted to vote in Battle Creek. Emily Burton Ketcham of Grand Rapids brought national leaders such as Susan B. Anthony to this city. (See the separate Ketcham Coll. 293). In 1884, Michigan Senator Thomas W. Palmer is said to

be the first to make a speech in the U.S. Senate in support of woman's suffrage. A suffrage amendment passed again in Michigan in 1893, to be struck down by the Michigan Supreme Court. After other defeats, Michigan finally granted women voting rights in 1918, two years before women were given these rights throughout the nation. A number of other prominent women and women's groups achieved notable firsts, and/or lobbied and labored for women's rights up to the time of this historical milestone.

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Scope and Contents

The collection details the struggle of women in the Grand Rapids, Michigan area, as part of the national effort for women's suffrage. The bulk of the collection consists of publications including various suffragist magazines and bulletins as well as duplicates of material gathered by the Michigan Equal Suffrage Association.

It also contains letters written in response to an essay and song contest sponsored by the Grand Rapids Equal Franchise Club. The essay and songs, sung to patriotic tunes, proclaim the virtues of women and their right to vote.

The newspaper clippings and citations to clippings in local Grand Rapids newspapers provide further data on the local movement. Microfilm copies of *Woman Weekly* (21 November 1908 - 23 January 1909) are also included. This films copies original material in other Grand Rapids Public Library manuscript collections.

The collection also includes a 1975 student paper on the Grand Rapids suffrage movement from 1910-20 within the broader national suffrage movement context.

There is much history, however, that might be added to this collection, if resources are found, to document woman suffrage in Western Michigan before 1900.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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URL: <http://www.grpl.org>

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Unknown and accessions 00.[2909].1, 2009.002

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Related Materials

Related Materials

Coll. 036, Woman magazine

Coll. 054, Grand Rapids Public Library Photo Collection, contains a photograph of the Grand Rapids suffrage headquarters.

Coll. 078, "Votes for Women" float in 1910 Grand Rapids Homecoming Parade. 078-1.5-86.1

Coll. 185, Grand Rapids Public Library Copy Photograph Collection contains a portrait of suffragette Minnie R Mickel, (185-2-90)

Coll. 293, Ketcham family papers, including information on Michigan Suffragette Emily Burton Ketcham.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History
- records (documents)
- Suffragists -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids
- Women -- Suffrage -- Michigan -- History

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances
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Research papers - "Study of G.R. Woman's Suffrage Movement, 1910-1920," by Ruth E. Hoogland, 1975.	Box 1	Folder 1
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Correspondence & Ephemera

Title/Description	Instances	
[Folded poster] WWI illustration by Herbert at top, plus wording: "Vote for Woman Suffrage; Fight for Democracy at Home, November 5" / N.Y. : National Woman Suffrage Publication Co. ; reproduced by Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame, Lansing, 1989.	Box 2	Folder 1
Grand Rapids Equal Franchise club, Calendar, 1917-1918.	Box 2	Folder 1
Small sheet of paper with a board of red and blue American flags. "Votes for Women in Michigan"... "Are Women People?" ...	Box 2	Folder 1
Various song sheets & essays	Box 2	Folder 1
Letters [need item inventory]	Box 2	Folder 1
Convention minutes, 1899.	Box 2	Folder 1

Michigan Women's Study Material, 1989.

Title/Description	Instances	
[Folded poster] The Farmer Knows! / N.Y. : National Woman Suffrage Publ. Co.; reproduced by Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame, Lansing, 1989.	Box 1	Folder 2
6 historical flyers reproduced in 1989 by the Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame. On colored paper	Box 1	Folder 2
Plan of Work for Campaign / Michigan Equal Suffrage Association, 1913. Small brochure. Reproduced 1989 by the Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame.	Box 1	Folder 2

Publications

Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

The Michigan Suffragist (1914-1917) is also available on microfilm in the microfilm cabinet, as is Woman Weekly (1908-1909).

Title/Description	Instances	
Report of the Seventeenth Annual Convention of the Michigan Equal Suffrage Association, held in Saginaw, E.S., Oct. 23, 24, and 25, 1901. Bay City, Mi. : Hurley Bros. Formerly M324.774.M582r v. 17. 00.[2909].1	Box 1	Folder 3
The Woman Citizen [serial]. v. 3, no. 27, Nov. 30, 1918. 2009.002	Box 2	Folder 2

General

An Idea Whose Time Has Come : Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame. General information, directions and membership flyer. [Flyer].	Box 1	Folder 17
Charismatic, Compassionate, Courageous! [flyer & order form for book] "Historic Women of Michigan" [Flyer].	Box 1	Folder 17
Misc. newspaper clippings, 1911-1970 (Photocopies).	Box 2	Folder 3
1914 Grand Rapids Press suffrage edition, first section [2018.060], 1914-05-02	Drawer FF-VIII-C	

How the Suffragists Changed Michigan [kit] / Michigan Women's Studies Association, Inc., Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame, Lansing. n.d.

Title/Description	Instances	
Table of Contents and original packet envelop (2)	Box 1	Folder 11
I-1 to I-4 Information	Box 1	Folder 12
D-1 to D-3 Documents	Box 1	Folder 13
F-1 to F-10 Flyers	Box 1	Folder 14
N-1 to N-11 News Articles	Box 1	Folder 15
P-1 to P-4 Posters	Box 1	Folder 16

Miscellaneous, ephemera & postcards, 1911-1927.

Title/Description	Instances	
3 postcards, unused, Will P. Canaan Co., each with different suffrage messages.	Box 1	Folder 9
Michigan laws relating to Women and Girls ... issued by Michigan Equal Suffrage Assoc., Detroit, 1911. pamphlet.	Box 1	Folder 9
Study Circles program / Michigan Equal Suffrage Assoc., 1914. Kalamazoo : Horton-Beimer Press.	Box 1	Folder 9
Report of the Equal Suffrage Campaign for 1912 ... / by Ida L. Chittenden, Manager. Michigan Hall of Fame reproduction, 1989.	Box 1	Folder 9
Year book of the Michigan Equal Suffrage Association, and report of the 30th Annual Convention, held in Saginaw, Nov. 10 & 11, 1915 / compiled and edited by Mary Ahnefeldt Brander.	Box 1	Folder 9
Year book of the Michigan Equal Suffrage Association, and report of the 28th Annual Convention, Jackson, Michigan, Nov. 5,6,7, 1913	Box 1	Folder 9
Bulletin [serial] / Michigan League of Women Voters. v. 5, no. 8, Dec. 1927. Has image of Mrs. Siegel W. Judd, the newly elected	Box 1	Folder 9

president, on the front. [Mailed label to Miss Dorothy Stuart Baker ...]

Two reproduction flyers on orange paper.	Box 1	Folder 9
Leaflet: In Loving Memory of Emily Burton Ketcham / compiled by MaryL. Doe. Ladies' Literary Club, Jan. 25, 1907. Ketcham image on verso of cover, neg. #3993. [Ketcham b. July 16, 1838-d. July 12, 1907]	Box 1	Folder 10
Michigan Women's Historical Center & Hall of Fame. Timeline of Michigan Women's History. From the Center's website, 1/12/2009	Box 1	Folder 18