

Finding aid for the St. Cecilia records Collection 284

Finding aid prepared by Jill Bannink

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

September 23, 2014

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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

March 17, 2007

111 Library Street NE

Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49503

616-988-5400

localhis@grpl.org

Table of Contents

<u>Summary Information</u>	3
<u>Biographical/Historical note</u>	4
<u>Scope and Contents note</u>	4
<u>Administrative Information</u>	5
<u>Related Materials</u>	5
<u>Controlled Access Headings</u>	5
<u>Collection Inventory</u>	7
<u>Series I. Histories</u>	7
<u>Series II. Documents of the Organization</u>	7
<u>Series III. Ephemera</u>	8
<u>Series IV. Publications</u>	9
<u>Series V. Programs</u>	11
<u>Series VI. Yearbooks</u>	20
<u>Series VII. Related Organizations</u>	22

Summary Information

Repository	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Title	St. Cecilia Society records
Date [inclusive]	1889-1982
Extent	1.8 Linear feet Three boxes
Language	English
Abstract	<p>St. Cecilia Music Center (formerly known as St. Cecilia Society) is a non-profit organization that advances the appreciation of music in Grand Rapids, Michigan. St. Cecilia was formed in 1883 and is considered the 'mother of the arts' in Grand Rapids. This is a devised collection which brings together miscellaneous accessions and found items relating to the organization. The bulk of the collection consists of programs and yearbooks. A few other periodicals and other documents are included. This collection does not constitute the official archives of the organization, although some of the items were recieved from St. Cecilia or from individual members.</p>

Biographical/Historical note

In 1883, Grand Rapids woman Ella Pierce decided to establish a music society and gathered eight of her friends to hold the first meeting on September 7 of that year. These nine women formed a society to advance musical culture and they proclaimed that the society “was on broad lines, free from selfish interests, devoted to musical improvement and the development of the art in the community.” The name St. Cecilia was chosen because she is the patron saint of music. By the end of the first year, the society had 100 members. During the first ten years, meetings were held in various rented rooms throughout the city, including at the Ladies' Literary Club. In the seventh year, the society began bringing well-known artists to Grand Rapids, and only members could attend the concerts. This significantly increased membership, and society members decided they needed a building that could house their growing numbers and that was designed specifically for musical performances.

In May 1892, the society purchased land on Ransom and on November 1893 work began on the building that was designed by Chicago architect Henry Ives Cobb. A dedication ceremony took place on June 19, 1894 and the mayor and local dignitaries were in attendance. Over ten percent of the population turned out to tour the new building. Women took an active role in fundraising for construction, and this building was the first building to be built and owned by women dedicated to music. Also, in 1895, Frederick S. Church, a famous New York artist and Grand Rapids native, designed a stained glass window that pictured Saint Cecilia. The window hangs on the building's south wall. In 1971, the building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

St. Cecilia Music Society is considered the “mother of the arts” in Grand Rapids. In 1916 and 1917 the society gave free Sunday concerts, and the audience often sang along with the music, providing an escape from the uncertainty and violence of World War I. These free concerts led to the idea of establishing an orchestra, which would later become the Grand Rapids Symphony.

The society also featured famous musicians still early in their careers, such as English pianist Myra Hess. Since its beginning, the society gave new, unrecognized musicians a chance to be heard. This emphasis on the talents of youth have led to the creation of St. Cecilia Music Society's youth choirs, youth orchestra and youth band. These programs are especially important at a time when budget cuts are forcing schools to reduce funding to music programs. In 2003, the society celebrated its 120th birthday through performances by the Grand Rapids Ballet Company, Opera Grand Rapids, the Grand Rapids Symphony and the Civic Theatre. All of these organizations can trace their beginnings back to St. Cecilia Music Society.

Scope and Contents note

The bulk of this collection is formed from accession 1986.137 unless otherwise noted. Most of this collection is St. Cecilia Society programs and yearbooks. The programs span from the 1880s to the 1980s and the yearbooks range from 1893 to 1968.

The collection's strength is the wide date range of material that allows one to track basic organizational changes throughout the years, though there is little information available after the 1980's. A weakness of the collection is the limited amount of history on the organization. Apart from the 1895 booklet on the new building, a few newspaper clippings from the 1950's and the 1985 press releases, there is no further information on the history of the organization and how it dealt with challenges such as debt, the Depression or urban renewal. There is also very little biographical information on society members. The society has its own archives and further information on these subjects may be found there.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department March 17, 2007

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Various and unknown donors. Accession numbers 1986.137, 1986.328 and unknown.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

See also the St. Cecilia Music Society archives, located at St. Cecilia Music Society

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- St. Cecilia Music Center. (Grand Rapids, Mich.)
- St. Cecilia Society. (Grand Rapids, Mich.)

Geographic Name(s)

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History

Subject(s)

- Music -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids
- Music -- Societies, etc.
- Performing arts -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids

Series I. Histories

Collection Inventory

Series I. Histories

Scope and Contents note

This series includes an 1895 booklet on the new building, a history of Camp Roger, and a 2003 invitation to St. Cecilia's 120th birthday celebration.

	Box	Folder
Camp Roger : Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. The story of the St. Mark's Pro-Cathedral Camp on Little Bostwick Lake, Mi. 1925.	1	3
St. Cecilia [1895 booklet on new building, with interior images.]	1	4
1883-2003. It's our birthday ... and we're having ... a party! Nov. 17, 2003 [invitation] 00.[4071].1	1	58

Series II. Documents of the Organization

Scope and Contents note

These business documents include an 1893 statement of finances for the building fund and an 1898-1899 outline of work.

	Box	Folder
Statement of the Financial Condition of the Building Fund of the St. Cecilia Society of Grand Rapids, Mich. June 22, 1893.	1	5

Series III. Ephemera

Outline of Work for 1898-1899.	1	5
--------------------------------	---	---

Series III. Ephemera**Scope and Contents note**

This series includes two 1893 calenders, newspaper clippings from the 1950s which document St. Cecilia's 75th and 79th anniversary celebrations, and flyers on Camp Roger and St. Cecilia's Day.

Calendars

	Box	Folder
--	------------	---------------

1893 calendar [Daily Quotes] Compiled for the Benefit of the building fund by Twenty Number 5.	1	1
--	---	---

Clippings (Additional clippings accompany programs)

	Box	Folder
--	------------	---------------

Clippings from the 1950s, includes articles on the 75th and 79th anniversary of the Society.	1	7
--	---	---

Flyers

	Box	Folder
--	------------	---------------

Camp Roger, on Little Bostwick Lake, 14th Season, July/Aug. 1926.	1	2
---	---	---

The St. Cecilia Spoon, Nov. 22, n.d.	1	8
--------------------------------------	---	---

Series IV. Publications**Series IV. Publications****Scope and Contents note**

The publications in this series are the 1896 Music and Drama periodical, the 1953 Newsy Notes, and the 1954 to 1959 Season periodical. Also included is a 1913 book titled What is a Symphony?

Periodicals**Music and Drama**

	Box	Folder
--	------------	---------------

v. 1, no. 4, Jan.-Feb. 1896	1	54
-----------------------------	---	----

v. 1, no. 6, Apr.	1	54
-------------------	---	----

v. 1, no. 7, May	1	54
------------------	---	----

Newsy Notes

	Box	Folder
--	------------	---------------

71st Season Oct. 1953	1	55
-----------------------	---	----

71st Season Nov. 1953	1	55
-----------------------	---	----

71st Season Feb. 1954	1	55
-----------------------	---	----

Season

Season	Box	Folder
72nd President's Message, [Sept. 1954]	1	56
72nd v. 5, no. 2. [Member List]	1	56
72nd v. 5, no. 3.	1	56
72nd v. 5, no. 4, Jan. 1955	1	56
72nd. V. 5, no. 5, Feb. 1955	1	56
72nd, v. 5, no. 6, Mar. 1955	1	56
73rd, v. 6, no. 2, Nov. 1955 [Member List]	1	56
74th, v. 7, no. 1, Oct. 1956	1	56
74th, v. 7, no. 2, Nov. 1956 [Member List]	1	56
75th, v. 8, no. 2, Nov. 1957 [Member List], clipping	1	56
75th, Diamond Anniversary. v. 9, no. 1, Oct. 1958	1	56
76th, v. 10, no. 2, Nov. 1959	1	56

Soundings.

Soundings.		
	Box	Folder
v. 111, no. 3, July 1999 (2007.079)	1	56.5
What is a Symphony?/ by Cornelia R. Hopkins. G .R.: Saint Cecilia Society, 1913. (00.[3169].1)	1	57
Series V. Programs		
Scope and Contents note		
<p>Programs make up the bulk of this collection, and they range from the 1880s to the 1980s. Some of the programs in the 1950s and 1960s have personal notes on them describing the musicians and the performances. Also included are press releases for the 1985 addition to the St. Cecilia building, and these papers include a brief history of the organization.</p>		
Undated		
	Box	Folder
President's Day, Apr. 27th, n.d.[Invitation on cover]	1	8
Song Recital, by Mr. Albert Gerard-Thiers. n.d.	1	8
Songs of all Nations. St. Cecilia Auditorium, Mar. 22 and 23, n.d. (2)	1	8
1881-1890		

1891-1900

	Box	Folder
Musicale". Jan. 21, 1884. 1998.032, 5/24/2002 [Card split in 2 pieces]	1	9
1889/90? Program Grand Concert, Liberati. N.d. [No St. Cecilia ID. Ca. 1889/90? F.J. Schwankovsky Music House, 23 Monroe Ave. ads]	1	10
1891-1900		
	Box	Folder
8th Artist Recital, Feb. 20, 1891	1	11
Themes from Shakespeare, Oct. 30, 1891	1	11
German Music, Jan. 22, 1892	1	13
[Member Program] Mar. 4, 1892	1	13
16th Artist Recital. Song Recital by Mrs. Corinne Moore Lawson of Cincinnati, Jan. 11, 1893	1	14
21st Artist Recital. Chopin Recital, by Vladimir De Pachmann, Jan. 29, 1894.	1	15
Students' Day, Mar. 16, 1894	1	15
[Member program], Oct. 19, 1894	1	15

1891-1900

Majestic Reception Concert and Ball, Dec. 5, 1984	1	15
1894 Dedication Program: Dedication of the St. Cecilia, June 19, 1894 (2)00.[3498].1	1	12
Programme of Piano Recital given by Mr. E.A.MacDowell, Jan. 21, 1895	1	16
Dedication and Presentation of a Saint Cecilia Window, In Memory of Emma Lyon Greeson, from Mrs. T.H. Lyon and Wm. A. Greeson. The design from the hand of the Artist and Friend, F.S. Church, Oct. 11, 1895.	1	16
Sable Symposium of St. Cecilia's at the St. Cecilia, May 23, 1895.(3)	1	17
Artist Recital. Jan. 15, 1896	1	18
Idealized Dance Form, Oct. 30, 1896.	1	18
Artist Recital. Nov. 6, 1896.	1	18
Yale Glee, Banjo, and Mandolin Clubs Concert. Dec. 29, 1896. (00. [3499].1)	1	18
Opera Carmen / by George Bizet. Feb. 19, 1897	1	19
[Members Recital] Oct. 7, 1898	1	20
Shakespeare Song Recital. Nov. 18, 1898	1	20

1901-1910

Benefit Recital by Edward MacDowell. Feb. 6, 1899.	1	21
1901-1910		
	Box	Folder
44th Artist Recital, Oct. 16, 1902	1	22
Stories of the Child Jesus, Dec. 12, 1902	1	22
45th Artist Recital, Feb. 26, 1903	1	23
The Season's Festival Dance. Given under the direction of Miss Calla Travis, Apr. 24-25, 1903	1	23
Shakespeare Recital, Nov. 30, 1906	1	24
Toy Shop Opera Feb. 27, 1906 (00.[3496].1)	1	25
The Toastmaster. May 6, 1910 (00.[3497].1)	1	26
1911-1920		
	Box	Folder
Concern for benefit of Red Cross and War Relief, Aug. 2, 1917.	1	27
1921-1930		
	Box	Folder

1931-1940

Artists' Recital, Dec. 1, 1922	1	28
Golden Anniversary Program, Apr. 14, 1923	1	29
Requests Day, May 4, 1923 (2)	1	29
Annual Flower day, Feb. 6, 1925.	1	30
St. Mark's Choir presents the Pirates of Penzance, Benefit Camp Roger, Apr. 17, 1926.	1	31
First St. Cecilia Friday Morning Musical, Oct. 25, 1929.	1	32
Friday Morning Musicale : Early Forms of Music, Nov. 8, 1929	1	32
761st Program, Nov. 29, 1929	1	32
Chopin, Schubert, Schumann and Mendelssohn, Dec. 6, 1929	1	32
Artist Recital. Oscar Seagle, Baritone, Dec. 13, 1929	1	32
1931-1940		
	Box	Folder
St. Mark's Choir presents the Pirates of Penzance, Benefit Camp Roger, Apr. 30, 1932.	1	33

1941-1950

Artist Recital. Juliette Lippe. 781st Program, Oct. 21, 1932	1	33
--	---	----

1941-1950

	Box	Folder
Carol Silver, Pianist, Dec. 3, 1943.	1	35

Violin Recital by Gilbert Ross, assisted at the piano by Helen Titus. Oct. 29, 1943.	1	34
--	---	----

[Members Program] Mar. 16, 1945.(3)	1	36
-------------------------------------	---	----

St. Cecilia Chorus, Mrs. Henry J. Dotterweich, Director, Mrs. John Kremer, Accompanist. Mar. 28, 1947.	1	37
--	---	----

Cathedral Choral Society, et al. Jan. 1, 1948.	1	38
--	---	----

1951-1960

	Box	Folder
357th Artist Recital, Virginia MacWatters, Soprano, Eugene Bossart, piano, Oct. 4, 1957.	1	39

358th Artist Recital, Camilla Heller Doppmann, cellist, William Doppmann, pianist, Oct. 25, 1957	1	39
--	---	----

359 Artist Recital. Suzanne Bloch. Nov. 8, 1957.	1	39
--	---	----

1961-1970

360th Artist Recital, Sidney Foster, pianist, Nov. 22, 1957	1	39
Anniversary Program, 1883-1958	1	40
Hollywood String Quartet, Feb. 28, 1958	1	40
Madrigal Singers of Michigan State Univ., Dec. 5, 1958	1	40
372nd Artist Recital, Robert Goldsand, pianist, Mar. 13, 1959	1	41
William K. Boot, Pianist, Nov. 28, 1959	1	41
Brunetta Mazzolini, Soprano, Oct. 21, 1960	1	42
1961-1970		
	Box	Folder
Artists Program #385, Wallfisch Duo, Mar. 17, 1961	1	43
Spring Luncheon and Program, Apr. 14, 1961. Charles Fisher and Eugene Bossart. Includes Menu.	1	43
Artist Recital, Richard Miller, tenor, Oct. 13, 1961. Has clipping attached.	1	43
Harry Ray, pianist and The Kalamazoo String Quartet, Nov. 17, 1961.	1	43
[Members Program] Jan. 5, 1962	1	44

1961-1970

Manhattan Trio, Feb. 16, 1962	1	44
Artist Program. Sakiki Kanamore, Soprano, Anthony Kooiker, accompanist, Oct. 26, 1962. Has clipping.	1	44
Ralph Votapek, Winner of the Van Cliburn, Into. Quadrennial Piano Competition, Nov 16, 1962. c. 1 existing / c. 2 P2005.035.37	1	44
Artist Program. John Boyden, Baritone, Eugene Bossart, Accompanist, Mar. 29, 1963	1	45
Artist Program, Raymond Michalski, Basso, Oct. 16, 1964	1	46
Artist Program, John Perry, Pianist, Nov. 13, 1964	1	46
Souvenirs of the Saints ... an evening of music and memories of the St. Cecilia Society from 1883 to Nov. 6, 1964.	1	46
Mrs. Ralph Sasser. Music – Mr. Washington versus Mr. Lincoln. Feb. 5, 1965.	1	47
Artist Program, Aiko Onishi, Pianist, Feb. 12, 1965. Clipping.	1	47
Beaux Arts Trio of New York, Oct. 1, 1965.	1	47
The Turn of the Screw, Directed by Eric Weaver, Nov. 5-6, 1965.	1	47
Members Program. Apr. 1, 1966.	1	48

1971-1980

Artist Program. Elizabeth Mannion, mezzo soprano, Fiora Contino, pianist, Oct. 7, 1966	1	48
Noel Jan Tyl, Bass-Bariton, Mr. Stanton Carter, accompanist, n.d. [1967?]	1	49
Artist Program, Charles Avsharian, violinist, accompanied by Barbara Nissman, Jan. 20, 1967.	1	49
[Member Program] Mar. 31, 1967	1	49
Univ. of Michigan School of Music, in co-operation with Univ. Extension Service and the St. Cecilia Society. Elizabeth Mannion, mezzo-soprano, Eugene Bossart, pianist. July 11, 1967.	1	49
[Member Program] Apr. 5, 1968	1	50
1971-1980		
	Box	Folder
St. Cecilia Junior Symphony, David F. Ellis, Conductor, Cheryl Millard, Soloist. Feb. 6, 1978.	1	51
1981-1990		
	Box	Folder
Guarneri House, Grand Opening Recital, Apr. 25, 1982.	1	52

Series VI. Yearbooks.

1985 Ground Breaking Ceremony, June 7, 1985. "Our Second Hundred Years" Includes press release. 1986.328 1 53

Series VI. Yearbooks.**Scope and Contents note**

Some yearbooks were originally cataloged under the call number MKG780.6.Sa. The yearbooks consist of lists of programs, committees, bylaws, active members, and images of members and the building. The 1914-1915 yearbook includes a colored image of the stained glass window designed by New York artist and Grand Rapids native Frederick S. Church.

	Box	Folder
1893/1895 (2, 1 gift of GR Hist. Society) 00.[1014].1	2	1
1896/1897 00.[1011]	2	2
1899/1900	2	3
1903/1904	2	4
1907/1908 00.[1010].1	2	5
1908/1909 00.[1023].1	2	6
1914/1915 00.[1013].1	2	7
1916/1917 00.[1016].1	2	8

Series VI. Yearbooks.

1917/1918 00.[1017].1	2	8
1918/1919 00[1018].1	2	8
1919/1920 00.[1012].1	2	9
1925/1926 00.[1006].1	2	10
1926/1927 00.[1019].1	2	11
1927/1928 00.[1020].1	2	11
1928/1929 00.[1021].1	2	11
1929/1930 00.[1022].1	2	11
1930/1931 00.[1015].1	2	12
1942/1943 00.[1024].1	2	13
1961/1962	3	1
1962/1963	3	1
1963/1964	3	1
1964/1965 (2)	3	2

Series VII. Related Organizations

1965/1966	3	3
1966/1967	3	3
1967/1968	3	3

Series VII. Related Organizations**Scope and Contents note**

This series includes the program of the 50th convention of the Michigan Federation of Music Clubs in 1967 and Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra programs ranging from 1953 to 1969.

	Box	Folder
50th Convention of the Michigan Federation of Music Clubs, Apr. 27-29, 1967, Pantlind Hotel and St. Cecilia Building. Cover graphic by Dennis Sirrine.	3	4

Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra

	Box	Folder
25th Season, 1953-54 programs	3	5
26th Season, 1954-55 programs	3	5
28th Season, 1956-57 programs	3	5
30th Season, 1958-59 programs	3	5

Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra

37th Season, programs for March 18, 1966 and April 29, 1966	3	5
38th Season, program for Oct. 14, 1966	3	5
39th Season, programs for Nov. 10, 1967, Dec. 15, 1967, and Feb. 2, 1968	3	5
40th Season, programs for Feb. 7, 1969	3	5