

# **Finding Aid for the Breakfast Club Papers Collection 438**

**Finding aid prepared by Ruth Van Stee**

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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

August, 2015

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
<b>Title</b>	Breakfast Club Papers
<b>Date [bulk]</b>	Bulk, 1979-1982
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1966 - 1985
<b>Extent</b>	1.0 Linear feet one legal box
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>The Breakfast Club Collection contains material related to its founding member and life-time president, John A. Collins, who organized the club in 1936 during his tenure as Mayor of East Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Breakfast Club is a loosely organized group of local leaders in business, politics and cultural institutions that meets every other Wednesday morning in downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan. The material in this collection dates mainly from 1979 through 1982 and consists of correspondence, roster of members booklets, news clippings on Collins' 97th birthday celebration and his death at age 99, photographs of the celebration in East Grand Rapids on the 100th anniversary of Collins' birth and the dedication of a sculpture in his honor, and a cassette tape recording of the breakfast club's 50th anniversary meeting, with Judge Stuart Hoffius, vice-president since 1936.</p>

## Biographical/Historical note

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The Breakfast Club was organized in 1936 by a group of men who invited other men to a regular breakfast meeting on a Wednesday morning at the Pantlind Hotel (presently, the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel). They continued to meet every other Wednesday, with breakfast served at 7:30 and adjournment promptly at 8:30. They would often invite outside speakers to the breakfasts, including professors and foreign students from the local colleges, various clergymen, and other local talent. The first year John Collins, mayor of East Grand Rapids from 1933 - 1955, was elected president. He remained in that position, as did the other officers, for the next 50 years, even after his death in 1982. While the club was open to only males for many years, they invited and included men from any race and nationality.

John Collins (August 3, 1882 - April 16, 1982), the main focus of this collection, grew up in Grand Rapids, attended Catholic schools on the north side of the city, and married Sadie Campbell in 1904. Together they raised seven children in their home on Rosewood Avenue in East Grand Rapids. He began his career at Bissell Carpet Sweeper Company in 1910 and continued there until 1955, walking the 7.5 miles from to work every day, which was noted in *Ripley's Believe or Not*. In addition to his lengthy service as mayor of East Grand Rapids, he served on the Kent County Board of Supervisors.

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## Scope and Contents note

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This collection contains materials concerning the Breakfast Club, especially as it relates to John A. Collins, lifetime president of the club. Most of the items are from 1979-1982, from the time of Collins' 97th birthday to his death in 1982, including news clippings, correspondence, and photographs. Outside of those dates, there are some earlier Membership Roster booklets from 1966 and 1971, and cassette tapes of the 50th anniversary of the club in 1986.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department August, 2015

### Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Gordon Olson, Accession 1986-527

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## Related Materials

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### Related Archival Materials note

129, Rotary Club Records, Roasting John Collins, 1964. 2-5, 15-1

416, Grandville Star Photographs, 2-160

164, GRPL Oral History Collection

133, News Photographs Collection

59, James H. Hooper Photographs, 1933, #623

125, Robinson Studio Collection, Commercial Series, C00798-C007100

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## Controlled Access Headings

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### Geographic Name(s)

- East Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History
- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- Biography

### Subject(s)

- Mayors -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids

## Collection Inventory

	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
50th Anniversary Cassette Tape 1986	1	1
Photographs August 11, 1982	1	2
Correspondence 1982 - 1984 (Bulk, 1982)	1	3
Member Rosters 1966 -1985 (Bulk, 1979-1985)	1	4
News Clippings 1979-1982 (Bulk, 1982)	1	5
		<b>Box</b>
Michigan Legislative Resolution Certificate September 30, 1981		1