



Champaign County Historical Archives

Compiled by: Karla Gerdes

Creator/Corporate name: The Woman's Club of Sidney, Illinois and Sidney Woman's Club.

Inclusive Dates: 1906—1987.

Physical Description: 4 boxes, (2.6 linear feet).

Provenance: Items in this collection were donated by Karla Gerdes and Carol Erb.

Access: The records are accessible to the public within applicable copyright restrictions and limited to use at the Champaign County Historical Archives of The Urbana Free Library.

Organizational History:

The Woman's Club of Sidney, Illinois was founded in 1906. Mary Busey and Helen Packard were instrumental in the club formation. A meeting was held at Mrs. J.B. Porterfield's house, where it was decided to organize a woman's club for Sidney and a nominating committee was appointed for the election of officers. The name of the organization was listed in the original constitution as "The Woman's Club of Sidney, Illinois" but was often times and in later years referred to as "The Sidney Woman's Club." The object of the club was to create an intellectual stimulus, and to be a means of mutual improvement. Meetings were held September through June and would include a program topic from one of the following departments: arts, conservation, education, health, home life, international affairs, or public affairs. The club provided monetary or volunteer support to many community and general projects. Some of these projects included tree planting, refreshments for the USO, books for the school library, scholarships for band and art camps, gifts for children living in youth homes, plantings for the Lions Club Park, donations for the veterans' hospital, landscaping for the community center, and working with other groups to form a library in Sidney. Project funds came from membership dues, bake sales, rummage sales, plays, and other fundraisers.

The membership yearbooks in this collection end with the 1986-1987 year, but the club continued to exist until approximately 2005. A decline in membership led to a vote for the club to be disbanded.

The Woman's Club of Sidney joined the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs in 1907, the District Federation in 1908, the General Federation in 1927, and the County Federation in 1927. One of the club's members, Oral Bocock Lehman, was also an officer at the district and state levels.

A motion was made and seconded at the February 7, 1928 meeting to check with the federation officers in regard to a junior organization and the Sidney Junior Woman's Club was organized in 1928. The Junior Club joined the District Federation in 1928, and the State and County Federations in 1933. The Sidney Junior Woman's Club disbanded around 1948 and members merged back into the Sidney Woman's Club.



Scope and Content:

The Sidney Woman's Club collection consists of records from 1906-1987. The majority of the collection consists of program yearbooks from 1906-1986; with the exception of the 1908-1909 yearbook. Items in the 1906-1907 yearbook are the organization date, club flower, club colors, club motto, list of officers, executive board, club members, honorary members, order of business, program of home and miscellany department for the year, and the club constitution. Yearbooks in later years followed the same format and included additional items such as when the club joined the state, district, general and county federations, committee members, departments of work, past presidents, memorial of past members, including date of death and other items depending on the year. There are nineteen bound or spiral ring composition books containing the secretary's meeting minutes and roll call of members for the years 1908-1975 with some books missing. The roll call is not included in the 1971-1975 book. In some cases newspaper clippings about various club events are also included. A note included with the materials states, "secretary's minutes missing are: beginning to June 1908, Sept. 1923 to April 1926, May 1938 to Sept. 1940, Feb 1952 to March 1956, Sept. 1969 to Sept. 1971, March 1975 to present."

The collection also includes treasurer's books from 1939-1968 which show membership dues, money collected for projects, and disbursement of funds. There are a few items of correspondence and special programs, as well as four scrapbooks containing a variety of items including newspaper clippings, committee reports, photographs, programs, and keepsakes.

Also in the collection are a few items from the Sidney Junior Woman's Club. Those materials include program yearbooks from 1936-1947, a secretary minute book for 1945-1946, treasurer's book for 1944-1948 and a scrap book.

Subject terms:

Sidney Woman's Club – Records and correspondence
Woman's Club of Sidney, Illinois – Records and correspondence
Sidney Junior Woman's Club –Records and correspondence

Arrangement:

Materials in the collection are arranged by record type, then chronologically.

Box 1

- Folder 1: Awards and citations including community service, honor roll report, national defense, public education, international aid, conservation, and membership gain.
- Folder 2: History of the Woman's Club of Sidney by Mary B. Porterfield, 1906-1910, 4 pages.
History of the Sidney Woman's Club by Mrs. Glenn McElroy, April 1947-1948, 3 pages.
History of the Sidney Woman's Club by Mrs. Howard Winston, April 1955-April 1956, 19 pages.



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Sidney Woman's Club Records

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- Membership list, members who have died or moved, 1907-1938.
- Folder 3: Synopsis of Oral Bocock Lehman's career as a Clubwoman at district and state levels of the organization. Included is a single paragraph on the history of the Sidney Woman's club.
- Folder 4: Program for Sidney Woman's Club Golden Jubilee Tea, March 12, 1957; program for Sidney Woman's Club 75th Anniversary May 4, 1982; anniversary napkin; music and words to Onward! Illinois Federation; poem "Our Lovely Pioneer" by Elva Lovell; card announcing the presentation of Mrs. Edward J. Lehman for President of the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs; miscellaneous letters and notes and some photo copied newspaper clippings.
- Folder 5: Yearbooks: 1906-1920 except for 1908-1909 year.
- Folder 6: Yearbooks: 1920-1930.
- Folder 7: Yearbooks: 1930-1940.
- Folder 8: Yearbooks: 1940-1952.
- Folder 9: Yearbooks: 1952-1970.
- Folder 10: Yearbooks: 1970-1987.
- Folder 11: Treasurer's book: April 193-Aug 1954.
- Folder 12: Treasurer's book: August 1954-May 1968 and bank book.

Box 2

- Folder 1: Minutes: June 1908-December 1910, 100 pages. Organization constitution is on pages 93-96.
- Folder 2: Minutes: March 1913-June 1916, bound book with 139 pages. Page 136 is a roll call of Club Babies.
- Folder 3: Minutes: September 1916-April 15, 1919, bound book with 153 pages.
- Folder 4: Minutes: May 1919-June 1923, bound book with 196 pages.
- Folder 5: Minutes: April 1926-June 1929, bound composition book, pages not numbered.
- Folder 6: Minutes: September 1929-June 1932, bound composition book, pages not numbered.
- Folder 7: Minutes: September 1932-June 1934, bound composition notebook with some loose pages at the end, pages not numbered.
- Folder 8: Minutes: September 1934-June 1936, bound composition notebook with some loose pages at the end, pages not numbered.
- Folder 9: Minutes: September 1936-June 1938, bound composition notebook with some loose pages at the end of the book, pages are not numbered.
- Folder 10: Minutes: September 1940-February of 1944, bound composition notebook, pages not numbered.
- Folder 11: Minutes: March 1944-June 1947, bound composition notebook, pages not numbered.

Box 3

- Folder 1: Minutes: September 1947-December 1949, bound composition book, pages not numbered.



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- Folder 2: Minutes: January 1950-February 1952, bound composition book, pages not numbered.
- Folder 3: Minutes: March 1956-June 1959, bound composition book, pages not numbered.
- Folder 4: Minutes: September 1959-June 1962, spiral ring composition book, pages not numbered.
Minutes: September 1962-September 1964, spiral ring notebook, pages not numbered.
- Folder 5: Minutes: October 1964-June 1967, spiral ring notebook, pages not numbered.
Minutes: June 1967-September 1969, spiral ring notebook, pages not numbered.
- Folder 6: Minutes: September 1971- February 1975, bound record book, 84 pages.
- Folder 7: Sidney Junior Woman's Club Yearbooks: 1936-1947
- Folder 8: Sidney Junior Woman's Club Minute Book: 1945-1946.
- Folder 9: Sidney Junior Woman's Club Treasurer's Book: 1944-1948.
- Scrapbook: Sidney Junior Woman's Club, 1942: contains newspaper clippings from September of 1940 to February 24, 1943. Some of the newspaper clippings include pictures. There is a photograph of Mrs. Ernest [Doris] Hale. Membership/Yearbooks for 1941-1942 and 1943-1944 are glued into the book. It has a second place ribbon from the 19th District Scrap Book Contest, Junior division for 1942.

Box 4

- Scrapbook: Sidney Woman's Club, 1938-1939: has a spoke wheel drawn on the first page with the signature of the Sidney Woman's Club Members. It contains various newspaper clippings; some district and state organization items, mainly to do with guest speakers or Oral Lehman, who was a Sidney member and also on the other boards; a page of club babies that includes pictures of Mary Elnora McElroy, Maurice Eugene Trees and Marcia Cole; and a page with pictures taken in front of the Sidney Presbyterian Church and dated June 23, 1938, names of the members are written under the photographs.
- Scrapbook: Sidney Woman's Club, 1940: includes a program book for the 1939-1940 year, newspaper clippings about the Sidney Woman's Club meetings and activities, some with photo captions, a page of photographs from a Club Party in 1941 or 1942 and a second page of photographs with no date.
- Scrapbook: Sidney Woman's Club, 1941-1942: won 3rd place in the Senior Division. The scrap book contains mainly newsprint articles, some with photo captions, committee reports and a membership yearbook. There are some articles on the state organization of which Oral Lehman was the outgoing director and a program from the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs. No photographs.
- Scrapbook: Sidney Woman's Club, 1943: The scrap book received 1st prize at the 19th District Scrapbook Contest, Senior Division. It includes a copy of the 1942-1943 member program book, newspaper clippings from the various meetings and events of the group, a page with pictures and names of officers for the year, small photographs of each member, pictures from the Costume party for the Junior club that is dated June 2, 1942



and envelopes containing various committee reports. Some of the pictures from the costume party appear to be the same as those in the 1940 scrap book but developed on different paper. Mrs. L.B. Porterfield is identified as winning first prize for her Indian costume. The officers with photographs are Mrs. J. E. Raymond, Miss Loreen Gasser, and Mrs. F.F. Lovingfoss. The picture of Mrs. J.H. McArthur is one that was printed in a newspaper.

Photographs: Individual photographs from the member page that we have been able to identify moving left to right and starting at the top of the page are: top row, position (1) Mrs. J.H. McArthur, (2) Etta Kennedy Cole, (3) unidentified; second row down, position (1) Lois Cole, (2) unidentified, (3) unidentified, (4) Oral Bocock Lehman, (5) unidentified; third row down, position (1) unidentified, (2) Dorothy Smith, (3) Thelma Gasser, (4) Loreen Gasser, (5) unidentified; fourth row down, position (1) Cleta Johnson, (2) Nellie Porterfield, (3) unidentified, (4) unidentified, (5) Rosella Wilson; fifth row down, position (1) unidentified, (2) unidentified, (3) Virginia McElroy, (4) Eleanor McBride, (5) unidentified; sixth row down, position (1) unidentified, (2) Nora Cole, (3) unidentified, (4) Marguerite Cole, (5) unidentified; bottom row, position (1) unidentified, (2) unidentified, (3) Hilda McCarrey, (4) unidentified, (5) unidentified.