MS-187, Dayton Federation of Women’s Clubs

Collection Number:  MS-187

Title:  Dayton Federation of Women’s Clubs

Dates:  1907-2007

Creator:  The Dayton Federation of Women’s Clubs

Summary/Abstract:
Records include annual reports, programs, meeting minutes, membership records, and scrapbooks containing clippings and photographs pertaining to the club's activities. Founded in 1907, the Dayton Federation of Women's Clubs is an amalgamation of Dayton area women's organizations and is engaged locally in charitable, educational and social activities.

Quantity/Physical Description:  4 lin. ft.

Language(s):  English

Repository:
Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-001, (937) 775-2092

Restrictions on Access:  There are no restrictions on accessing material in this collection.

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Preferred Citation:
[Box Number, Folder Number], MS-187, Dayton Federation of Women’s Clubs Collection, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio

Acquisition:
The records of the Dayton Federation of Women’s Clubs were donated to the Wright State University Special Collections and Archives in August of 1988 by Mrs. Howard J. Redder, the president at the time.

Revisions:
Additions were made by Dawne Dewey in December 1989 and Tiffany O’Sheal in 2007. Further additions were made and the finding aid was re-formatted by Victoria Penno in November 2012.

Related Material:
MS-315 College Women’s Club of Dayton
Arrangement:
The material is arranged into five series:

Series I: Administrative
Series II: Programs
Series III: Membership
Series IV: Scrapbooks
Series V: Publications and News Clippings

Biographical/Historical Note:
The Dayton Federation of Women’s Clubs was founded in 1907 by Marie J. Kumler. Mrs. Kumler brought together the 11 women’s clubs then currently active in the Dayton area in an effort to “unite the club women of Dayton and of Montgomery County, Ohio, for closer cooperation and efficiency in the promotion of their major interests, patriotism, education, philanthropy, and civic betterment and to become better acquainted as clubs and individuals and to help one another in every possible way.” The Dayton Federation of Women’s Clubs became affiliated with the Ohio and the General Federation of Women’s Clubs during the same year.

In 1908, the club began its most enduring project, the Marie J. Kumler Scholarship Loan Fund. This fund, which provides interest free loans to young women for higher education, was established through voluntary penny per week contribution from each club member. The money raised is loaned to deserving students who are sponsored by a member of the Dayton Federation of Women’s Clubs. The first beneficiary, as chosen by Mrs. Kumler, was “a deserving factory girl with artistic ability and womanly traits.” In 1927, the club attempted to enlarge the program into a “Marie J. Kumler Memorial School” on the outskirts of Dayton. They purchased a working dairy farm for this purpose and issued donation cards in order to raise funds. Their fundraising fell through, however, and they broke their contract in 1928, returning the land to its original owner. The scholarship fund itself continued and in later years, clubs supporting the fund increased their donations to 52 cents per capita per year. The fund also solicits donations through wills, gifts, trusts and endowments.

Charitable work has always been a part of the DFWC’s mandate. In 1929, during the Great Depression, American Federation of Women’s Clubs members convinced NCR to turn its auditorium into a soup kitchen for the needy. Early each morning, the women would travel to the auditorium to cook meals for the needy. Another enduring legacy of the early years of the DFWC is Daybreak House, a home for runaway children. This project started when several Federation members discovered that runaway children in Montgomery County were automatically sent to the county workhouse if they could not prove they had a place to stay overnight. In order to prevent this, the clubwomen began taking stray children into their own homes. This one-on-one approach developed into a club-sponsored shelter that opened in 1975. Currently, one of the DFWC’s largest projects is its Daybreak fundraiser, a Doll House and Miniature Show every October. These early projects did not go unrecognized and the DFWC was chosen to host the 33rd Annual GFWC Convention, April 22-29, 1929.
Over the years, the DFWC itself has functioned relatively unchanged. Neither World War I nor World War II disrupted the DFWC routine although the club contributed money and supplies to relief efforts. It has become increasingly involved with the Ohio Federation Women’s Clubs (OFWC), through its Division of Blind services, and the General Federation Women’s Clubs (GFWC) with its “Free Enterprise” program.

Although its original 1907 constitution was revised in 1963, the club has continued to meet on the first Saturday of each month from September through May. Most importantly, it has continued its important charitable, social, and educational work through an increasing number of women’s clubs in the Dayton and Montgomery County area.

Scope and Content:
The Dayton Federation of Women’s Clubs (DFWC) is a collaboration group that brings together the various women’s clubs around Dayton to cooperate and to be more effective as women’s clubs. These clubs help and promote each other. In this collection are various materials about the DFWC’s activities and events, their membership as well as materials about their connection to the OFWC and the GFWC. The records within the Dayton Federation of Women’s Clubs collection are divided into five different series.

Series I, Administrative Records, contains the DFWC’s original 1907 constitution and its revised 1963 version, the organization’s annual reports from 1910 to 1928. Other records in this series include copies of the 1978 and 1985 standing rules as well as the minute records for both executive and general meetings from 1979 through 1981. This series also has the awards given to the DFWC from various sources. The Scholarship Loan Fund is a big part of the DWFC and this series has the scholarship bank records and receipts as well as some correspondence all dating 1982-1997.

Series II, Programs, contains the DFWC yearly programs from 1933 to 1977. It also contains correspondence concerning several of the DFWC’s most important projects – the Marie J. Kumler Memorial School in 1927, the 33rd Annual GFWC Convention in 1929 and the group’s work with the OFWC’s Division of the Blind in the mid-1960s. This material is interesting because it documents two of the group’s earliest projects.

Series III, Membership, consists of the Dayton Federation of Women’s Club yearly directories from 1931 to 1987 and member club’s booklets for 1929 to 1988. This series documents the changing membership of the DFWC.


Series V, Publications and News Clippings, consists of published books about the OFWC as well as copies of the GFWC magazine, The Buckeye, from 1928 to 1971. This series also contains several book publications dealing with the various Federations of Women’s Clubs. Along with these books, this series has the DFWC newsletters from 1986-1999 and newspaper clippings from 1950-1988 about the DFWC, OFWC and the GFWC. There are some gaps in the dates for
the clippings. There is an article from Ladies Home Journal from 1917 that documents the early years of the DFWC.

**Subject Terms:**

**Organizations/Corporate Names**
Dayton Federation of Women’s Clubs

**Places**
Dayton (Ohio)

**Subjects (General)**
Women--Societies and Clubs--Ohio--Dayton
Dayton Federation of Women’s Clubs--Archives

**Material Types**
Newspaper Clippings
Photos
Correspondence
Scrapbooks
Publications

**Collection Inventory**

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**Series V: Publications and News Clippings**

**Books**

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