

## **MS-408 WOMAN'S LITERARY CLUB RECORDS**

**Collection Number:** MS-408

**Title:** Woman's Literary Club Records

**Dates:** 1889-2013

**Creator:** Woman's Literary Club

**Summary/Abstract:**

Records include yearbooks, meeting minutes, correspondence, financial and membership records, and scrapbooks containing clippings and photographs pertaining to the club's activities. Founded in 1889, the Woman's Literary Club was the first women's club in Dayton. The club's purpose is the study of literature, but it has also engaged in charitable activities. It has also evolved over the years to include creative writing as well as literary study.

**Quantity/Physical Description:** 9.4 linear feet

**Language(s):** English

**Repository:**

Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-0001, (937) 775-2092

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

**Restrictions on Use:**

Copyright restrictions may apply. Unpublished manuscripts are protected by copyright. Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

**Preferred Citation:**

[Box Number, Folder Number], MS-408, Woman's Literary Club Records, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio.

**Accruals:** Additional records may be deposited in the future.

**Revisions:**

The collection inventory was revised (additions and box and/or file re-numbering) each time additions were processed (Aug. 2010, Mar. 2011, Oct. 2011, July 2012, Dec. 2014). The first revision included additional creative writing records and clippings. Subsequent revisions included yearbooks, meeting minutes and/or papers. In July 2012, a new explanatory note was also added to the "Scope and Content" field.

**Related Material:**

MS- 187, Dayton Federation of Women's Clubs

MS-228, Helen Hunt Club

Some records of the Woman's Literary Club are held at the Dayton Metro Library.

**Processed by:** Ximena Chrisagis, Winter 2010

**Additions processed by:** Ximena Chrisagis, August 2010

**Additions processed by:** Ximena Chrisagis, March 2011

**Additions processed by:** Jeri Kniess, Oct. 2011

**Additions processed by:** Ximena Chrisagis, July 2012, Dec. 2014

**Arrangement:**

This collection is arranged into nine series:

Series I: Yearbooks

Series II: History, Constitution, Bylaws, and Procedures

Series III: Meeting Minutes

Series IV: Papers

Series V: Correspondence

Series VI: Attendance/Financial Reports

Series VII: Events, Publicity and Creative Writing Records

Series VIII: Publications

Series IX: Scrapbooks

**Historical Note:**

The Woman's Literary Club (WLC) was the first women's club in Dayton. Founded in 1889, it was one of the few women's clubs in the country at the time. Among the founding members were Miss Lilly King, Mrs. O.B. Brown, Mrs. Charles Snyder, Mrs. B.F. McCann, Mrs. Edith L. Boyer, and Mrs. John Campbell. Its goal was the study of literature, as well as history, art, and music. When the WLC was founded, it served as a vehicle for women to engage in serious scholarly pursuits and gain confidence in public speaking at a time when these opportunities were rare for women. During its first 25 years, the club was known for civic and philanthropic (in addition to literary) activities.

It boasted several prominent Daytonians among its early members, including Mrs. David L. Rike, Mrs. Charlotte Reeve Conover (also one of its founders), Electra Doren and Mary Davies Steele. The club's membership was sometimes referred to as "the smartest women in Dayton". Thus, the WLC had strict attendance and presentation rules for its members. Originally, members had to memorize the papers they were presenting. Although the rules have since been relaxed, the club still requires a strong commitment from its members. Papers are still assigned based on a theme chosen by the program committee and presenters must write a college-level term paper that can be read aloud in no more than 25 minutes. In addition, the club encourages creative writing among its members by offering creative writing workshops and annual creative writing awards. The awards were instituted in 1931 and continue to the present.

## **Scope and Content**

The collection is arranged into nine series.

Series I, Yearbooks, are available for almost all membership years of the club, starting with the first year, 1889-1890 and ending with the membership year 2010-2011. However, there is no yearbook included for the year(s) 2009-2010. The first 10 years of yearbooks are bound in leather and placed at the beginning of this series. A loose copy of each of these same yearbooks placed after the leather volume, for the ease of use of the researcher. For most (but not all) of the yearbooks currently in the collection, two copies are available. Some include notes from the original owner.

Series II, History, Constitution, Bylaws and Procedures, contains records relevant to the history and operation of the club. Among these are club histories written for the seventy-fifth and centennial anniversaries, the original constitution and bylaws, and presidents' and committee handbooks and policies and procedure manuals. Meeting minutes covering the first two years of the club 1889-1891 are retained in Series I because they are part of a complete handbook that includes the club's original constitution and bylaws. This series spans the years 1889-2005.

Series III, Meeting Minutes, begins with board meeting and/or executive board meeting minutes, most of which are organized in five year time spans. However, the bulk of this series is the (regular) meeting minutes of the club membership. Annual (financial) reports and proposed budgets appear within this series because they were discussed during the meetings and were located with the official minutes. The regular meeting minutes are organized by single membership year. Generally, the first meeting of the year is in October and the last meeting of the year is in April. The run of meeting minutes is fairly complete. Slight gaps can be noted by checking for year gaps in the box and folder listing.

Series IV, Papers, includes the papers presented at the regular meetings. The papers are arranged by month, day, and year of meeting; most regular meetings had two papers presented. However, in some cases, only one paper is provided for a particular date. Papers are not available for every meeting represented in the Meeting Minutes series. The Papers series begins with booklets on how to present a paper (most current available edition is 1989) and a listing removed from one of the president's handbooks that indicates the authors used for WLC papers from 1947-2004. In addition to regular meeting papers, this series also includes papers periodically presented as programs at special meetings such as the Christmas tea. For one paper presented in October 2005, the exact day the paper was presented could not be determined. A paper that was labeled as "proposed but never presented" (1989-1990) is also included in this series. This same paper was apparently presented at a 2011 club meeting after the records were first processed and accessible to club members, so it appears in two separate boxes within this series and each location cross-references the other in the inventory. Finally, there is a set of two papers for which the date could not be identified using the yearbooks. These papers were probably presented sometime between 2008 and 2010. Because they are not numerous enough to form their own series, Critic's Reports are also filed in this series.

Series V, Correspondence, includes letters from the president to the membership marking the beginning of membership years. It also contains letters indicating memorial books purchased in memory of deceased members for the Dayton Metro Library and other miscellaneous correspondence. This series spans the years 1967-2003.

Series VI, Attendance/Financial Reports, contains club receipts, disbursements, memberships, and annual (budget) reports covering the years 1926-1942, 1951-1957, 1957-1967, 1967-1977. There are also attendance records covering the years 1999-2000 through 2002-2003. This series contains separate ledgers that were not filed with the meeting minutes, as well as reports for years for which corresponding minutes were not provided. This series also contains a historical record of stock shares for 1916-1924.

Series VII, Events, Publicity, and Creative Writing Records, contains special events publicity and programs, spanning 1932 through 2012. The Creative Writing Records consist mainly of programs from the annual Officer's Day/Creative Writing Awards event and a listing of award winners from the years 1932-2003, for purposes of tracking Writer Laureate eligibility. The Bergen-McCarthy routine at the beginning of this series was undated, and could not be placed in the context of a specific meeting. This series also includes a "Miscellaneous" file of publications, flyers, and correspondence collected by club members that could not be placed in the context of a specific meeting based on the available minutes. These documents may not be directly related to club business.

Series VIII, Publications, contains poetry and essays written by club members and published in various sources between 1966 and approximately 2010. Also features a copy of Celia Elliott's 2010 memoir entitled, "Off the Ruffled Cuff," which highlights her time spent working at Dayton Daily News during World War II, one of many females hired as a reporter to keep the daily newspaper in business while their male counterparts served their country.

Series IX, Scrapbooks, contains three complete scrapbooks of newspaper clippings, photos, and club histories (including biographical sketches of some of the early notable members) filed in binder boxes. Where possible, acidic newspaper articles were photocopied and the originals discarded. A 1906 photo of Mary Celinda Chambers Stout was stuck in one of the scrapbooks. Ms. Stout's significance to the club could not be ascertained, but the photo was placed in its own folder. This series also contains additional miscellaneous clippings that had been thrown into a binder but lacked a clear theme or any organization. These clippings are filed in two separate folders and labeled as "Scrapbook".

### **Subject Terms**

Women -- Ohio -- Dayton

### **Organizations/Corporate Names**

Woman's Literary Club (Dayton, Ohio)

### **Places**

Ohio--Dayton

**Subjects (General)**

Literature -- Societies, etc.  
 Women -- Ohio -- Dayton

**Material Types**

Periodicals.  
 Meeting Minutes.  
 Papers.  
 Programs.  
 Photographs.  
 Scrapbooks.

**Collection Inventory**

<b>Series I</b>		<b>Yearbooks</b>	
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1		Woman's Literary Club Yearbooks	1889-1890 through 1932-1933
2		Woman's Literary Club Yearbooks	1933-1934 through 1973-1974
3		Woman's Literary Club Yearbooks	1974-1975 through 2006-2007
<b>Series II</b>		<b>History, Constitution, Bylaws, and Procedures</b>	
4	1	Constitution/Bylaws/Meeting Minutes	1889-1891
	2	25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Booklet (including history)	1914
	3	50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Newspaper Clipping	1939
	4	75 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	1964-1965
	5	Centennial Souvenir Booklet (includes history)	1989
	6	The Beginning of the Dayton Woman's Literary Club	[2002?]
	7	Directories-Dayton Federation of Women's Clubs	1994, 2001-2006
	8	90-Year Certificate: Dayton Federation of Women's Clubs	1997
	9	Program Committee	1947-1989
	10	Traditions and Policies	1950-1999
	11	President's Handbook	2000-2004
	12	Recording Secretary: Attendance, Constitution/Bylaws, Forms	1994-1995, 2003-2005

<b>Series III</b>		<b>Meeting Minutes</b>	
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
4	13	Board Minutes	1944-1953
	14	Board Minutes	1953-1958
	15	Board Minutes	1959-1964
	16	Board Minutes	1965-1970
	17	Board Minutes	1970-1975
	18	Board Minutes	1975-1980
5	1	Board Minutes	1981-1983
	2	Budget Meeting Minutes	Jun. 24, 1984
	3	Executive Board Minutes	1986-1996
	4	Board Agenda and Minutes	1994-1995
	5	Meeting Minutes	1973-1974
	6	Meeting Minutes	1974-1975
	7	Meeting Minutes	1975-1976
	8	Meeting Minutes	1976-1977
	9	Meeting Minutes	1977-1978
	10	Meeting Minutes	1978-1979
	11	Meeting Minutes	1979-1980
	12	Meeting Minutes	1980-1981
	13	Meeting Minutes	1981-1982
	14	Meeting Minutes	1982-1983
	15	Meeting Minutes	1983-1984
	16	Meeting Minutes	1984-1985
	17	Meeting Minutes	1985-1986
	18	Meeting Minutes	1986-1987
	19	Meeting Minutes	1987-1988
	20	Meeting Minutes	1988-1989
	21	Meeting Minutes	1989-1990
	22	Meeting Minutes	1990-1991
	23	Meeting Minutes	1991-1992
6	1	Meeting Minutes	1992-1993
	2	Meeting Minutes	1993-1994
	3	Meeting Minutes	1994-1995
	4	Meeting Minutes	1995-1996
	5	Meeting Minutes	1996-1997
	6	Meeting Minutes	1997-1998
	7	Meeting Minutes	1998-1999
	8	Meeting Minutes	1999-2000
	9	Meeting Minutes	2000-2001
	10	Meeting Minutes	2001-2002

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
	11	Meeting Minutes	2002-2003
	12	Meeting Minutes	2003-2004
	13	Meeting Minutes	2004-2005
	14	Meeting Minutes	2007-2008
	15	Meeting Minutes	2008-2009
	16	Meeting Minutes	2009-2010
	17	Meeting Minutes	2010-2011
	18	Meeting Minutes	2011-2012
	19	Meeting Minutes	2012-2013

**Series IV    Papers**

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
7	1	How to Prepare and Present a Paper	1967, 1975, 1989, 2005
	2	Authors Used for Woman's Literary Club Papers	1947-2004
	3	Papers	Dec. 3, 1964
	4	Papers	Oct. 29, 1986
	5	Papers	Apr. 20, 1989
	6	Papers (Proposed; Never Presented)-see also Box 10, File 34	1989-1990
	7	Papers	May 9, 1991
	8	Papers	Feb. 18, 1993
	9	Papers	Mar. 18, 1993
	10	Papers	Oct. 20, 1994
	11	Papers	Feb. 16, 1995
	12	Papers	Nov. 16, 1995
	13	Papers	Nov. 21, 1996
	14	Papers	Oct. 21, 1999
	15	Papers	Nov. 17, 1999
	16	Papers	Dec. 9, 1999
	17	Papers	Apr. 20, 2000
	18	Papers	Oct. 5, 2000
	19	Papers	Jan. 25, 2001
	20	Papers	Feb. 22, 2001
	21	Papers	Mar. 22, 2001
	22	Papers	Apr. 19, 2001
	23	Papers	Oct. 4, 2001
	24	Papers	Oct. 18, 2001
	25	Papers	Nov. 1, 2001
	26	Papers	Nov. 15, 2001
	27	Papers	Jan. 10, 2002

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
	28	Papers	Jan. 24, 2002
	29	Papers	Feb. 7, 2002
	30	Papers	Feb. 21, 2002
	31	Papers	Mar. 7, 2002
	32	Papers	Mar. 21, 2002
	33	Papers	Apr. 4, 2002
	34	Papers	Apr. 18, 2002
	35	Papers	Oct. 10, 2002
	36	Papers	Oct. 24, 2002
	37	Papers	Nov. 7, 2002
	38	Papers	Nov. 21, 2002
	39	Papers	Dec. 5, 2002
	40	Papers	Jan. 9, 2003
	41	Papers	Jan. 23, 2003
	42	Papers	Feb. 6, 2003
	43	Papers	Feb. 20, 2003
7A	1	Papers	Mar. 6, 2003
	2	Papers	Mar. 20, 2003
	3	Papers	Apr. 24, 2003
	4	Papers	Oct. 9, 2003
	5	Papers	Oct. 23, 2003
	6	Papers	Nov. 6, 2003
	7	Papers	Nov. 20, 2003
	8	Papers	Dec. 11, 2003
8	1	Papers	Jan. 8, 2004
	2	Papers	Jan. 22, 2004
	3	Papers	Feb. 5, 2004
	4	Papers	Feb. 19, 2004
	5	Papers	Mar. 4, 2004
	6	Papers	Mar. 18, 2004
	7	Papers	Apr. 22, 2004
	8	Papers	Oct. 7, 2004
	9	Papers	Oct. 21, 2004
	10	Papers	Nov. 4, 2004
	11	Papers	Nov. 18, 2004
	12	Papers	Jan. 13, 2005
	13	Papers	Jan. 27, 2005
	14	Papers	Feb. 10, 2005
	15	Papers	Feb. 24, 2005
	16	Papers	Mar. 31, 2005
	17	Papers (Tea Program)	Apr. 14, 2005



<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
8	18	Papers	Apr. 28, 2005
	19	Papers	Oct. 2005
	20	Papers	Nov. 3, 2005
	21	Papers	Nov. 17, 2005
	22	Papers	Jan. 12, 2006
	23	Papers	Jan. 26, 2006
	24	Papers	Feb. 9, 2006
	25	Papers	Feb. 23, 2006
	26	Papers	Mar. 9, 2006
	27	Papers	Mar. 23, 2006
	28	Papers	Apr. 6, 2006
	29	Papers	Apr. 13, 2006
9	1	Papers	Oct. 5, 2006
	2	Papers	Oct. 19, 2006
	3	Papers	Nov. 2, 2006
	4	Papers	Nov. 16, 2006
	5	Papers	Jan. 11, 2007
	6	Papers	Jan. 25, 2007
	7	Papers	Feb. 8, 2007
	8	Papers	Feb. 22, 2007
	9	Papers	Mar. 8, 2007
	10	Papers	Mar. 22, 2007
	11	Papers	Apr. 5, 2007
	12	Papers	Oct. 4, 2007
	13	Papers	Oct. 18, 2007
	14	Papers	Nov. 1, 2007
	15	Papers	Nov. 15, 2007
	16	Papers	Jan. 10, 2008
	17	Papers	Jan. 24, 2008
	18	Papers	Feb. 7, 2008
	19	Papers	Feb. 21, 2008
	20	Papers	Mar. 6, 2008
	21	Papers	Mar. 20, 2008
	22	Papers	Apr. 4, 2008
	23	Papers	Apr. 17, 2008
	24	Papers	Oct. 2, 2008
	25	Papers	Oct. 16, 2008
	26	Papers	Oct. 30, 2008
	27	Papers	Nov. 13, 2008
	28	Papers	Feb. 2/Feb. 5, 2009

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
10	1	Papers	Feb. 19, 2009
	2	Papers	Feb. 26, 2009
	3	Papers	Mar. 12, 2009
	4	Papers	Mar. 26, 2009
	5	Papers	Apr. 9, 2009
	6	Papers	Oct. 8, 2009
	7	Papers	Oct. 22, 2009
	8	Papers	Nov. 5, 2009
	9	Papers	Nov. 19, 2009
	10	Papers (1)	Dec. 10, 2009
	11	Papers	Jan. 14, 2010
	12	Papers	Jan. 28, 2010
	13	Papers (1)	Feb. 11, 2010
	14	Papers (1)	Feb. 25, 2010
	15	Papers	Mar. 11, 2010
	16	Papers	Mar. 25, 2010
	17	Papers	Apr. 8, 2010
	18	Papers	Apr. 22, 2010
	19	Papers	Oct. 7, 2010
	20	Papers	Oct. 21, 2010
	21	Papers	Nov. 4, 2010
	22	Papers	Nov. 18, 2010
	23	Papers	Jan. 13, 2011
	24	Papers	Jan. 27, 2011
	25	Papers	Feb. 10, 2011
	26	Papers	Feb. 24, 2011
	27	Papers	Mar. 10, 2011
	28	Papers	Mar. 24, 2011
	29	John Updike's "Friends from Philadelphia". Published in <i>The New Yorker</i> (Oct. 30, 1954); no member paper included [perhaps read at the meeting]	Apr. 7, 2011
	30	Papers	Apr. 21, 2011
	31	Papers	Oct. 6, 2011
	32	Papers	Oct. 20, 2011
	33	Papers	Nov. 3, 2011
	34	Papers (see also Box 6, File 23)	Nov. 17, 2011
	35	Papers	[2008-2011?]
10A	1	Papers	Jan. 12, 2012
	2	Papers	Jan. 26, 2012
	3	Papers	Apr. 5, 2012
	3a	Paper – Spring Tea Program	2012

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
10A	4	Papers [Relevant Article]	Oct. 4, 2012 Aug. 5, 2012
	5	Papers	Oct. 18, 2012
	6	Papers	Nov. 1, 2012
	7	Papers	Nov. 15, 2012
	8	Papers	Jan. 10, 2013
	9	Papers	Jan. 24, 2013
	10	Papers	Feb. 7, 2014
	11	Papers	Feb. 21, 2013
	12	Papers	Mar. 7, 2013
	13	Papers	Mar. 21, 2013
	14	Critic's Reports	2007-2008
	15	Critic's Reports	2009
<b>Series V Correspondence</b>			
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
10A	16	Letters-Beginning of Club Year	1967, 1973, 1979-2004
	17	Donations (to and from the WLC)	1977-1983
	18	Memorials	1984, 2002-2004
	19	Correspondence-Elizabeth Donovan	2002-2003
<b>Series VI Attendance/Financial Documents</b>			
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
11	1	Stock Shares of Woman's Club (Historical Value Only)	1916-1924
	2	Treasurer's Annual Report	1938-1939
	3	Bank Deposit Book	1951-1955
	4	Budgets and Annual Treasurer's Reports	1964-1972
	5	Application Booklet for Tax Exemption	Feb. 1989
	6	Ledger-Membership and Accounting	1926-1942
	7	Ledger-Treasurer's Reports	1941-1952
	8	Ledger-Treasurer's Reports	1951-1957
	9	Ledger- Membership and Accounting	1957-1965
	10	Ledger- Membership and Accounting	1966-1980
	11	Ledger-Attendance	1967-1986
	12	Ledger-Attendance	2000-2003

<b>Series VII</b>			
<b>Events, Publicity, and Creative Writing Records</b>			
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
12	1	Bergen and McCarthy Routine	196?
	2	A Bibliography on Women in Montgomery County History	1986
	3	Programs - Centennial Events	1989
	4	Programs – Guest Coffee	1980, 1996-2003
	5	Programs – Officers’ Day/Creative Writing Awards	1935-1940, 1994-2012
	6	Creative Writing Awards	May 2, 2002
	7	Creative Writing Rules/Winners (for Writer Laureate Eligibility), Alphabetical, A-H	1933-1967
	8	Creative Writing Winners (for Writer Laureate Eligibility), Alphabetical, I-V	1932-1967
	9	Creative Writing Winners (for Writer Laureate Eligibility), Alphabetical, W-Z and miscellaneous arrangement	1934-2003
	10	Potential Judges for Creative Writing Awards	1993-1995, 2001
	11	Publicity for Club Members’ Works	
	12	Clippings	1964-2003
	13	Photos and Negatives	
	14	Miscellaneous	1975-2011
<b>Series VIII</b>			
<b>Publications</b>			
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
12	15	Poetry by Members	Undated
	16	Poetry by Members	1966
	17	Poetry by Members	1973
	18	Poetry by Members (Creative Writing Award Winners)	1974
	19	Poetry by Members	1979-1983
13	1	Poetry by Members	1994-1995
	2	Poetry by Members	2001
	3	Essays by Members	[2008-2010?], 2010
	4	“Off the Ruffled Cuff” by Celia Elliott – DDN Memoir	

<b>Series IX</b>		<b>Scrapbooks</b>	
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
13	5	Photo: Mary Celinda Chambers Stout and Sunday School Class	1906
	6	Scrapbook	1987-1989
	7	Scrapbook	2005-2006
14		Scrapbook	
15		Scrapbook	
16		Scrapbook	