

## Marking 99 Years of Service

# Springfield Women's Club a Tradition

By DEBORAH EDWARDS

It's not everybody's cup of tea, but having a club meeting - complete with silver tea service - is a tradition the Springfield Women's Club faithfully maintained for nearly 100 years.

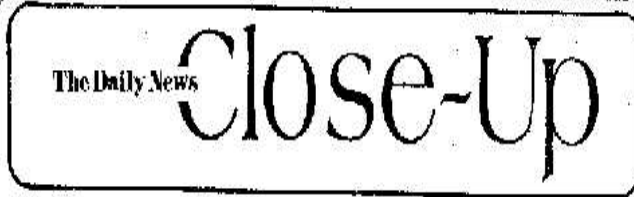
Maintaining tradition gives the members a sense of pride. And tradition in the social graces goes beyond etiquette, into one of the fundamental elements of modern society - community involvement and support.

And in this tradition - as it enters 19th year of existence - the club welcomes Kit Dobbelle, former Chief of Protocol in the Carter administration, Wednesday at 10, as this year's first speaker.

Former Pittsfield Mayor Evan Dobbelle was appointed U.S. Chief of protocol by President Carter in Jan 1977. In May 1978 he was named treasurer of the National Democratic Party and President Carter asked Mrs. Dobbelle to succeed him as chief of protocol. She served in that capacity until September 1979 when Mrs. Carter asked her to come to the White House

as her staff director. Mrs. Dobbelle presently resides with her husband in Pittsfield.

She will be speaking to women who are



familiar with public service.

"Most of the women in the club," says Frances Gagnon, publicity chairman, "are involved in the community," she said.

The purpose of the club, as stated in the bylaws, is "to form a center for moral, intellectual and social culture, to encourage movements for the betterment of society, and to foster public spirit in the community."

In the words of Beverly Lynch, club president, "The members contribute very heavily in a very quiet way."

As a fundraising organization, they not only contribute and raise money for their

projects, but encourage people and organizations to improve the quality of the community. "It's not just money that members give," Mrs. Lynch said, "it's the

time and participation."

On an annual basis, Springfield Women's Club helps to support Laughing Brook Education Center and Wildlife Sanctuary, Belchertown Friends, Children's Study Home, Forest Park Zoo, Girl Scouts, Red Cross, Channel 57, George Walter Vincent Smith Museum, Springfield Symphony, Stage West, YWCA, and the Salvation Army.

Also, this year two special grants were given to Children's Protective Services and Springfield Community Mental Health Consortium.

"These are worthwhile organizations

that should be supported," said Mrs. Lynch.

The club gives an annual Conservation and Urban Beauty Award to private citizens or groups in recognition of efforts to renovate historical buildings and improve landscapes.

Also, the club's monthly programs bring interesting and informative speakers to the Springfield area.

According to Mrs. Lynch, not all the 422 members actively participate in the club.

Potential club members are usually sponsored by two existing members. However, women interested in finding out more about the club may contact any member of the board of directors, or the Springfield Museum of Fine Arts (the club's meeting place since 1956).

"Persons interested in joining could also write a letter to the board showing their interest in the club, and outlining their participation in the community (or outline how they would like to make a contribution to the community) and a guest pass will be issued for a future meeting.

"This club doesn't know an age barrier," she said. "Many of the members have actively participated for over 50 years."



**GUEST SPEAKER - Kit Dobbelle, former U.S. Chief of Protocol in the Carter administration, will speak at Wednesday's meeting of the Springfield Women's Club. The meeting will be the first of the club's 99th year.**