

HISTORY OF

THE WOMAN'S CLUB OF MEDFORD

Unfortunately the early records of the Club were destroyed. So, with the help of Mrs. William Dyer, Sr., the Club's first President, and the Calendars we have on file, we will try to assemble the facts for you.

Quoting Mrs. William Dyer, Sr.:

In my opinion, Florence and Lillian Ullman and Ella Allen were directly responsible for the organization of The Woman's Club of Medford. These three girls prevailed upon Mrs. Jacob Cochley until she finally consented to help form a Club. It all started in April 1913 when 12 or 14 of us would trek to the old school house on Filbert Street between Bank and Branch Streets where we studied parliamentary law, literature, music, art, home economics and social etiquette.

"We wrote papers on various subjects assigned to us by Mrs. Cochley. She appointed a different woman to act as Presiding Officer at each meeting and in this way we learned the fundamentals of conducting a meeting.

"We met in this fashion for one year, when we organized in April 1914 and elected the following officers: Lou Dyer, President, and Florence Ullman, Secretary.

"We selected the name of "Athena Club" as the name of our organization and chose as the Club flower the violet. (A-the-na means, in Greek mythology, the Goddess of Wisdom).

"Each meeting was closed with a thought for the day usually supplied by Mrs. Cochley.

"In 1916 we joined the Federation of Woman's Clubs, and in

October 1919, the Federation requested us to change the name to "The Woman's Club of Medford". Our original dues were 50¢ a year and we had a membership of 18 or 20."

"Mrs. Cochley died in June 1933 and is buried near Jacksonville, Florida. Mrs. Dyer feels The Woman's Club of Medford is a most wonderful monument to her memory."

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As previously mentioned, the Club was organized in April 1914 under the name "Athena Club" with its first officers being Mrs. William Dyer., Sr., President, and Miss Florence Ullman, Secretary. At that time, the Club's activities centered around literature, current events, home economics, music and art.

In the Club year beginning in 1915, Miss Ella R. Allen was elected President and Mrs. Daniel F. Remer elected Secretary. The Club Calendar for that year reveals several interesting subjects discussed along the Club's activities; one being a debate on the question: "Has the fear of punishment or the hope of reward the greater influence on human conduct?" and another topic being "The Mother in the Home".

Mrs. Charles I. Hollinshead was elected President for the year 1916-1917 and had as Secretary Mrs. S. T. Haines. The Club Calendar for that period reveals a total of twelve meetings, one meeting being on Education -- "Needed Improvements for our Public School System" and "Cooperation in Education". Another topic of timely interest was "The Household Budget".

Records regarding the Club year 1917-1918 are not available, and we can determine only that Mrs. Abram Stackhouse was President during that period.

In October 1919 the Club's name was changed, at the request of the Federation, to "The Woman's Club of Medford." Mrs. John Lewis was President during this period. It was during this time that Child Welfare was introduced as a department, with other departments being music, study and home.

Mrs. J. Maurice Garwood was elected President in 1920 and other officers were: Mrs. Daniel Remer, Vice President; Mrs. Julia Haines, Recording Secretary; Mrs. Jacob Cochley, Corresponding Secretary; and Mrs. William D. Cowperthwait, Treasurer. The program reveals 15 meetings were held - business meetings in homes and program meetings in the School House. Membership at that time was about 29. One of the meetings was a "Pilgrimage to Philadelphia", which, no doubt, was the Club's trip.

President for the Club year 1921-22 was Miss Ella R. Allen, Vice President Mrs. Jacob Cochley, and Recording Secretary Mrs. Warne Smith. An activity during that period was a musical at the Riverton Porch Club for the benefit of the Children's Home. Another meeting was an entertainment in benefit of Burlington County Hospital. The year ended with a May picnic at Valley Forge. It was during this period that the Club had its first "Men's Night".

The Club year 1922-23 had the same officers as the previous Club year. The Departments at that time were Home Service, Legislative, Institutional and Cooperation.

Mrs. Israel W. Garwood was President for the year 1923-24 with Mrs. J. Maurice Garwood as Vice President and Mrs. William Dyer, Sr., as Recording Secretary. A new department, Floral Committee, was started at this time. The Calendar also reveals a Tenth Anniversary Party was held with the Ex-Presidents as hostesses.