



BHC-MSS 0238

Guide to the Records of the American Association of University Women,
Bridgeport Chapter
October 2022

Descriptive Summary

Creator: American Association of University Women, Bridgeport Chapter

Title: Records of the American Association of University Women, Bridgeport Chapter

Dates: 1917-1996

Quantity: ca. 12 linear feet

Abstract. Originally called the College Club when it was founded in 1916, the American Association of University Women's Bridgeport chapter began with the goal to "promote literature and instill in high school girls the deeper significance of college life." Since then the chapter has gone on to support local education through scholarships, committee work, support of adult education, and providing community support, all while retaining the local character of the chapter. The collection focuses primarily on the group's early days into the 1970s and addresses the changing nature of education in an urban setting.

Language: English

Repository: Bridgeport History Center

Biographical History:

Originally called the College Club when it was founded in 1916, the American Association of University Women's Bridgeport chapter began with the goal to "promote literature and instill in high school girls the deeper significance of college life." The original founders, Sannie Bassett, Mollie Bassett Calvin, Harriet Bassett, Bertha Watson, Marion Green, Evelyn Davis, and Susan Matthews, were all college graduates in an era where it was not expected for most women to go on to higher education.

The College Club quickly grew to include 42 members, and they networked to help other college age women in the area and to advocate for better education overall. They began to award scholarships in 1919 - something the chapter still does today - and also worked to provide living spaces for members as needed. Their club house was purchased in 1927, and stood at 199 Cortland Street until it was sold to make way for Interstate 95. The club house also held teas and games of bridge, as well as hosted lectures on education, finance, and other interests for women,

In 1931, the College Club changed its name to the American Association of University Women, Bridgeport Chapter. This did not change its overall goal of promoting education for women - it simply offered more resources to do so while retaining a local character and focus.

This focus sharpened in the 1960s and 1970s, with a greater concentration on local education and support for Bridgeport public schools. The chapter worked with Youth Opportunities Unlimited/Youth Opportunities Unlimited Revised Services in the late 1960s and was a partner in

helping it transform into the School Volunteers Association (SVA), until that organization could operate independently. There was a greater focus on adult education as well into the 1980s, with Project Re-entry - a program meant to get adults back into education through college, vocational schools, adult education, and distance learning through Charter Oak College. The AAUW also hosted smaller courses on personal finance, retirement, and money management in response to greater economic independence for women through the right to open a bank account and the 1974 Equal Credit Opportunity Act.

The American Association of University Women's Bridgeport Chapter also donated its piano to the Bridgeport Public Library in 1971 to celebrate the opening of the Fine Arts Department formerly located in the Burroughs-Saden building. The group remains highly active, and still focuses on education in the area and awarding scholarships.

Scope and Content note:

This collection is primarily comprised of subject files that shed light onto the interests of the organization from the 1910s into the 1970s. The presence of board minutes and executive board minutes within the subject files series helps to provide context for the rest of the subject files, and the scrapbooks offer a look at the public perception of the organization.

Series II, which features the working files from community projects in the late 1960s into the 1970s, demonstrates the commitment the organization displayed to improving Bridgeport during the era of urban renewal. The membership forms in series IV that date from the same era compliment these documents.

Arrangement note:

The collection is arranged into four series. Series I contains subject files, arranged alphabetically. Series II, Committees and projects, contains the working papers and documents generated by initiatives the group participated in. They are arranged alphabetically by project names. Donor imposed restricted membership forms are placed in series III and arranged chronologically, and scrapbooks are arranged chronologically in series IV.

Subject files are split between two groups of boxes, due to the 1996.12 accession being found elsewhere in the stacks after the rest of the collection was processed. They are integrated in the subject file listing on the finding aid.

See Also:

<https://ww3.aauw.org/resource/aauw-archives-by-state/> For archives by state

Administrative information:

Provenance: Accessions 1977.63, 1981.38, 1982.21, 1987.17, 1996.12; all donations from the American Association of University Women Bridgeport branch.

Preferred Citation:

Records of the American Association of University Women, Bridgeport Chapter (BHC-MSS 0238), Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library.

Names and Subject Tracings

Personal names

Bassett, Sannie

Calvin, Mollie Bassett

Bassett, Harriet
Watson, Bertha
Green, Marion
Davis, Evelyn
Matthews, Susan

Corporate names

American Association of University Women. Bridgeport chapter.
School Volunteers Association

Subject tracings

Educational equalization
Volunteer workers in education
Education
Educational change
Vocational education
Leadership in women -- Connecticut
Women in higher education
Women--Education--History
Burroughs-Saden branch, Bridgeport Public Library

Detailed box/folder listing

Series I, Subject files

Box 1

1. Action is our bag, 1969
2. Activities and reports, 1917-1930
3. Activities and reports, 1930-1942
4. Activities and reports, 1942-1946
5. Activities and reports, 1946-1951
6. Activities and reports, 1951-1952
7. Activities and reports, 1952-1955

Box 2

1. Activities and reports, 1953-1963
2. Activities and reports, 1963-1967
3. Activities and reports, 1967-1969
4. Activities and reports, 1969-1970
5. Activities and reports, 1970-1973
6. Activities and reports, 1973-1974, undated

Box 3

1. Anniversary, national, 1981
2. Anniversary, chapter, 50th, 1966
3. Anniversary, chapter, 50th, 1966
4. Annual information, 1973-1974
5. Articles of association and bylaws, 1935-1968

6. Art safari, 1971-1981
7. Art safari, 1981
8. Arts, 1967=1968
9. Bennett, Lois, Lois Bennet Day, 1946
10. Bennett, Lois, Book, 1924

Box 4

1. Board minutes, 1916-1928
2. Board minutes, 1960-1963
3. Board minutes, 1967-1971
4. Board minutes, 1971-1973
5. Bulletins, 1939, 1957-1963
6. Bulletins, 1964-1968
7. Bulletins, 1968-1971

Box 5

1. Bulletins, 1971-1973
2. Bylaws, 1931-1975
3. Careers correspondence, 1969-1971
4. Career information fair, 1971
5. China study, 1964-1965
6. Connecticut division, AAUW, 1969-197
7. Constitution and bylaws, 1922
8. Cookbooks, 1967, undated
9. Disarmament and human rights seminar, 1977
10. Energy task force, New England, undated
11. Equal rights amendment, undated

Box 6

1. Executive board minutes, 1918-1930
2. Executive board minutes, 1930-1933
3. Executive board minutes, 1933-1935
4. Executive board minutes, 1935-1940
5. Executive board minutes, 1941-1946
6. Executive board minutes, 1947-1952

Box 7

1. Executive board minutes, 1953-1960
2. Executive board minutes, 1963-1967
3. Fellowships, 1967
4. Finances, 1960-1972
5. Finances, treasuries report, 1944-1945
6. Flyers, 1970s
7. Fund raising, 1971
8. History, published, 1952, 1977
9. History, unpublished, 1943-1966

10. History, national, 1957
11. House, 199 Cortland St., 1955-1956
12. House committee, 1942

Box 8

1. House, building needs, 1954
2. House, sale of, 1958
3. Legislative, 1965-1969
4. Meeting minutes, 1924-1931
5. Members, 1966-1978
6. Members, 1966-1979
7. Name change to AAUW
8. National program for Voluntary Act 2, 1969-1970
9. Nominating committee, 1942-1943, 1960-1964
10. Photographs, 1950s-1970s
11. Policies, c. 1960s
12. Publicity and publicity reports, 1945-1965
13. Recording section, annual reports, 1935-1941
14. Regional planning, 1963-1964
15. Scholarship activities, 1954-1955
16. Scholarship, finances, 1935-1960
17. Scholarship forms, 1960-1961
18. Scholarship meeting, reports, 1933-1938

Box 9

1. Scholarship reports, 1938-1968
2. Scholarship recipients, 1910s-1960s
3. School Volunteer association, 1967-1968
4. State division. 1971-1973
5. Study topics, 1970-1975
6. Study topics, 1970-1975
7. Taxes, federal, 1948-1958
8. United Nations Association

Box 10

1. United Nations seminar, 1977
2. What Goes On Here: Community services directory, undated
3. Youthbridge, 1969
4. Misc., 1950s-1970s

Series II, Committees and projects

5. Area representative community projects, 1970-1974
6. Area representative community projects, 1970-1974
7. Community Development Action Plan, 1968-1969
8. Community Mental Health, 1966-1968
9. Citizen's Community Survey Committee report, 1969

Box 11

1. Citizen's Community Survey Committee report drafts, 1969
2. Citizen's Community Survey Committee working documents, 1968-1969
3. Citizen's Community Survey Committee working documents, 1968-1969
4. Other reports used as references, 1960s
5. Other reports used as references, 1960s
6. Other reports used as references, 1960s

Series III, Member information

Box 12 – Donor imposed restriction, contact organization for access permission

1. Blank membership questionnaires, 1968
2. Membership questionnaires, 1968
3. Membership questionnaires, 1968
4. Membership participation, 1968
5. Green slips and tabulation to date, 1972

Series IV, Scrapbooks

Box 13, Scrapbooks, 1930-1939; 1935-1943; 1943-1960

Box 14, Scrapbooks, 1943-1944; 1954-1956, 1978-1982, 1958-962; 1965-1966

1996 accession

Box 15

1. Guest book, 1950-1958
2. Scrapbook, 1973-1977
3. Scrapbook, 1975-1978
4. Scrapbook, 1982-1983
5. Anniversary, 75th, 1991
6. Annual reports, 1973-1975
7. Area representation of world problems, 1975-1976
8. Board manual, 1989
9. Board minutes, 1983

Box 16

1. Bulletins, 1976-1982
2. Bulletins, 1983-1986
3. Bulletins, 1983-1996
4. Bulletins, 1994-1996
5. Bylaws and policies, 1976-1995
6. Challenger, Mary Ellen, presidential files, 1980-1983
7. Charter Oak College, 1986-1987
8. Clippings, 1992-1993

Box 17

1. Clippings, 1989-1990
2. Correspondence, 1994
3. Directories, 1976-1195
4. Duties of the board, 1988
5. Fellowships, 1970-1975
6. Claire Fulcher
7. Events, 1980s
8. Humanities symposium, 1975
9. Joint board meetings, 1971-1975
10. Member awards etc. 1971-1972
11. Misc., 1972-1971
12. Misc., 1972-1981
13. Name grant biographies, 1954-1980
14. Name grant biographies, 1984-1989

Box 18

1. Names honorees, 1971-1980
2. National organization publications, 1979s-1980s
3. Office of the president, 1979-1981
4. Outstanding young women of America, 1970-1975
5. Pamphlets, 1980s-1996
6. Piano at Bridgeport library, 1969-192
7. Project re-entry, 1974-1975
8. Project Re-entry phase II. 1974-1975
9. Scholarships, 1969-1972
10. State convention, 1996
11. Status of women, 1972

Box 19, scrapbooks

1. Scrapbook, 1969-1973
2. Scrapbook, 1974-1979
3. Scrapbook, 1978-1981
4. Art safari scrapbook, 1970-1972

Accrual, 2023 material found in stacks

Box 20

1. Clipping binder, 1983-1985
2. Clipping binder, 1983-1985
3. Clipping binder, 1983-1985
4. Clipping binder, 1985-1987
5. Clipping binder, 1985-1987

Box 21

1. Clipping binder, 1987-1989
2. Clipping binder, 1987-1989

3. Clipping binder, 1987-1989
4. Member biographies, 1983