

Guide to the Rochester Women's Educational and Industrial Union Records 2014.005

Finding aid prepared by Maria Socia

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Local History & Genealogy Division

2/2014

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Summary Information

Repository	Local History & Genealogy Division
Creator	Women's Educational and Industrial Union Records (Rochester, N.Y.).
Title	Rochester Women's Educational and Industrial Union Records
Date [inclusive]	1893-1993
Extent	5.5 Cubic feet 7 boxes.
Language	English
Digital Files	Negatives thought to be nitrate were scanned and discarded. The negatives were in an envelope marked "L.L. [Lavinia Lloyd] Dock, Suffrage Parade." The negatives were scanned and are stored as tiff files in the G drive under Cheri-->Manuscripts & Special Collections-->Digital Files-->WEIU Negatives.
Mixed materials [Box]	6
Mixed materials [Box]	5
Mixed materials [Box]	4
Mixed materials [Box]	3
Mixed materials [Box]	7
Mixed materials [Box]	1
Mixed materials [Box]	2

Abstract

The Rochester Women's Educational and Industrial Union Records document an organization established in 1893 to improve educational, social, and economic conditions for women and children. The collection includes business and financial records, including meeting minutes, financial statements, and correspondence; philanthropic papers documenting numerous charitable projects; commemorative and promotional materials, including newsletters, flyers, and anniversary booklets; visual materials recording WEIU events; and commemorative and promotional artifacts.

Citation

Rochester Women's Educational and Industrial Union Records, [Box#, Folder#], Local History & Genealogy Division, Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County N.Y.

Historical Note

The Rochester Women's Education and Industrial Union (WEIU) was established in 1893 to improve educational, social, and economic conditions for women and children. It was formed during a meeting held at the Chamber of Commerce by the Fortnightly Ignorance Club, a women's society founded in 1881 by Jane Marsh Parker, an early historian of Rochester, to discuss "vital topics of the day." The meeting was headed by Ignorance Club president Dr. Sarah Adamson Dolley, one of the first female physicians in the country, and attended by many local pioneering women, including Susan B. Anthony, one of the WEIU's founding members. A few days prior to the meeting, Anthony had been outraged by news of a local woman being jailed after fainting in the street simply because she had no place to go. Familiar with the Buffalo Women's Educational and Industrial Union, she invited that organization's president, Mrs. George W. Townsend, to the meeting to speak of the work it had been doing. Modeled after the Buffalo WEIU, established in 1884, and Boston's, begun in 1877, the Rochester WEIU became the seventeenth of its kind in the United States.

Individual committees carried out the work of the WEIU, with each led by a chairperson who served on the board of directors. Committees came in and out of existence over the years depending on the needs of the community and Union. Three prominent committees in the organization included the Educational Committee, established to monitor and improve educational conditions through regular school visits, talks, and lectures; the Legal Protection Committee, which provided free legal aid to women; and the Philanthropic Committee, which established a "Noon Rest" for working girls, an association that provided women with a comfortable place to dine, relax, and converse with friends.

Throughout its operation, the WEIU was known for a number of reform and philanthropic successes. With the support of the WEIU, Helen Barrett Montgomery was elected as the first female school commissioner in 1899. In 1913, the WEIU assisted in Nellie McElroy being hired as the first policewoman in Rochester. The Union introduced manual training and sewing into schools, started summer schools, and installed Rochester's first playground. In 1919, a scholarship fund was created to help women further their education, and in 1951, all WEIU membership proceeds went directly to this fund. The Danforth Fund was created in recognition of Edwina Danforth's service on the Board of Education. The program gave free eye examinations and loaned eyeglasses to schoolchildren. The Union's Voluntary Public Defender's office provided free lawyers to represent individuals in police court. A popular secondhand store called the Opportunity Shop, originally known as the Salvage Shop, was created by Fannie R. Bigelow to help stretch budgets. The shop opened in 1916, made possible with a \$1,000 loan from George Eastman.

The WEIU began to decline due to some unfavorable decisions, including their support of an unpopular 1911 sanitary survey of Rochester by Caroline Bartlett Crane, and for a display they presented in a Child Welfare Exhibit on sexual hygiene. The dissolution of the WEIU occurred in the early 1990s when the organization joined the Rochester Area Foundation.

Scope and Content Note

The Rochester Women's Educational and Industrial Union Records, 1893-1993, comprise business and financial records, philanthropic papers, commemorative and promotional materials, visual materials, and artifacts documenting the organization's 100 years of operation. Business and financial records are composed primarily of meeting minutes and financial statements, 1893-1993. Also included are membership and board of directors' lists, by-laws, trusts and estates concerning sums bequeathed to the WEIU, and correspondence and miscellaneous papers on numerous topics such as passing of legal bills, prohibition of night work for women in factories, real estate purchases, and the incorporation and dissolution of the WEIU.

Philanthropic papers include newspaper clippings, brochures, reports, and correspondence for several charitable projects, such as the Danforth fund, the public defenders program, and the scholarship program. Commemorative and promotional materials are composed of program and event announcements, newsletters, membership information, flyers announcing annual meetings and elections, calendars, handbooks, and anniversary booklets that document the history of the WEIU. Visual materials include 35mm color transparencies, photographs and negatives, and a videocassette that document Opportunity Shop events, annual board meetings and picnics, scholarship recipients, and the 1913 Suffrage Parade in Washington, D.C. Artifacts comprise a commemorative pen, a ribbon, promotional bags for the WEIU and Opportunity Shop, and a canvas bag for the Salvage Shop, which was used for donation pickup by the WEIU.

Arrangement

The collection is organized into three series: Series 1: Documents, 1893-1993; Series 2: Visual materials, 1913-1990; Series 3: Artifacts, undated. Series 1: Documents are divided into three subseries: Subseries 1: Business and financial records, 1893-1993; Subseries 2: Philanthropic, 1921-1992; Subseries 3: Commemorative and promotional, 1908-1990. Series 2: Visual materials is divided into three subseries: Subseries 1: 35mm color transparencies, 1967-1977; Subseries 2: Photographs and negatives, 1913-1990; Subseries 3: Video, 1985.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Local History & Genealogy Division 2/2014

Access

There are no restrictions regarding access to this collection.

Use

Permission to publish, reproduce, distribute, or use in any current or future manifestations must be obtained in writing from the Rochester Public Library Local History & Genealogy Division.

Custodial History

The custodial history is unknown.

Processing Information

Processed February 2014 by consulting archivist Maria Soscia. This project was made possible by a grant from the Documentary Heritage Program of the New York State Archives, a program of the State Education Department.

Related Materials

Related Materials

The Rochester Public Library's Local History & Genealogy Division holds additional material about the Women's Educational and Industrial Union.

Decennial Yearbook Rr361.8 W872d

Scrapbooks: Rrq361.806 W872s item 2 (1915-1921) Rrq361.806 W872s item 3 (1924-1969) Rrq361.806 W872s item 4 (1930-1940) Rrq361.806 W872s item 5 (1964-1972) Rrq361.806 W872s item 6 (1970-1983) Rrq361.806 W872s item 7 (1987-1989)

Projects Scrapbook: Wartime Emergency Shop Rr362.5948 P964p

Crane, Caroline Bartlett, A Sanitary Survey of Rochester, N. Y. Rr628 C891s

Controlled Access Headings

Personal Name(s)

- Anthony, Susan B. (Susan Brownell), 1820-1906
- Bigelow, Fannie R., 1861-1937
- Danforth, Edwina, 1864-1961
- Dolley, Sarah Adamson, Dr., 1829-1909
- Dow, Harriet Brown, 1852-1936
- Eastwood, Ellen C., 1840-1911
- Gannett, Mary Thorn Lewis, 1854-1952
- Landsberg, Miriam M., 1847-1912
- Montgomery, Helen Barrett, 1861-1934
- O'Connor, Evangeline M. (Evangeline Maria), 1843-1940
- Parker, Jenny Marsh (Jane Marsh Parker), 1836-1913
- Perkins, Caroline (Erickson), 1835-1919
- Warner, Mary F., 1853-1936

Subject(s)

- Women--Economic conditions--19th century.
- Women--Economic conditions--20th century.
- Women--Legal status, laws, etc.--New York (State)--History.
- Women--New York (State)--Rochester--Societies and clubs.
- Women--Political activity--New York (State)--History.
- Women--Social conditions--19th century.
- Women--Social conditions--20th century.
- Women--Suffrage--New York (State)--History.
- Women's rights--New York (State)--History.

Bibliography

The Woman's Educational and Industrial Union, Seventy-fifth Anniversary booklet, ca. 1968.

Year Book of the Woman's Educational and Industrial Union, Rochester, N. Y., 1896-1897.

Decennial Yearbook: Woman's Educational and Industrial Union, Rochester, New York, 1903. LH-ST
Rr361.8 W872d

Proceedings of the First Meeting of the W.E.I.U., April 10, 1983.

Altman, Babette, "The Opportunity Shop," 1984.

McKelvey, Blake, "Susan B. Anthony," *Rochester History*. 7, no. 3. (April, 1945).

"Women's Educational and Industrial Union." *Western New York Suffragists*. <http://winningthevote.org/weiu.html>. Accessed January 30, 2014.

Documents

Collection Inventory

Documents 1893-1993		
Business and financial records 1893-1993		
	Box	Folder
Membership lists; Director's lists and ballots (bound book) 1893; 1893-1928	1	1
Board of director's members, committees 1913-1992	1	2
Board of directors members; Committees; Historical calendars 1930-1933; 1945-1975; undated	1	3
Constitution and by-laws, Formation of Union April 10, 1893; Charter members; Board meeting minutes; Annual meeting minutes; Newspaper clippings (bound book) 1893-1896	1	4
Constitution by-laws and amendments 1899-1953	1	5
By-laws 1908-1975	1	6
Certificate of assumed name, N. Y. S. Department of State 1985-1986	1	7
[Incorporation – correspondence and newspaper clippings] 1907-1908	1	8

Business and financial records

Incorporation certificate 1937-1986	1	9
[Dissolution of WEIU – correspondence and copy of certificate] 1991	1	10
[Mayor Thomas P. Ryan Proclamation] 1993	1	11
[Minutes] April 10, 1893	1	12
Minute book (bound book) 1897-1923	1	13
Secretary's minute book (bound book) 1905-1909	1	14
Minutes and newspaper clippings (bound book) 1910-1912	1	15
Minutes and miscellaneous 1913	2	1
Minutes and miscellaneous (May, September, and November missing) 1914	2	2
Minutes and miscellaneous 1915	2	3
Minutes and miscellaneous (October and November missing) 1916	2	4
Minutes and miscellaneous (June missing) 1917	2	5
Minutes and miscellaneous 1918	2	6

Business and financial records

Minutes and miscellaneous 1919	2	7
Minutes and miscellaneous 1920	2	8
Minutes and miscellaneous 1921	2	9
Minutes and miscellaneous 1922	2	10
Minutes and miscellaneous 1923	2	11
Minutes and miscellaneous 1924	2	12
Minutes and miscellaneous (November and December missing) 1925	2	13
Secretary's minutes and treasurer's reports January 1929-May 1934	2	14
Secretary's minutes and treasurer's reports June 1934-June 1938	2	15
[Minutes and financial statements] 1944-1947	2	16
[Minutes and financial statements] 1947-1952	2	17
[Minutes] (Driveway Easement) 1952-1957	2	18
[Minutes] (Driveway Easement) 1958-1963	2	19
Minutes and financial statements May 1961-April 1965	2	20

Business and financial records

Minutes and financial statements June 1965-May 1967	2	21
Minutes and financial statements May 1967-April 1968	2	22
Minutes and financial statements 1968-May 1970	2	23
Minutes and financial statements re: fire May 1970-May 1971	2	24
Minutes and financial statements May 1971-April 1972	2	25
Minutes and financial statements May 1972-April 1973	2	26
Minutes and financial statements May 1973-April 1974	2	27
Minutes and financial statements May 1974-April 1975	2	28
Minutes and financial statements May 1975-April 1976	2	29
Minutes and financial statements May 1976-April 1977	2	30
Minutes and financial statements May 1977-April 1978	2	31
Minutes and financial statements May 1978-April 1979	3	1
Minutes and financial statements May 1979-April 1980	3	2
Minutes and financial statements May 1980-April 1981	3	3

Business and financial records

Minutes and financial statements May 1981-April 1982	3	4
Minutes and financial statements May 1982-April 1983	3	5
Minutes and financial statements May 1983-April 1984	3	6
Minutes and financial statements May 1984-April 1985	3	7
Minutes and financial statements May 1985-April 1986	3	8
Minutes and financial statements May 1986-April 1987	3	9
Minutes and financial statements May 1987-April 1988	3	10
Minutes and financial statements May 1988-April 1990	3	11
[Minutes] undated	3	12
Index to minutes of board meetings 1960-1977	3	13
Shop Committee minutes (missing September 1956-June 1957) August 1956-December 1958	3	14
Shop Committee minutes January 1959-January 1964	3	15
Shop Committee reports (bound book) 1931-1941	3	16

Business and financial records

[Shop Committee reports] 1957-1958	3	17
Annual Opportunity Shop reports 1958-1977, 1986	3	18
Annual meeting data--letters, reports, and minutes 1958-1968	3	19
Annual meetings 1894, 1956-1991	3	20
[Committee reports] 1894	3	21
[Committee reports and financial statements] 1905	3	22
[Committee reports and financial statements] 1906	3	23
[Committee reports and financial statements] 1907	3	24
[Committee reports and financial statements] 1908	3	25
[Financial statements] 1909	3	26
[Committee reports and financial statements] 1910	3	27
[Committee reports and financial statements] 1911	3	28
[Minutes, committee reports and financial statements] 1912	3	29

Business and financial records

[Legal Protection Committee reports and miscellaneous papers] 1905-1915, 1932	3	30
Yearend profit and loss statements 1946-1990	3	31
Bequests--trusts 1967-1990	3	32
Howell's estate 1979	3	33
Bequests--Howell; Glasford 1979; 1989	3	34
Ella A. Dickson legacy 1935	3	35
Ingeborg Hansen estate 1959	3	36
[Correspondence and miscellaneous papers], undated	3	37
[Correspondence and miscellaneous papers], 1904	3	38
[Correspondence and miscellaneous papers] 1906	3	39
[Correspondence and miscellaneous papers] 1907	3	40
[Correspondence and miscellaneous papers] 1908	3	41
[Correspondence and miscellaneous papers] 1909	3	42

Philanthropic

[Correspondence and miscellaneous papers] 1910	3	43
[Correspondence and miscellaneous papers] 1911	3	44
[Correspondence and miscellaneous papers] 1912	3	45
[Correspondence and miscellaneous papers] circa 1914-1915	3	46
[Correspondence and miscellaneous papers] 1931-1932, 1945-1946	3	47
[Correspondence and miscellaneous papers] 1961-1968	3	48
[Correspondence and miscellaneous papers] 1937-1970	3	49
Building purchased 1937-1970	3	50
Women's Educational Union background material 1919-1936	3	51
Philanthropic 1921-1992		
	Box	Folder
Projects and philanthropy 1921-1976	3	52
Philanthropy 1945-1992	4	1
Donations social agencies 1931-1973	4	2

Commemorative and promotional

Scholarship recipients 1945-1990	4	3
Public Defender, Danforth Eyeglass Fund, miscellaneous papers May 1934-May 1935	4	4
Public Defender, Danforth Eyeglass Fund, miscellaneous papers May 1935-May 1936	4	5
Public Defender, Danforth Eyeglass Fund, correspondence Waller meetings May 1936-May 1937	4	6
Danforth Eyeglass Fund 1961-1962	4	7
Commemorative and promotional 1908-1990		
	Box	Folder
[Newspaper clippings and Photostats] 1897, 1953-1954	4	8
Publicity Shop newspaper clippings 1969-1985	4	9
[Flyers, pamphlets, and brochures] 1898-1958	4	10
[Event cards] 1896-1942	4	11
[Calendars and programs of events] 1899-1921	4	12
[Flyers for annual meetings and elections] 1897-1943	5	1

Visual materials

[Salvage Shop flyers and brochures] undated	5	2
[Opportunity Shop flyers, pamphlets, and brochures] 1937-1990	5	3
[Newsletters] 1957-1958, 1984	5	4
[Membership forms] 1893-1981	5	5
[Membership tickets] 1898-1925	5	6
Booklets 50th and 75th Anniversaries 1893-1943	5	7
Calendars 1908	5	8
Calendars 1909	5	9
[Handbooks] 1967, 1978	5	10
[Yearbooks] 1896, 1903	6	1
[Women of Rochester Who Made a Difference: A Sesquicentennial Tribute to Rochester Women, 1834-1984] 1984	6	2
[Annual reports for WEIU Boston, Buffalo, and Dunkirk] 1904-1910	6	3
Visual materials 1913-1990		

35mm color transparencies

35mm color transparencies 1967-1977		
	Box	Folder
Opportunity Shop's 50th Anniversary, Midtown Mall display 1967	6	4
Opportunity Shop picnic July 1975	6	5
Opportunity Shop 1977	6	6
Board picnic at Ed Cornwell's 1975	6	7
Photographs and negatives 1913-1990		
	Box	Folder
[Opportunity Shop aerial view; Opportunity Shop's 50th Anniversary, Midtown Mall display (photographs)] 1942 [1967?]; 1967	6	8
Opportunity Shop at 86 North Street after fire and as clean-up began preparatory to rebuilding the interior (negatives) August 1971	6	9
Opening Ceremony (negatives) November 1971	6	10
["La Déjà Vu," Opportunity Shop period clothing fashion show (photographs and related documents)] April 9, 1981	6	11
[Rosemary Disney artwork to benefit Opportunity Shop (photograph and related document)] 1987	6	12

Video

Opportunity Shop; Recipients of the scholarship tea (photographs and negatives) undated; 1982	6	13
[Opportunity Shop closing] (photographs and related documents) 1990	7	1
[Portrait of unidentified woman (negative),] undated	7	2
Annual board meeting at Jean Whalen's; Julia Wiley's at Krieha Cottage; [Christmas lunch after board meeting; Lunch with Judge Pine, (photographs)] 1984-1985, 1987-1988; 1986; 1980s; undated	7	3
Annual meeting (photographs) 1990	7	4
Nancy Robbins and Elsa Beach (photograph) October 1975	7	5
L. L. (Lavinia Lloyd) Dock Suffrage Parade (photograph) March 3, 1913	7	6
Video 1985		
	Box	Folder
TV ad, Saphor and Associates, 20 30 seconds, Opportunity Shop (3/4") May 1985	7	7
Artifacts undated		
	Box	Folder
[Commemorative ball point pen] undated	7	8

Artifacts

[Ribbon] undated	7	9
[Small bags, "Save Your Discard for the Opportunity Shop"] undated	7	10
[Canvas bag, "Save Your Waste for the Women's Educational and Industrial Union"] undated	7	11