

The Townsman Newspaper Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

Repository Identifier

mawelhs

Local Identifier

Not applicable

Name and Location of Repository

The Wellesley Historical Society

229 Washington Street

Wellesley, MA 02481

(781)235-6690

www.wellesleyhistoricalsociety.org

Title

The Townsman Newspaper Collection

Date

1906-2006 (Bulk 1906-1978)

Extent

26 Boxes of unbound issues, 49 Bound Volumes

Name of Creator

The Townsman

Administrative History

The Townsman, a weekly paper published in Wellesley Massachusetts, published its first issue on April 6, 1906. Originally published on Friday afternoons, it was devoted entirely to the town of Wellesley and its interests: religious, educational, political and social welfare. In the early years, the editor requested submissions for current news, lodge and club meeting notes, society events, and personals.

The Townsman was not the first newspaper to be published in Wellesley. *The Wellesley Courant* was published from 1883 until around the end of 1895, and *The Wellesley Review* was published from 1893 until about 1906. However, the precursor to *The Townsman*, was a modest monthly periodical, *Our Town*, which was first published January 1898. Originally focused on moral and religious problems and activities, it quickly broadened its scope to the discussion of all kinds of town issues. *Our Town* ran for six years, during which time it became increasingly evident that a weekly paper would be of great value to the community. However, by the end of 1903, with the dissolution of *Our Town*, a movement had been started in the Wellesley Club for the establishment of a local weekly paper. The matter was discussed, resulting in the following circular which was sent out to residents:

The Townsman Newspaper Collection Wellesley Historical Society

The Town of Wellesley needs a good weekly newspaper, directed by its townspeople and devoted wholly to the interest of the Town. The public welfare will in many ways be served by the establishment of such a publication, properly presenting the news and interests of the community. This can now be done if sufficient public interest is shown... We feel that this enterprise has in it the possibility of great value to the Town, and commend it to your careful consideration (*The Townsman*, vol. 1, no. 1).

The response to the circular was positive; however, arrangements could not be made at the time for a creation of a paper. The issue of a local paper was brought up again, and the Wellesley Publishing Company was formed. A circular was sent out to residents after the incorporation of the Wellesley Publishing Company stating “The Town of Wellesley is to have a weekly newspaper directed by its townspeople and devoted to the interests of the Town...the enterprise is regarded more in the nature of a public benefit than an enterprise for profit...” (*The Townsman*, vol. 1, no. 1). The company’s board included: Isaac Sprague-President, C.N. Taylor-Treasurer, George A. Sweetser-Clerk, J.W. Peabody and W.O. Robson-Directors, and John T. Ryan-Editor and Manager.

The Townsman continues to be published on a weekly basis, and is available in print and online.

Scope and Content

This collection contains the issues from *The Townsman*, beginning with the first issue April 6, 1906 through April 6, 2006, in unbound form; and from 1906-1978 in bound form. Every attempt has been made to keep the four best unbound copies; unfortunately, in many instances, four copies were not available. In some cases, entire years are missing in both bound and unbound form.

In addition to the regular issues, *The Townsman* published occasional supplements. These include the Servicemen’s Pictorial issues, which ran annually every spring from 1943-1945. Conceived by the editor, A. Edwin “Buck” Larson, it became an annual feature for the men and women in the armed forces. It was also the first such effort on the part of either a daily or weekly paper in the country (*The Townsman*, Feb. 23, 1945).

Other supplements published with the paper include: the Student Special which was published in the fall, and would become the Back to School insert; the Special Pictorial section which ran from March 3, 1939-March 31, 1939; Guide to Shopping published in May 16, 1957; “Buy in Wellesley” published May 17, 1967; “At the Playhouse” published December 11, 1968; the Newcomer’s Guide “Welcome to Wellesley”; “A Day in the Life of Wellesley”; Centennial Anniversary Issue” published April 2, 1981; “Official Guide to Wellesley’s Veterans Parade” published in October 14, 1990; “Town of Wellesley Net Valuation of Personal Property and Real Estate, and Tax Rate” published in January 9, 1992; “Celebrating 125 Years of Wellesley College” published in September 2000, “Let’s Make History: Wellesley at 120, the Townsman at 95” published in April 2001; and “Wellesley: Celebrating 125 Years, 1881-2006” published April 6, 2006.

The Townsman Newspaper Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

The collection also includes 56 reels of microfilm, covering the years 1906-1965.

System of Arrangement

The newspapers are organized chronically; the unbound issues are separated from the bound volumes.

Index Terms

Researchers searching for related materials about similar topics, people or places should search the Library of Congress' catalog using the following headings:

Newspapers—Local editions

Wellesley (Mass.)

Wellesley Hills (Mass.)

Wellesley Free Library

Robson, W. O.

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research purposes by appointment only. Please contact the Wellesley Historical Society for more information.

info@wellesleyhistoricalsociety.org

(781)235-6690

Physical Access

Some of the materials are fragile. The microfilm is currently inaccessible.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

Copyright restrictions may apply.

Languages and Scripts of the Material

English

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The majority of the collection does not have any acquisition information. A number of unbound issues are stamped "Wellesley Free Library"; however, only six of these stamped issues have accession information. In 1983, the Wellesley Free Library donated those six issues, from 1907 to 1915, to the Historical Society (1983.58). The following additional issues were donated to the Wellesley Historical Society: April 3, 1931 was donated by Agnes E. Dodge in May 1957 (D.4), May 24, 1956 was donated by Mrs. Hetty S. Wheeler on September 14, 1959 (W.28).

17 reels of microfilm covering issues from January 1908 to December 1924 were purchased by the Wellesley Historical Society on December 7, 1968 from an unnamed source (1968.101). An additional 39 reels of microfilm covering issues from April 6, 1906 to December 1965 were

The Townsman Newspaper Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

purchased by the Wellesley Historical Society on March 24, 1969 from another unnamed source (1969.18).

Accruals

The Wellesley Historical Society may add additional materials to the collection in the future; however, no further accruals are currently expected.

Existence and Location of Originals

Wellesley Historical Society

Related Materials

The Wellesley Free Library has digitized the entire collection from 1906-1989, which has been made available to the public at the following address:

<http://www.wellesleyfreelibrary.org/digitized-content.html>.

Description

DACS finding aid created February 2014 by Hilary Streifer

The Townsman Newspaper Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

Appendix: Box and Folder List

Box 1: April 1906-February 1907

Folder 1: April 1906
Folder 2: May 1906
Folder 3: June 1906
Folder 4: July 1906
Folder 5: August 1906
Folder 6: September 1906
Folder 7: October 1906
Folder 8: November 1906
Folder 9: December 1906
Folder 10: January 1907
Folder 11: February 1907

Box 2: March 1907-July 1907

Folder 1: March 1907
Folder 2: April 1907
Folder 3: May 1907
Folder 4: June 1907
Folder 5: July 1907

Box 3: August 1907-January 1908

Folder 1: August 1907
Folder 2: September 1907
Folder 3: October 1907
Folder 4: November 1907
Folder 5: December 1907
Folder 6: January 1908

Box 4: February 1908-June 1908

Folder 1: Townsman Sale Signs
Folder 2: February 1908
Folder 3: March 1908
Folder 4: April 1908
Folder 5: May 1908
Folder 6: June 1908

The Townsman Newspaper Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

Box 5: July 1908-November 1908

Folder 1: July 1908
Folder 2: August 1908
Folder 3: September 1908
Folder 4: October 1908
Folder 5 : November 1908

Box 6: December 1908-May 1909

Folder 1 : December 1908
Folder 2 : January 1909
Folder 3 : February 1909
Folder 4 : March 1909
Folder 5: April 1909
Folder 6: May 1909

Box 7: June 1909-October 1909

Folder 1 : June 1909
Folder 2 : July 1909
Folder 3 : August 1909
Folder 4: September 1909
Folder 5: October 1909

Box 8: November 1909-June 1910

Folder 1 : November 1909
Folder 2 : December 1909
Folder 3 : January 1910
Folder 4: February 1910
Folder 5 : March 1910
Folder 6 : April 1910
Folder 7 : May 1910
Folder 8 : June 1910

Box 9: July 1910-June 1911

Folder 1: July 1910
Folder 2: August 1910
Folder 3 : September 1910
Folder 4 : October 1910
Folder 5: November 1910

The Townsman Newspaper Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

Folder 6 : December 1910
Folder 7: January 1911
Folder 8 : February 1911
Folder 9: March 1911
Folder 10 : April 1911
Folder 11: May 1911
Folder 12: June 1911

Box 10: July 1911-April 1912

Folder 1 : July 1911
Folder 2: August 1911
Folder 3: September 1911
Folder 4: October 1911
Folder 5: November 1911
Folder 6 : December 1911
Folder 7: January 1912
Folder 8 : February 1912
Folder 9 : March 1912
Folder10 : April 1912

Box 11: May 1912-February 1913

Folder 1: May 1912
Folder 2 : June 1912
Folder 3 : July 1912
Folder 4 : August 1912
Folder 5: September 1912
Folder 6 : October 1912
Folder 7 : November 1912
Folder 8 : December 1912
Folder 9 : January 1913
Folder 10 : February 1913

Box 12: March 1913-August 1913

Folder 1 : March 1913
Folder 2: April 1913
Folder 3: May 1913
Folder 4 : June 1913
Folder 5 : July 1913
Folder 6 : August 1913

The Townsman Newspaper Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

Box 13: September 1913-March 1914

Folder 1: September 1913
Folder 2 : October 1913
Folder 3 : November 1913
Folder 4 : December 1913
Folder 5 : January 1914
Folder 6: February 1914
Folder 7 : March 1914

Box 14: April 1914-December 1914

Folder 1: April 1914
Folder 2: May 1914
Folder 3: June 1914
Folder 4: July 1914
Folder 5 : August 1914
Folder 6: September 1914
Folder 7: October 1914
Folder 8: November 1914
Folder 9: December 1914

Box 15: January 1915-July 1915

Folder 1: January 1915
Folder 2: February 1915
Folder 3: March 1915
Folder 4 : April 1915
Folder 5 : May 1915
Folder 6: June 1915
Folder 7 : July 1915

Box 16: August 1915-September 1916

Folder 1: August 1915
Folder 2: September 1915
Folder 3: October 1915
Folder 4: November 1915
Folder 5: December 1915
Folder 6: January 1916
Folder 7: March 1916
Folder 8: April 1916

The Townsman Newspaper Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

Folder 9: May 1916
Folder 10: June 1916
Folder 11: July 1916
Folder 12: August 1916
Folder 13: September 1916

Box 17: January 1917-August 1919

Folder 1: January 1917
Folder 2: February 1917
Folder 3: March 1917
Folder 4: April 1917
Folder 5: May 1917
Folder 6: June 1917
Folder 7: July 1917
Folder 8: December 1917
Folder 9: May 1918
Folder 10: June 1918
Folder 11: July 1918
Folder 12: August 1918
Folder 13: September 1918
Folder 14: October 1918
Folder 15: November 1918
Folder 16: December 1918
Folder 17: January 1919
Folder 18: February and March 1919
Folder 19: May 1919
Folder 20: June 1919
Folder 21: July 1919
Folder 22: August 1919

Box 18: September 1919-October 1922

Folder 1: September 1919
Folder 2: January and March 1920
Folder 3: January 1922
Folder 4: February 1922
Folder 5: March 1922
Folder 6: April 1922
Folder 7: May 1922
Folder 8: June 1922

The Townsman Newspaper Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

Folder 9: July 1922
Folder 10: August 1922
Folder 11: September 1922
Folder 12: October 1922

Box 19: November 1922-March 1923

Folder 1: November 1922
Folder 2: December 1922
Folder 3: February 1923
Folder 4: March 1923

Box 20: January 1924-November 1932

Folder 1: January 1924
Folder 2: June 1925
Folder 3: June 1926
Folder 4: February 1928
Folder 5: April 1928
Folder 6: May 1928
Folder 7: June 1928
Folder 8: September 1929
Folder 9: May 1930
Folder 10: July 1930
Folder 11: April 1931
Folder 12: April 1932
Folder 13: September 1932
Folder 14: October 1932
Folder 15: November 1932

Box 21: February 1933-December 1942

Folder 1: February 1933
Folder 2: December 1933
Folder 3: August 1934
Folder 4: September 1934
Folder 5: December 1934
Folder 6: December 1935
Folder 7: February 1936
Folder 8: March 1936
Folder 9: June 1936

The Townsman Newspaper Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

Folder 10: December 1936
Folder 11: June 1937
Folder 12: May 1938
Folder 13: June 1938
Folder 14: September 1938
Folder 15: March 1939
Folder 16: September 1939
Folder 17: September 1940
Folder 18: October 1940
Folder 19: February 1941
Folder 20: April 1941
Folder 21: May 1941
Folder 22: January 1942
Folder 23: October 1942
Folder 24: December 1942

Box 22: April 1943-August 1947

Folder 1: April 1943
Folder 2: April 1944
Folder 3: September 1944
Folder 4: February 1945
Folder 5: September 1945
Folder 6: December 1945
Folder 7: January 1946
Folder 8: April 1946
Folder 9: September 1946
Folder 10: October 1946
Folder 11: February 1947
Folder 12: March 1947
Folder 13: May 1947
Folder 14: August 1947

Box 23: May 1948-November 1955

Folder 1: May 1948
Folder 2: August 1948
Folder 3: December 1948
Folder 4: April 1949
Folder 5: October 1949
Folder 6: April 1950

The Townsman Newspaper Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

Folder 7: June 1950
Folder 8: June 1951
Folder 9: April 1952
Folder 10: September 1952
Folder 11: September 1953
Folder 12: November 1953
Folder 13: November 1955

Box 24: May 1956-July 1961

Folder 1: May 1956
Folder 2: May 1956
Folder 3: February 1957
Folder 4: March 1957
Folder 5: May 1957
Folder 6: January 1958
Folder 7: December 1958
Folder 8: August 1959
Folder 9: September 1959
Folder 10: June 1960
Folder 11: September 1960
Folder 12: January 1961
Folder 13: March 1961
Folder 14: July 1961

Box 25: August 1962-April 1986

Folder 1: August 1962
Folder 2: November 1962
Folder 3: May 1967
Folder 4: December 1968
Folder 5: December 1969
Folder 6: June 1970
Folder 7: August 1970
Folder 8: November 1970
Folder 9: December 1970
Folder 10: April 1974
Folder 11: February 1978
Folder 12: April 1981
Folder 13: April 1981
Folder 14: April 1986

The Townsman Newspaper Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

Box 26: July 1986-April 2006

Folder 1: July 1986
Folder 2: July 1987
Folder 3: June 1988
Folder 4: July 1988
Folder 5: July 1988
Folder 6: April 1989
Folder 7: October 1990
Folder 8: January 1992
Folder 9: October 1998
Folder 10: September 2000
Folder 11: April 2001
Folder 12: April 2006

Unbound

April 1906-March 1907
April 1907-March 1908
January 1925-December 1925
January 1926-December 1926
January 1927-December 1927
January 1928-December 1928
January 1929-December 1929
January 1930-December 1930
January 1931-December 1931
January 1932-December 1932
January 1933-December 1933
January 1934-December 1934
January 1935-December 1935
January 1936-December 1936
January 1937-December 1937
January 1938-December 1938
January 1939-December 1939
January 1940-December 1940
January 1941-December 1941
January 1942-December 1942
January 1943-December 1943
January 1945-December 1945
January 1946-December 1946
January 1947-December 1947
January 1949-December 1949

The Townsman Newspaper Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

January 1950-December 1950
January 1951-December 1951
January 1952-December 1952
January 1954-December 1954
January 1955-December 1955
January 1957-December 1957
January 1958-December 1958
January 1959-December 1959
January 1960-December 1960
January 1961-December 1961
January 1962-December 1962
January 1963-December 1963
January 1964-December 1964
January 1965-December 1965
January 1966-December 1966
January 1967-December 1967
January 1968-December 1968
January 1969-December 1969
January 1971-December 1971
January 1972-December 1972
January 1973-December 1973
January 1974-December 1974
January 1975-December 1975
January 1978-December 1978