

Maugus Club Collection  
Wellesley Historical Society

**Repository Identifier**

mawelhs

**Local Identifier**

2019.02

**Name and Location of Repository**

The Wellesley Historical Society

229 Washington Street

Wellesley, MA 02481

(781) 235-6690

[www.wellesleyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.wellesleyhistoricalsociety.org)

**Title**

Maugus Club Collection

**Date**

1892-1998, bulk 1896-1941

**Extent**

1.5 linear feet; 1 carton, plus Archives Oversize Materials

**Name of Creator**

The Maugus Club (Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts)

**Historical Note**

The Maugus Club is a non-profit, member-owned club in Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts, with its clubhouse located at 40 Abbott Road. The club is a social as well as a sports club, offering squash, badminton, and bowling. The facilities also include lounges and kitchen facilities. Social activities include dances and special events.

Established in 1892, the Maugus Club originated as a men's social, reading, and exercise club. The club was formed by a group of prominent men interested in providing social and recreational activities for their fellow townspeople. An early article about the club noted that the "Maugus Club seeks by means of bowling and other less vigorous forms of physical exercise to afford relaxation from business cares and to promote good fellowship among its members" (*Our Town*, May 1902, p. 57). The Bylaws note that the club was "established for the maintenance of places for social meetings, and reading rooms for the accommodation of social and charitable bodies, and for the encouragement of athletic exercises" (Bylaws, Section II).

While originally it was largely restricted to activities involving men, by the 1950s it had "developed into a family club ... practically all functions now provide for mixed participation" (*The New Maugus Club*, brochure, 1953). The first president of the club was Joseph E. Fiske, followed by Francis C. Hersey, Frank F. Baldwin, Gamaliel Bradford VI, John Edmunds, and Isaac Sprague.

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Charter members purchased the old Bemis Estate on Abbott Road in 1895 and completed renovations of the clubhouse for a “grand opening” on October 17, 1896; the club was legally incorporated that year. Before the Abbott Road clubhouse was built, “the Club rooms were in Putney’s Block [now the area near the gas station on Route 9 in Wellesley Hills], and consisted of a small hall, containing pool and card tables, and a reading room supplied with magazines and periodicals” (Maugus Theatricals program book, 1911). In the years prior to World War II, one of the main draws of the club were its annual theatricals, produced by members and staged in the “Maugus Playhouse” on the Club’s premises.

The original building was completely destroyed by a fire on April 12, 1953, with firefighters from five surrounding towns helping fight the blaze for almost eight hours. Preparations for a new building started immediately, and the present building was completed in 1956.

In addition to its own activities, the Maugus Clubhouse has long been the home of the Wellesley Hills Woman’s Club, their use of the facilities dating from 1896.

### **Scope and Content Note**

This collection contains a variety of materials relating to the activities of the Maugus Club. The bulk of the collection is in Series IV, which contains program books and other related materials pertaining to the Maugus Club Theatricals; an appendix lists all of the theatrical productions chronologically.

### **System of Arrangement**

The collection is organized into seven series, organized by type of material.

- I. Historical Documents; 1890s-1908
- II. Yearbooks, Member Lists, Bylaws; 1903-1915 and 1936-1970
- III. Programs, Events, Activities, 1893-1937
- IV. Theatricals, 1896-1941
- V. Miscellaneous Papers, 1953-1998
- VI. Blueprints, c.1912 [Archives Oversize Materials]
- VII. Photograph, c.1948 [Archives Oversize Materials]

### **Library of Congress Index Terms**

Amateur plays  
Amateur theater  
Athletic clubs  
Badminton (Game)  
Bowling  
Community theater  
Printed ephemera  
Private clubs  
Societies and clubs

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Sports clubs  
Squash (Game)  
Theater programs  
Wellesley (Mass.)  
Wellesley Hills (Mass.)

**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.

**Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use**

Copyright restrictions may apply.

**Languages and Scripts of the Material**

English

**Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Some materials from 2016.02, part of a diverse collection of materials

**Accruals**

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

**Related Materials**

Wellesley Hills Woman's Club (2017.39)

Photograph Collection: Clubs & Organizations: Maugus Club

Family Archives: Clubs & Organizations A-W: Maugus Club

**Description**

DACS-compliant Finding Aid created in April 2019 by Alden Ludlow. Processing of this collection was made possible through a grant from the Wellesley Community Preservation Committee.

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**Container List**

***I.* Historical Documents, c.1893, 1896, and 1908**

This series contains materials related to the founding of the Maugus Club. It includes a manuscript containing Section II of the bylaws, signed by the original shareholders and founders of the club from circa 1893. The series also includes the original Agreement of Association dating from 1896. The materials in this Series are extremely fragile, and care should be used when accessing the materials in Folder 1.

**Box 1**

Folder 1: Shareholders and Section II of Bylaws (manuscript), c.1893

Folder 2: Agreement of Association, 1896

Folder 3: Documents/Receipts, 1908

***II.* Yearbooks, Member Lists, Bylaws: 1903-1915 and 1936-1970**

This series contains a number of booklets produced by the club for members. Generally, they contain the listings of officers for the given year, the club's bylaws, and membership lists.

**Box 1**

Folder 4: 1903-1915

Folder 5: 1936-1970

***III.* Programs, Events, Activities: 1893-1937**

This series contains leaflets and program books relating to social activities held at the clubhouse.

**Box 1**

Folder 6: General, 1893-1937

Folder 7: Smoke Talks, 1903-1910

Folder 8: Art Exhibition Catalogue, 1903

***IV.* Theatricals**

This series contains program books from Maugus Club theatricals. Initially the club offered amateur entertainment and events, but by 1911 the theatricals were held annually and had taken on a more professional tone. The series includes a bound volume containing all of the program books from 1911-1941, at which point the War overshadowed the annual event, and it never came back to the prominence it once held. Some of the program books have tickets attached.

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**Box 1**

Folder 9: Flyers and Announcements, 1898 & 1905-1915  
Folder 10: Correspondence regarding collecting program books, 1947  
Folder 11: Program Books, 1896, 1897, and 1912-1919  
Folder 12: Program Books, 1920-1925  
Folder 13: Program Books, 1926-1930, 1933, and 1934  
Bound Volume: Program Books, 1911-1941

**V. Miscellaneous Papers, 1953-1998**

This series contains miscellaneous papers relating to the work of the Maugus Club. Most of the material is related to the club's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1993.

**Box 1**

Folder 14: Maugus Club 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (1993) "History" scrapbook  
Folder 15: Maugus Club 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (1993) scrapbook additional materials  
Folder 16: Miscellaneous papers, 1953-1998

**VI. Blueprints, c.1912**

This series contains a set of three blueprints (38x29cm) created c.1912 showing the "Addition and Alteration [plans for] the Maugus Clubhouse, Wellesley Hills, Mass." The plans were created by R.C. Spring, and include additional bowling alleys, as well as the addition of the 500-seat hall, which included a large stage for theatrical productions.

**Archives Oversize Materials Box 15 Folder 6**

Blueprints, c.1912

**VII. Photograph, c.1948**

This series contains one oversize (37.5x30cm) photograph, noted on the back, "Maugus Club Dance, c.1948."

**Archives Oversize Materials Box 15 Folder 7**

Photograph, c.1948

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**Appendix: Maugus Club Theatricals**

- 1896 *Lady Nancy* by Florence Atherton Spalding (performed in Wellesley Town Hall)  
1897 Mother Goose Market and Entertainment (at the Maugus Club House)

**Annual Theatricals began in 1911**

- 1911 *A Pair of Spectacles* by Sydney Grundy  
1912 *Lord and Lady Algy* by R. C. Carton  
1913 *Raffles* by E. W. Hornung and Eugene Presbrey  
1914 *The Commuters* by James Forbes  
1915 Three One Act plays:  
    *The Missing Card* by Ian Hay Beith  
    *Spreading the News* by Lady Gregory  
    *The Wolf and the Woman* by Vincent S. Lawrence  
1916 *The Jollies of 1916* and the *Maugus Minstrels*  
1917 *The Old Homestead* by Denman Thompson  
1918 *Seven Keys to Baldpate* by George M. Cohan (“First time on any amateur stage”)  
1919 *Over, Over There: A Barrage of Music and Merriment*  
1920 *It Pays to Advertise* by Roi Cooper Megrue and Walter Hackett  
1921 *The Leading Lady*, featuring Mr. Orrin C. Hart’s Maugus Orchestra  
1922 *Capt. Kidd Jr.* by Rida Johnson Young  
1923 *Hit the Trail Holliday* by George M. Cohan  
1924 *West is East* (“First and last time on any stage”)  
1925 *Nothing But the Truth* by James Montgomery  
1926 *Under Cover* by Roi Cooper Megrue  
1927 *The Show Off* by George Kelly  
1928 *The Rear Car* by Edward E. Rose  
1929 *Alias the Deacon* by John B. Hymer and LeRoy Clemens  
1930 *You and I* by Philip Barry  
1931 *The Haunted House* by Owen Davis  
1932 *The Alarm Clock* by Avery Hopwood  
1933 *Gold in the Hills, or Dead Sister’s Secret* by J. Frank Davis  
1934 *Remote Control* by Clyde North, Albert C. Fuller, and Jack Nelson  
1937 *Night of January 16<sup>th</sup>* by Ayn Rand  
1939 *Fly Away Home* by Dorothy Bennett and Irving White  
    *You Can’t Take It With You* by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman  
1940 *Sweeney Todd, The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* by George Dibdin Pitt  
1941 *The Ghost Train* by Arnold Ridley

A note in the front of the bound volume notes that “no plays were presented in 1935 and 1936” and that “between 1941 and 1944 *George Washington Slept Here* and *My Sister Eileen* were given in collaboration with the Wellesley Players Club.” No play was presented in 1938, though two were presented in 1939, in April and December.