

Wellesley Club Collection
Wellesley Historical Society

Repository Identifier

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Name and Location of Repository

The Wellesley Historical Society

229 Washington Street

Wellesley, MA 02481

(781) 235-6690

www.wellesleyhistoricalsociety.org

Title

Wellesley Club Collection, 1889 – 2015

Date

1889 – 2015

Extent

7 linear feet, 14 boxes

Name of Creator

Wellesley Club

Historical Note

Founded in 1889, the Wellesley Club is the first and oldest civic organization in the town; Wellesley separated from Needham in 1881. Wellesley Club describes itself as “a civic organization that was founded in 1889 soon after the Town of Wellesley, Massachusetts was established. The Club’s mission is to promote literary and social culture among its members, with a focus on discussions relating to the welfare of the Town of Wellesley.”

The club’s vision was to give the newly incorporated town of Wellesley unity, neighborliness, and common purpose. The bitter division from Needham in 1881 was followed by strife between three areas in the town, Wellesley Hills, Wellesley Village, and Wellesley Lower Falls. Local banker George Eliot Richardson proposed the club as a unifying project, conceived of as a social club, dinner club, and working community group. He based his vision on the Cambridge Club, of which he was a member.

The Wellesley Club adopted their constitution and bylaws on October 18, 1889, at a meeting at the United States Hotel, Boston. The club held their first official meeting on November 18, 1889, with 57 charter members. The plan was to meet monthly, before Town Meeting, to present unified community voice. In this way the club members sought to influence the direction of the town and functioned as a “shadow” Town Meeting. The club history notes, “Town Meetings (open to all adult male residents) were held frequently (considered a benefit back then), but the essential debates and decisions took place at the Wellesley Club. The actual Town Meetings

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were basically just a rubber stamp for what had been worked out the previous night over roast beef at the Copley Square or Westminster Hotels.”

The club initially capped membership at 100 men, but the number was expanded to 300 in 1994. The club was noted for having a waiting list of 100, and additionally a waiting list for the waiting list. Women were permitted to join the club beginning in 1988.

The club was instrumental in establishing the Town Improvement Board (1902), which addressed the issues of electric lighting, extension of the railroad system, the widening of the main roads, and the prohibiting the sale of alcohol in the town. The club also established the Wellesley Hospital Fund (1904). The club also was influential in establishing the first newspaper in town, *The Townsman*, first printed in April 1906.

Throughout its history the Wellesley Club has focused on improving the quality of life in Wellesley.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains materials documenting the activities of the Wellesley Club. A substantial portion of the collection contains meeting minutes and membership information, including lists of members and officers, as well as proposals for membership and general information on membership procedures. Other materials contained in the collection include correspondence, financial documents, programs for Wellesley Club events, newspaper clippings, photographs, and scrapbooks.

Index Terms

Wellesley (Mass.)

Wellesley Club (Wellesley, Mass.)

System of Arrangement

This collection is organized into nine series arranged by subject:

- I. Meeting Minutes; 1889 – 2015
- II. Membership; 1889 – 2015
- III. Financial Materials; 1900 – 2015
- IV. Correspondence; 1903 – 2015
- V. Constitution & Manual; 1887 – 1888, 1898, 1963, 1999, & undated
- VI. Events & Celebrations; 1891 – 2015
- VII. Press Releases & News Clippings; 1890 – 1996
- VIII. Photographs; 1989, 2001 – 2002, 2014, & undated
- IX. Scrapbooks, Ephemera, & Histories; 189 – 1913, 1964 – 1999, 2014, & undated

Conditions Governing Access

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

info@wellesleyhistoricalsociety.org

(781) 235-6690

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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

2015.07

The papers of the Wellesley Club from 1889 – 2008 were given as a long-term loan to the Wellesley Historical Society in 2008. The Wellesley Club board voted in May of 2015 to give the existing collection as a gift to the Wellesley Historical Society.

Accruals

Future accruals are expected and will be processed into the collection

Description

Processing of this collection was made possible through a grant from the Wellesley Community Preservation Committee.

The collection was originally processed in 2008 by Simmons College intern Natyra Pancsofar.

DACS Finding Aid created by Taylor C. Kalloch & Alden Ludlow in June 2018.

Bibliography

Wellesley Club. History. "The Wellesley Club Story." URL
<http://www.wellesleyclub.org/membership/history/>

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Container List

I. Meeting Minutes; 1889 – 2015

This series contains minutes from Wellesley Club meetings.

Box 1

- Folder 1: Minutes, Summary; 1889 – 1975
- Folder 2: Minutes, Town Improvement Board of the Wellesley Club; 1903 – 1960
- Folder 3: Minutes; 1889 – 1894
- Folder 4: Minutes; 1894 – 1904
- Folder 5: Minutes; 1904 – 1905
- Folder 6: Minutes; 1923 – 1932
- Folder 7: Minutes; 1932 – 1941

Box 2

- Folder 1: Minutes; 1941 – 1946
- Folder 2: Minutes; 1946 – 1953
- Folder 3: Minutes; 1948 – 1959
- Folder 4: Minutes; 1953 – 1957
- Folder 5: Minutes; 1962
- Folder 6: Minutes; 1963
- Folder 7: Minutes; 1964

Box 3

- Folder 1: Minutes; 1965
- Folder 2: Minutes; 1966
- Folder 3: Minutes; 1967
- Folder 4: Minutes; 1968
- Folder 5: Minutes; 1969
- Folder 6: Minutes; 1970
- Folder 7: Minutes; 1971
- Folder 8: Minutes; 1972
- Folder 9: Minutes; 1973
- Folder 10: Minutes; 1974
- Folder 11: Minutes; 1975
- Folder 12: Minutes; 1976
- Folder 13: Minutes; 1977
- Folder 14: Minutes; 1978
- Folder 15: Minutes; 1979
- Folder 16: Minutes; 1980 – 1981

Box 4

- Folder 1: Minutes; 1982 – 1984
- Folder 2: Minutes; 1985 – 1986
- Folder 3: Minutes; 1987 – 1989
- Folder 4: Minutes; 1990 – 1992

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Folder 5: Minutes; 1994 -1995
Folder 6: Minutes; 1996 – 2000
Folder 7: Minutes; 2001 – 2005
Folder 8: Minutes; 2006 – 2008
Folder 9: Minutes; 2008 – 2009
Folder 10: Minutes; 2009 – 2010
Folder 11: Minutes; 2010 – 2011
Folder 12: Minutes; 2011 – 2012
Folder 13: Minutes; 2012 – 2013
Folder 14: Minutes; 2013 – 2014
Folder 15: Minutes; 2014 – 2015
Folder 16: Minutes; undated

II. Membership; 1889 – 2015

This series contains list of club membership, including active and inactive members as well as membership waiting lists and the waiting list for the waiting list.

Archives Oversize Box 13

Folder 1: Map of Wellesley Club Membership; 1889

Box 14

Items: Inactive Members Cards

Box 5

Folder 1: Membership Lists; 1889 – 1919
Folder 2: Membership Lists; 1926 – 1935
Folder 3: Membership Lists; 1957
Folder 4: Membership Lists; 1962 – 1966
Folder 5: Membership Lists; 1971 – 1979
Folder 6: Membership Lists; 1980 – 1989
Folder 7: Membership Lists; 1990 – 1994
Folder 8: Membership Lists; 1995 – 2002
Folder 9: Membership Lists, Removed; bulk 1980s – 1994
Folder 10: Membership Lists; undated
Folder 11: Membership Reports; 2009 – 2010
Folder 12: Membership Reports; 2010 – 2011
Folder 13: Membership Reports; 2011 – 2012
Folder 14: Membership Reports; 2012 – 2013
Folder 15: Membership Reports; 2013 – 2014
Folder 16: Membership Reports; 2014 – 2015

Box 6

Folder 1: Officer Lists, Timelines; 1889 – 1965
Folder 2: Officer Lists; 1889 – 1995
Folder 3: Proposals for Membership, blank; undated

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- Folder 4: Proposals for Membership; 1960 – 1964
- Folder 5: Proposals for Membership; 1965 – 1969
- Folder 6: Proposals for Membership; 1970 – 1974
- Folder 7: Proposals for Membership; 1975 – 1979
- Folder 8: Proposals for Membership; 1980 – 1984
- Folder 9: Proposals for Membership; 1985 – 1989

III. Financial Materials; 1900 – 2015

This series contains financial records of the club. Included are statements, reports, receipts, and invoices.

Box 7

- Folder 1: Bank Statements; 1990 – 1991
- Folder 2: Bank Statements; 1992
- Folder 3: Bank Statements; 1993 – 1994
- Folder 4: Bank Statements; 1995 – 1996
- Folder 5: Financial Statements; 1989 – 1991
- Folder 6: Financial Statements; 1992 – 1994
- Folder 7: Financial Statements; 1995 – 1996
- Folder 8: Receipts; 1962 – 1996

Box 8

- Folder 1: Reports, Receipts, & Invoices; 2008 – 2009
- Folder 2: Reports, Receipts, & Invoices; 2009 – 2010
- Folder 3: Reports, Receipts, & Invoices; 2010 – 2011
- Folder 4: Reports, Receipts, & Invoices; 2011 – 2012
- Folder 5: Reports, Receipts, & Invoices; 2012 – 2013
- Folder 6: Reports, Receipts, & Invoices; 2013 – 2014
- Folder 7: Reports, Receipts, & Invoices; 2014 – 2015
- Folder 8: Reports, Receipts, & Invoices; undated
- Folder 9: Taxes; 1963 – 1965
- Folder 10: Treasurer's Report; 1962 – 1969
- Folder 11: Treasurer's Report; 1970 – 1979
- Folder 12: Treasurer's Report; 1980 – 1988
- Folder 13: Treasurer's Report; 1990 – 1995
- Folder 14: Treasurer's Report; 2000 – 2008

IV. Correspondence; 1903 – 2015

This series contains correspondence include both inter-club communications as well as correspondence between the club and outside organizations and individuals.

Box 9

- Folder 1: Correspondence: 1903 – 1959
- Folder 2: Correspondence: 1961 – 1962

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- Folder 3: Correspondence; 1963
- Folder 4: Correspondence; 1964
- Folder 5: Correspondence; 1965
- Folder 6: Correspondence; 1966 – 1969
- Folder 7: Correspondence; 1970 – 1979
- Folder 8: Correspondence; 1980 – 1989
- Folder 9: Correspondence; 1990 – 2005
- Folder 10: Correspondence; 2010 – 2015
- Folder 11: Correspondence; undated

V. Constitution & Manual; 1887 – 1888, 1898, 1963, 1999, & undated

This series contains copies of the club constitution, amendments, and club manuals. The most significant amendment included in this series is the amendment which allowed for the admission of women into the club.

Box 9

- Folder 12: Constitution & Amendments, Admission of Women to Wellesley Club; 1887 – 1888
- Folder 13: Constitution & Amendments; 1898, 1963, & undated
- Folder 14: Manual of the Wellesley Club; 1896 – 1999

VI. Events & Celebrations; 1891 – 2015

This series contains materials pertaining to club events and celebrations. Included are event programs as well as materials pertaining to the 75th, 100th, and 125th anniversary of the Wellesley Club.

Box 10

- Folder 1: 75th Anniversary; undated
- Folder 2: 125th Anniversary, Audio/Visual Materials; 2014
- Folder 3: 125th Anniversary, Award from Wellesley Celebration Committee; 2014
- Folder 4: 125th Anniversary, Printed Materials & Planning Documents; 2014
- Folder 5: Biographical Information on Speakers; undated
- Folder 6: Event Publicity; 1964 & undated
- Folder 7: List of Speakers; 2000 – 2013
- Folder 8: Programs; 1891 – 1899
- Folder 9: Programs; 1900 – 1909
- Folder 10: Programs; 1910 – 1919
- Folder 11: Programs; 1920 – 1929
- Folder 12: Programs; 1930 – 1931

Box 11

- Folder 1: Programs; 1940 – 1949
- Folder 2: Programs; 1950 – 1955
- Folder 3: Programs; 1956 – 1959

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Folder 4: Programs; 1960 – 1963
Folder 5: Programs; 1964
Folder 6: Programs; 1965 – 1969
Folder 7: Programs; 1970 – 1973
Folder 8: Programs; 1974
Folder 9: Programs; 1975 – 1977
Folder 10: Programs; 1978 – 1979

Box 12

Folder 1: Programs; 1980 – 1984
Folder 2: Programs; 1985 – 1988
Folder 3: Programs; 1989
Folder 4: Programs; 1990 – 1999
Folder 5: Programs; 2000 – 2010
Folder 6: Programs; 2011 – 2015
Folder 7: Speeches; 1894, 1949, 1964, & undated

Archives Oversize Box 13

Folder 2: 100th Anniversary; October 30, 1989

VII. Press Releases & News Clippings; 1890 – 1996

This series contains new clippings and press releases regarding the activities of the Wellesley club.

Box 12

Folder 8: News Clippings, Negatives; undated
Folder 9: News Clippings; 1890s
Folder 10: News Clippings; 1909 – 1910
Folder 11: News Clippings; 1911 – 1912
Folder 12: News Clippings; 1930 – 1957
Folder 13: News Clippings; 1962 – 1969
Folder 14: News Clippings; 1971 – 1975
Folder 15: News Clippings; 1981 – 1996
Folder 16: News Clippings; undated
Folder 17: Press Releases; 1939 – 1979

VIII. Photographs; 1989, 2001 – 2002, 2014, & undated

This series contains photographs of events and members of the Wellesley Club.

Box 12

Folder 18: Photographs, Centennial Celebration; 1989
Folder 19: Photographs, Founders; undated
Folder 20: Photographs, Half-Tone Screened, created in 2014
Folder 21: Photographs; Officers; 2001 – 2002

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IX. Scrapbooks, Ephemera, & Histories; 1889 – 1913, 1964 – 1999, 2014, & undated

This series contains scrapbooks, ephemera, and histories written about the club. The bulk of the series is comprised of scrapbooks.

Box 13

- Folder 1: Awards No Longer Awarded; 2014
- Folder 2: Ephemera; bulk undated
- Folder 3: History of the Wellesley Club; 1964 – 1999
- Folder 4: Poetry; 1974 & undated
- Folder 5: Scrapbook; 1889 – 1903
- Folder 6: Scrapbook; 1902 – 1913

Archives Oversize Box 13

- Folder 3: Illustrations & Posters; 1981 & undated
- Item 1: Scrapbook; 1889 – 1901

Archives Oversize Box 14

- Item 1: Scrapbook; 1896 – 1912