

S0496 Musical Research Club Records, 1912-1984 4 Rolls Of Microfilm

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Twelve women of University City who wanted more knowledge of music and to share this knowledge and their talents with one another organized the Musical Research Club in 1912.

Vera Schlueter, one of the organizers, had an accomplished career as a pianist. Vera not only studied with renown teachers in the United States, but also traveled in Europe to further her musical education. The club elected her president and thereafter she compiled its study program. It met in the homes of the members. In 1915 the group of twelve joined the National and Missouri Federation of Music Clubs.

In 1917 the group moved to the Ballwin Music Hall. After the start of the First World War, the group extended its talents in helping musically and physically in all branches of the service. At Navy, Marine and Army clubs, members helped sell War Bonds and did Red Cross work. One member drove an ambulance to take wounded from the train to Jefferson Barracks Hospital.

In 1920 the members moved to Vandervoort's Auditorium because the membership had grown to 64. This same year it formed a chorus and performed for other organizations. It held one choral performance at the Old Planters Hotel.

1922 saw another first: the singing of Christmas Carols by small groups, the first of these groups sang at the Claridge Hotel. This custom was carried on for many years. The Ensemble was chosen to sing at Scruggs Tea Room with the Veiled Prophet Queen and her Court. Another innovation was an Evening Valentine party and program given at the Claridge Hotel.

1924: MRC was invited to give weekly programs over KSD and KMOX radio stations. Many members participated.

1925: The first reciprocal club meeting was exchanged with other clubs in the city. The clubs did not have names and did not record the events. The members eventually returned to meeting in the members' homes for an unknown reason.

1926: The first Sacred program was given at the Curly Memorial Church. First time for the MRC to host the MFMC Convention. This event took place at the Coronado Hotel. An elaborate operetta was performed, "The Japanese Girl." This was performed at the Congress Hotel.

1928-1929: Meetings moved to the Town Club, on Locust Street. Federation Day was established and the "MRC Junior" organized, with MRC playing the part of the Mother Organization. Membership grew to 122. Philanthropic work was added, taking musical

programs to Rest Homes, supplying toys to under privileged children.

1931: The big project was buying out the Orphium Theatre to make money to entertain the MFMC Convention PLUS to send a young girl to New York to study voice.

1933: Another change of meeting place, this time top the Chase Hotel. The room was located just above the coal delivery chute. Many programs were interrupted by the noisy delivery of coal. The interesting thing was that the meetings started at 2:00 with the "events of the day," then "announcements," Symphony study," then the program. Tea was served at 3:45. Hostesses who served tea paid \$2.50 for the privilege. A spring concert was given at the Art Museum. Card parties were held to make money for philanthropic work. The tickets cost 50 cents. Some of the parties were held in members' homes.

1935: The Musical Research Ensemble was formed by Olive Bischoff. It gave an elaborate Evening Valentine Party and program at the Chase Hotel. This was done in costume. An exchange program with the Jefferson City Club was established. The Sacred programs were held at Delmar Baptist Church. Frolics were held, mostly at Grace Lockwood's home, with a picnic. Silver Teas were held in members' homes.

1937: An evening spring concert was given in the Assembly Hall of Keil Auditorium. since this was the 25th Anniversary of MRC an interesting luncheon and program was given at the club's new home, the Wednesday Club, on Westminster Place. In celebration, the Kister Photographic Studio presented to the club a book containing photographs of all the members.

1938-1939: Several outstanding programs were presented: "The Wonderful Weaver," written and directed by Olive Bischoff, given in the auditorium of the Wednesday Club. Another was "The Show Boast," also written by Mrs. Bischoff, the guest of honor at this performance was Captain Menke of the original Golden Rod Show Boat. Guests included three french girls from St. Genevieve, members' husbands and children also appeared in this show. A piano duo section was organized in this year. The chorus and ensemble were invited to perform at the MFMC Convention in Sedalia. Two scholarships were presented to students of the Community Music School. The club came home from the Convention with 100% for National Club rating, an honor won several years in a row. Membership 116, average attendance 98.

1940-1941: Vesper service, "The Christ Child" was presented, Valentine Party, Chase Hotel, Lenten Vesper services at St. Peter's Evangelical Church. A Program for Monday club of Webster Groves, Spring concert at Wednesday Club. The club contributed cookies, sheet music, records, books, etc., for the USO. Also furnished a room at Jefferson Barracks. Membership 160. The Sunday that "The Christ Child" was presented at the Delmar Baptist church was the Sunday the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and the performers were under great duress. MRC members helped at the Red Cross. Once a week members went to Jefferson Barracks to try music therapy on the patients. This was something new recommended by the National Federation on Music Clubs. A Theatre party was given for the Scholarship Fund, and it was a sell out. The Anna Agris School of the Dance presented some students from the school, and Agris joined the MRC. Leslie Parnas, world famous cellist, who was a recipient of our scholarship fund was also a guest in this year.

1944-1945: An opera program was given with very large attendance at this program honored the club with the attendance of the State President and 14 State Board Members. Other guests of the club included a Girl Scout group, String Ensemble from the St. Louis Institute of Music, the Police Quartet, and Malcolm Grager. The spring luncheon was at the DeSoto Hotel at which time "The Moth and the Flame" was presented. Attendance 276.

1946-1947: Theme in 1946 was "Stirring Events in American Music" which proved most challenging and most interesting. By this date the membership was 176. Attendance at the spring luncheon was 360. This same year a card party was given in Stix Auditorium for the Scholarship Fund. Tickets were again 50 cents and \$351 was raised. Many young artists have been assisted by the MRC, among them was Leslie Parnas and Malcolm Frager who have gone on to international fame. Membership was at 190. 1947 the Board honored Elizabeth Stellwagen by naming a scholarship fund in her honor, and the Board agreed. Elizabeth felt greatly honored and she carried on in the chairmanship for many years. This same year the program method was instituted--that of a continued chief subject for the year and each program developing some phase of that theme. This has been continued, making the programs educational and more interesting. This idea received written compliments from both the National and Missouri Federation of Music Clubs. An outstanding guest was Stanley Chappel, conductor of the Little Symphony and the Philharmonic Symphony.

1948-1949: In this time many activities took place, one such was the MRC was host at a luncheon at the Statler Hotel for the President of the National Federation of Music Clubs plus board members and club presidents from all over the United States who stopped here on their way to the National Convention in Texas. The theme for 1948 was "Music Flows Through Life Like a River." It was a musical history of the countries through which famous rivers of the world flowed. Guests in these two years included Howard Kelsey, an outstanding organist of St. Louis, and the boys' ensemble from Southwest High School.

1950-1951: Two more outstanding programs were Menottis Opera "The Telephone" and a costume program "Ladies of the White House."

The club sent music packages overseas for the International project of NFMC.

1950-1951: A great blow came to the club when it had to leave the Wednesday Club as the club home. It was such an ideal spot and everyone loved the facilities. The group met in Scruggs Auditorium and had tea in the dining room. An outstanding program by Mrs. Oscar Brauer was the story of the Oberamergau Passion Play presented with colored slides and our members performing appropriate music. A collection of musical data was contributed to the Missouri Historical Society. Exchange programs with other clubs of the District and State were on our agenda. Music was contributed to the USO at the Soldiers Memorial.

1951-1953: Theme - "Music :the Ambassador of Peace on the Roads of the World." This theme merited a letter of gratitude from Mr. Azevedok, Music Director of UNESCO of Paris France. Publicity-1,242 lines, 26 headlines and 2 pictures. 2,000 lines, 8 pictures. Once a year the club had a program devoted to Young Artists, worthy students from the St. Louis area. It gave each one five dollars.

1954-1956: An innovation for the Club, a series of club sponsored Radio programs over

station KFUE, these were four 15 minute programs featuring MRC. Many members participated. Another new feature presented was a Religious Art Program presented by the Rhythmic Choir of Dancing at the Church of the Open Door of Webster Groves. Another innovation was a program and tea at the Art Museum. A costumed Christmas program called "Christmas in Other Lands" was presented. This was chosen by the National Federation of Music Clubs as the outstanding program of the year.

1957-1960: An outstanding program was given by natives, in costume, from Liberia, Ghana, Egypt, Kuwait the State. 21 new members were admitted. The club had 10 members serving on the State board. Mrs. John Mueller was State President and Mrs. Norman R. Brice was Executive Vice President NFMC. In 1960 the club received 12 new members.

1961-1964: In 1962 the club celebrated its Golden Anniversary with a luncheon and program at Sunset Country Club several charter members were present for this celebration. This year it received 10 new members. The club has been honored by having 10 members chosen as the 4th District President. In 1962 the Club obtained a charter for the Past President's Assembly of NFMC. This same year the club came home from the State Convention with most of the top honors of the Federation. The Frolic this season was "Hello, St. Louis, Hello." This was given in commemoration of the bicentennial of St. Louis.

1965-1968: The opening teas were in the home of Mrs. Stuart Chambers for many years, but in 1965 the club held the tea in the home of Jewell Duke, where it spilled over to the lovely garden. This same year Mrs. Oscar P. Brauer, Chairman of "American Music" won the National Service Award for her outstanding report on the Federated Music Clubs of Missouri. The group began using new members as performers at our opening tea. This was continued for many years. The club again had to find a new home which turned out to be the Masonic Hall in Clayton. This was not too conducive to really paying attention to the programs, as members had to sit along the sides of the room facing one another. In 1967 the opening tea was again at Mrs. Chambers' home. one outstanding program was "Songs You Forgot to Remember." This year 12,568 hours in philanthropic work was given by club members. In 1968 the theme was "Women Behind Great Composers." Frances Smith and her sister Lucille Gewinner gave a most interesting book review and program on Robert and Clara Schumann. This year 19,667 hours were given for philanthropic work. Members were saddened by the death of Elizabeth Stellwagen, who had given so much to the club. This same year the Creative Art Section got busy and made \$197 for the club so that the dues would not be raised.

1969-1972: A program was presented in the memory of Elizabeth Stellwagen, thus began the club's "Elizabeth Stellwagen Scholarship Day." Again the group had to move, now the new home was The Church of the Holy Communion. It had access to a pipe organ that added much to Christmas and Lenten programs. It also had room for teas, the use of a silver service and someone to do the dishes. Again sadness came to the club. It lost seven outstanding members: Olive Bischoff, Addie O'Brien, Mary Cecilia Eyermann, Ethel Franz, Kitty LaMertha, Mrs. C. Pflanze and Mrs. Cayce. In 1971 guests of the club included the Cardinal Glennon College Glee Club and Mr. Jack A. Sparks of Washington University who performed on a beautiful handmade harpsichord. The group also was saddened by the death of its past President, Mrs. Roger "Beulah" Walwark.

1973-1976: In 1973 we contributed \$500 to the McClure High School Symphonic Band to help defray their expenses for a trip to Vienna Austria to participate in a Festival. The group also lost five more members: Mrs. Jesse Diamond, Doyne Neal, Grace Lockwood, Olivia Marting, and Lavina Mueller, another of the past presidents. Another interesting program was "Why Didn't you Tell me Opera Was so Much Fun." also, "Cheer up Christmas is Coming." At the opening tea the guest performers belonged to the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra. The Frolic was "Campaign of '75" written and directed by Mrs. Walter B. Franz (Nina). In 1975 the theme for the year was "A Bicentennial Festival." "America the Beautiful" was presented by Mrs. Brice with slides and appropriate live music. Again several members from the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra performed at our opening tea. The club members took an interesting symphony "Tour of Distinction" visiting old landmarks in the City of St. Louis. Two members died: Mrs. E. Kuhne and Mrs. Paul K. Pratte, who wrote and directed many of our outstanding programs. In 1977 the group lost five more members: Mrs. Mary Hamilton, Mrs. E. Sindelar, Mrs. E. Nan Bauer, Florence Luther and Mrs. G. Marting.

The Musical Research Club received a bequest of \$25,000 to be used for scholarships from the estate of the late Hilda E. Stroh. The Hilda E. Stroh Music Foundation was set up as a separate organization to administer the fund. This Foundation holds its own audition and the club received credit for the scholarships.

1977-1980: In 1977 the group moved the opening tea to the Church of the Holy Communion. Another Symphony Tour of Distinction was on its agenda. This time it visited historic homes. Once more it was sad at the loss of one of its members, Mrs. Ollie Babcock (Helen). New innovation for the opening tea, winners of the Hilda E. Stroh Scholarship performed; it still carries on this practice. Six hundred dollars was presented to the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra for expenses for their two concert tours of Vienna and England. Now it lost four valuable members: Mrs. Blanche Burnett, Mrs. F. Jungbluth, Mrs. Brice Smith (the sister of Mitzie Enloe and Lucille Gewinner) and Mrs. Pauline Wiegand. In 1979-1980 the theme was "Come to the Fair" to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the St. Louis World's Fair. The club took a bus tour to restored Kimmswick, Missouri. In this same year the club received a bequest of \$475 from the estate of Mr. Edward Hamilton in memory of his wife Mary Hamilton. This money was to be placed in the Elizabeth Stellwagen Scholarship fund. Again the loss of three devoted members: Marguerite Frederich, Marie Dunlap, and Mrs. Tieman. The 1980 theme was "One Hundred Years of Our St. Louis Symphony." The Hilda E. Stroh fund presented grants to nine outstanding applicants. Again it lost four members: Alma Blume, Hazel Fesler, who served the club long and faithfully, Mabel Hartt, Evelyn Gough's mother, and Mrs. A. Schulte.

1981-1982: President Mrs. Ed Collins (Virginia) found it necessary to resign due to severe illness. In true MRC tradition, Mrs. Ernest L. Keathley (Laura) stepped in to fill Mrs. Collins' unexpired term. The loss again of two faithful members: Mrs. J. Marguerite Niemoiller and Mrs. George Gebhart, who served as the treasurer of MRC.

At one time in its history the Musical Research Club almost reached the three hundred mark, with an average attendance of 259. It had nine different homes in 70 years. Its last innovation was the recognition of gentlemen members by making them Honorary Members, and they attend every meeting.

Since 1946 the MRC has given to scholarships and philanthropic projects the amount of \$26,046.24.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Musical Research Club Records gives the researcher a good look at the club's activities from its inception to the early 1980s. The photographs of members and activities are a valuable resource. There are also many awards, programs and newsletters which further chart the club's activities. Most of the scrapbooks contain a section of newspaper clippings on individual members. These show the researcher how individuals furthered the work of the Club as a whole. In addition, this collection includes information concerning not only the local chapter but also the state Federation of Music Clubs and the National Federation of Music Clubs.

The scrapbooks contain information on the topics the Club researched, but the information is limited because it does not contain the research, only programs. There is also some information concerning philanthropic pursuits the Club engaged in. The overall information contained within this collection, however, is very limited.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series 1, Photographs: This series consists of group photographs taken in the early history of the Musical Research Club. They range from 1910 to 1947. Folder 1.

Series 2, Microfilm: This series contains copies of the Musical Research Club's scrapbooks. In the scrapbooks, the research can find programs, photographs, newsclippings, achievement records, and awards for the years 1912 to 1983. Rolls 1 through 4.

FOLDER LISTING

Series 1: Photographs

- 1. 496.1: Musical Research Club, c. 1912 (one 5.5x6.5 Browntone Photo on card)
- 496.2: Musical Research club, c. 1910 (one 8x10 Browntone photo on card),
- 496.3 MRC, nd (one 3.5x4.5 Browntone print)
- 496.4: MRC, nd (one 8x10 BW print)
- 496.5: Elvira Diamond, nd (one 8x10 Bw print)
- 496.6: MRC, Neosho, MO, 1939 (one 8x10 BW print)
- 496.7: MRC Frolic, 1949 (one 8x10 BW print)

Series 2: Microfilm

Roll 1: Volume 1 through Volume 6

Vol. 1: Newsclippings and Photographs, 1912-1945

Vol. 2: Newsclippings and Programs, 1915-1930

Vol. 3: Newsclippings, programs and photographs, 1933-1937

Vol. 4: Photographs of past members for Silver Anniversary (1937-1938), 1912-1939

Vol. 5: Newsclippings and Photographs, 1940-1941

Vol. 6: Newsclippings and programs, 1948-1949

Roll 2: Volume 7 through Volume 11

Vol. 7: Newsclippings and programs, 1949-1952

Vol. 8: Newsclippings, programs and photographs, 1954-1955

Vol. 9: Newsclippings, programs and photographs, 1956-1957

Vol. 10: Newsclippings, programs and annual and committee report figures, 1958-1959

Vol. 11: Programs and photographs, 1965-1966

Roll 3: Volume 12 through Volume 16

Vol. 12: Newsclippings, programs and photographs, 1966-1967

Vol. 13: Newsclippings, programs and photographs, 1967-1968

Vol. 14: Newsclippings, programs and photographs, 1973-1974

Vol. 15: Achievement record: awards, programs and photographs, 1974-1975

Vol. 16: Achievement record: awards, programs and photographs, 1977-1978

Roll 4: Volume 17 through Volume 20

Vol. 17: Achievement record: awards, programs and photographs, 1978-1979

Vol. 18: Achievement record: newsclippings, awards, programs and photographs, 1979-1980

Vol. 19: Achievement record: newsclippings, awards, programs and photographs, 1980-1981

Vol. 20: Achievement record: newsclippings, awards, programs and photographs, 1982-1983

Records Center Storage

The original scrapbooks are stored at the records center as follows:

Box 1: Volumes 1-2, 4-6 034819

Box 2: Volumes 7-10 034820

Box 3: Volumes 11-15 034821

Box 4: Volumes 16-20 034822

Volume 3 is oversize and is located on site on the Oversize Shelf.

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