

# WOMEN'S COLLEGE CLUB OF PRINCETON

*ENRICHING AND EMPOWERING WOMEN  
SINCE 1916*





# CONTENTS

**Home**

**Women's clubs**

**Education for women**

**"The question of suffrage"**

**Founding of the College Club**

**Who were the founders?**

**Miss Fine's School**

**Colleges and costs**

**50th anniversary**

**Promoting women's education**

**Scholarships**

**Fundraising**

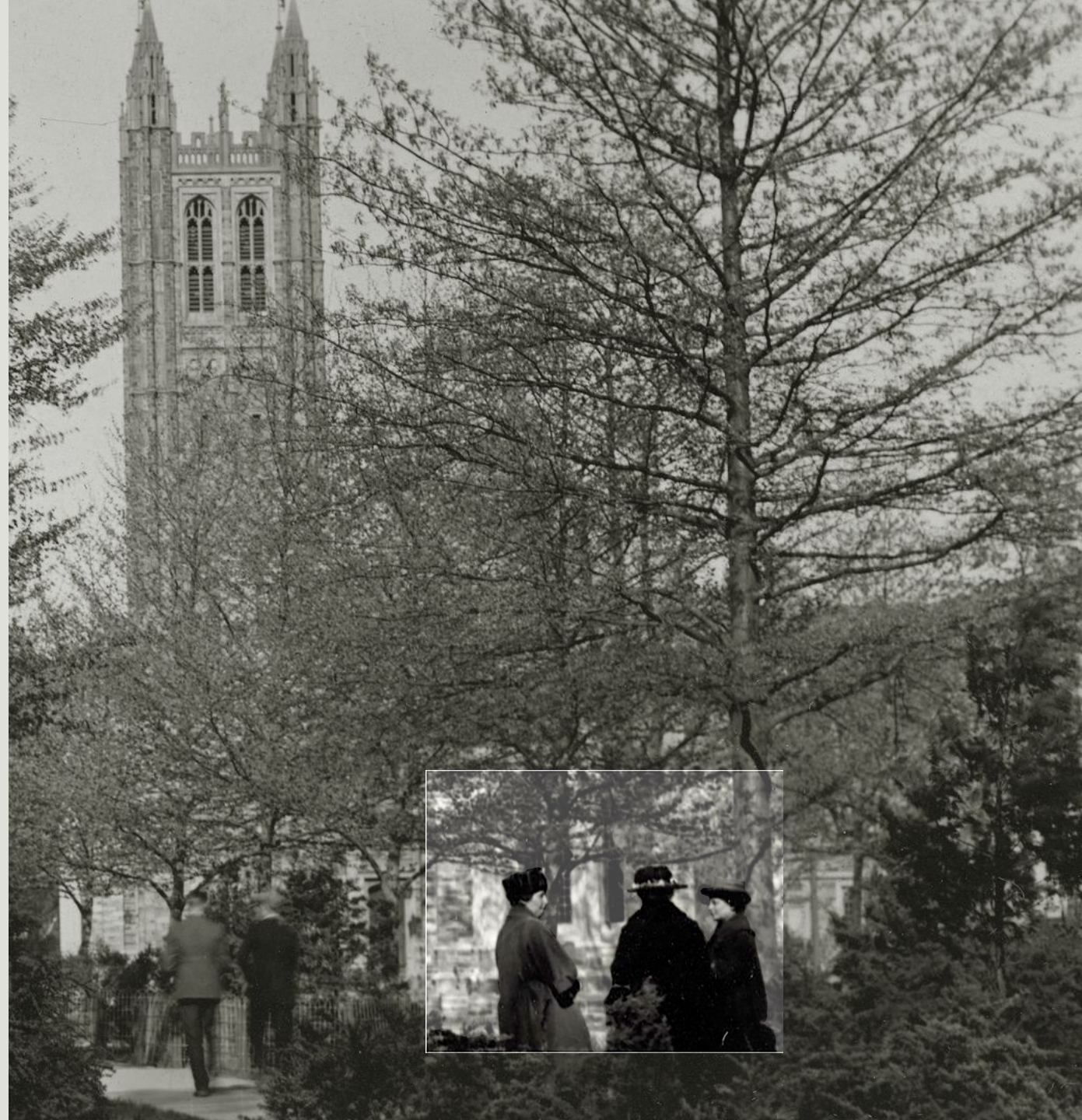
**"Friendly fellowship"**

**Timeline**

**Archives**

**Links**

Women talking in front of Holder Hall  
on Nassau Street, 1920s ([source](#))





In January 1916 a number of college-educated women met in Princeton High School on Nassau Street to found the Women's College Club of Princeton. The WCCP's purpose was threefold: collect information about colleges open to women, raise funds for local girls to enable them to go to college, and "foster friendly fellowship" among college women in Princeton. In this exhibit we look at the women who founded the club and the way they accomplished their goals over the years.

## WOMEN'S CLUBS

The WCCP was the second women's club in town. The first was the Present Day Club, founded in 1899, to "create an intellectual and social center of thought and action." Since the 1870s women increasingly socialized in clubs that fostered intellectual growth, community involvement, and social reform.



*Catherine Warren in front of her house on Library Street (source)*

In 1890 the General Federation of Women's Clubs was established in New York to share experiences and resources. Four years later the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs (NJSFWC) was founded in New Brunswick.

In 1911, Catherine Carter Warren, president of the Present Day Club (who joined the WCCP in 1920), was elected president of the NJSFWC.

## EDUCATION FOR WOMEN

The NJSFWC became the driving force behind the founding of the New Jersey College for Women in New Brunswick, where Rutgers College only had male students. Led by its first Dean, Mabel Smith Douglass, the college opened its doors in September 1918 for 54 female students. On December 7, Mabel Douglass visited the members of the Women's College Club in Princeton to share her experiences and ideals about the new college, which would later be named after her.



*New Jersey College for Women laboratory (source)*



## "THE QUESTION OF SUFFRAGE"

United in their support for women's education, members of the WCCP did not all share the same views about women voting. Home town of prominent pro- and anti-suffragists, as well as of Woodrow Wilson, Princeton played an interesting role in the struggle for women suffrage. On February 13, 1913, a group of suffragettes, marching from New York to Washington DC to attend a rally on the day before Wilson's inauguration

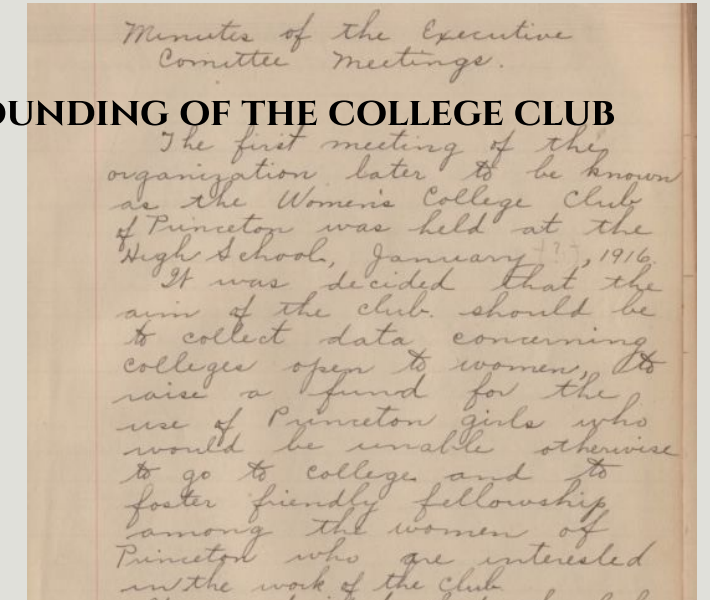


as president, stopped by on campus. When students clamored for a speech, "Colonel" Ida Craft yelled: "There's only one thing I have against Princeton... It isn't co-educational. You ought to have girls like Cornell!" (Read more).

In the fall of 1915, when equal suffrage was on the New Jersey ballot, eyes were on Princeton again. "Woman suffrage sentiment is rapidly growing in Princeton," Edith McComas, secretary of the newly founded Princeton Suffrage Committee, wrote to the *Trenton Evening News* in July. Of the 69 committee members she listed, 18 would join the WCCP half a year later. (highlighted on the list). One of the founding members of the WCCP held completely opposite views: Frances Folsom Cleveland Preston, vice-president of the New Jersey Association Opposed to Woman's Suffrage. The views of the remaining 30 founding members who are identified in the next pages are unknown.

Left: Suffragettes visiting the University campus, Feb 13, 1913 (source)

## FOUNDING OF THE COLLEGE CLUB



First minutes (View minute books 1916-19)

Although Woodrow Wilson, who was opposed to a federal amendment, did cast a historic vote for equal suffrage "as a citizen of New Jersey" on October 19, 1915, the New Jersey referendum was defeated. Three months later the Women's College Club was founded, listing 22 women, each representing a different alma mater, as members of the executive committee (view the list in the minutes).





*Gertrude Purves and May Fine (source, p 6)*

## WHO WERE THE FOUNDERS?

It was not until 1936 that membership lists included first and maiden names. Finding the full names of the founding members led to a few surprises. Not only was President Cleveland's anti-suffragist widow on the list, it also contained Bryn Mawr professor Mary (Mamie) Gwinn Hodder, whose love triangle was fictionalized in one of Gertrude Stein's novels. The women include May Margaret Fine, the pro-suffragist founder of Miss Fine's school and some of her teachers,

as well as a woman (Martha Irwin) who adopted two children, before marrying a man almost 20 years younger. In the columns on the right only members who were found in the minute books for the first four years are listed, organized by college affiliation. Names that are highlighted have a short bio, which can be read by clicking on the names.

The majority of women were spouses of faculty members of Princeton University, and to a lesser degree the Princeton

Theological Seminary. Unmarried members, indicated as "Miss," were usually teachers, or social workers, who worked for charity, government, or community organizations, like Elinor Purves, longtime director of Dorothea's House.



*Mary (Mamie) Gwinn, Bryn Mawr (source)*

## BARNARD, BRYN MAWR, MT HOLYOKE, RADCLIFFE

### Beggs Frances May Ingalls

(Mrs. George E. Beggs), Barnard

### Hodder, Mary Gwinn

(Mrs. Alfred Hodder), Bryn Mawr

### Irwin, Martha E.

(Mrs. Ralph M. Sheddan 1920), Bryn Mawr

### Scoon, Elizabeth Grier Hibben

(Mrs. Robert Scoon), Bryn Mawr

### Smith, Margaret Warner

(Mrs. Donald P. Smith), Bryn Mawr

### Prentiss, Lucy A. Stearns,

(Mrs Lory Prentiss), Mt. Holyoke

### Smith, Dorothea E., Radcliffe

## SMITH COLLEGE

### Armstrong, Rebekah Sellers Purves

(Mrs. W.P. Armstrong)

### Croll, Elsie L.

### Duffield, Elizabeth

### Hun, Lesley Crawford

(Mrs. John Hun)

### Morse, Ruth Estabrook Tucker

(Mrs. Anson Ely Morse)

### Purves, Elinor

### Purves, Gertrude

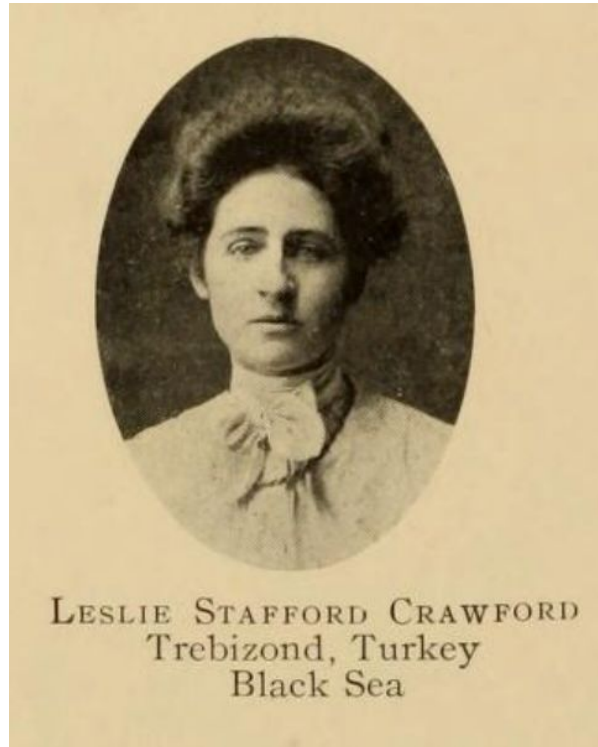
### Stevenson, Florence Day

(Mrs. J. Rosh Stevenson)

### Winans, Mary

(Mrs. Ario Pardee )





Lesley Crawford Hun (1881-1964) was born in İzmir, Turkey, where her parents were missionaries. After graduating from Andover Academy in Andover, MA, she went to Smith College, from which she graduated in 1904. In 1906 she married John Gale Hun, member of the faculty of the Princeton University mathematics department, who founded the Princeton Mathematics School in 1914, the present Hun School in Princeton.





Frances May Ingalls,  
153 West 80th Street,  
New York City



“I came to my senses and learned by  
experience the truth I had long read  
before in books—that youth and pleas-  
ure are vanity.”

Frances May Ingalls Beggs (1887-1982) graduated from Barnard in 1909. She married George Erie Beggs, professor of Engineering at Princeton University, and had one son. She joined the Princeton Suffrage Committee in 1915 and the WCCP in 1916, where she was a member of the executive committee and president in 1917-18 and 1933-35. A widow since 1939, she became executive assistant of the President of Wellesley College in 1947 and retired in 1954. During the Club's 50th anniversary she was one of the three charter members who were still alive.

*Left: yearbook photo of the Barnard Class of 1909*



Mary "Mamie" Gwinn Hodder (1860–1940) was a professor of English at Bryn Mawr faculty, where she had obtained a doctoral degree in 1888. She was one of the founders of the college prep school Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore in 1885, and ensured that women were allowed to study medicine at Johns Hopkins University, where her father was a member of the faculty. She was the romantic partner of Martha Carey Thomas, dean and president of the college, with whom she lived until she married fellow professor and novelist Alfred Hodder in 1904 and moved to New York. The love triangle was fictionalized in Gertrude Stein's short novel *Fernhurst* in 1905. After he died in 1907, Mary Gwinn Hodder moved to Princeton where she worked on a translation of *Beowulf*. She bequeathed her fortune to Princeton University, which holds the Mary Gwinn and Alfred Hodder papers. Mary Hodder was a member of the WCCP until she died (Source).





Elinor Purves, 1904  
*Bryn Mawr Yearbook*



Gertrude at Miss Fine  
*School group photo, 1918*

Elinor Purves (1882-1952) and her sister Gertrude (1891-1946) were the oldest and youngest daughter of Rev. George T. Purves, professor at the Princeton Theological Seminary and his wife Rebekah. During their professional career they lived together in Princeton.

Elinor graduated from Bryn Mawr in 1904. After teaching at Miss Fine's school for five years, Elinor became the head of Dorothea's House, a settlement for Italians in Princeton, endowed in memory of Dorothea van Dyke. Only Elinor signed up for the Princeton Suffrage Committee, where she was listed as a social worker. She became chief officer at Dorothea's House until 1950 and devoted herself to church and community work.

Gertrude graduated from Bryn Mawr in 1914. She joined the faculty of Miss Fine's School in 1916, and from 1931 was head of the Lower School, which she remained until her death in 1946. Because of her wish to establish a library at the department that she headed, a memorial fund was established for this purpose.



Elizabeth Grier Hibben (1888-1970) was the daughter of Princeton University President John Grier Hibben. After attending Miss Fine's School she graduated from Bryn Mawr in 1910. She was listed as a member of the Princeton Suffrage Committee as a social worker. In 1916 she married Robert Scoon, a professor of philosophy at the university. According to her alumna file she taught Sunday school at the First Presbyterian Church of Color of Princeton at Witherspoon Street and volunteered at the Isabella McCosh Infirmary. She had one son.

*Sunday Times-Advertiser*, Trenton, NJ,  
November 25, 1928





Mrs. Martha Irwin Sheddan, wife of Ralph M. Sheddan, died Thursday, June 20th, at her home in Germantown, Pennsylvania.

Mrs. Sheddan was the daughter of George Washington Irwin of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She was graduated from Bryn Mawr in 1899. She lived in Princeton about fifteen years and in Germantown for twenty-four years.

Besides her husband, Mrs. Sheddan is survived by a son, a daughter and four grandchildren. She was the daughter-in-law of the Reverend and Mrs. W. B. Sheddan, of 287 Nassau Street.

Obituary *Princeton Herald*, 1946

Martha Eliza Irwin (1878-1946) graduated from Bryn Mawr in 1899. Her alumna file reveals that she did settlement work in Philadelphia before moving to Princeton. A single woman according to the census of 1915 and 1920, she lived on Nassau Street with an adopted daughter and son, as well as a niece. She joined the Princeton Suffrage Committee in 1915. In 1920 she married the 19-year younger Ralph M. Sheddan, son of Rev. William B. and Alice Sheddan, also from Nassau Street. She moved with her family to Germantown, Philadelphia, where she lived for 24 years. In a 1935 alumnae survey she wrote that she worked there as social investigator at the Department of Public Assistance.

## MISS FINE'S SCHOOL

Elinor Purves and her sisters play a historical role in the development of women's education in Princeton. Their parents, Princeton Theological Seminary professor George Tybout Purves and his wife Rebekkah, employed Wellesley graduate May Margaret Fine, to tutor their daughters at their home at Stockton Street.



This is how the Miss Fine's School came into being, which May Fine founded in 1899. All Purves sisters went to Smith College. Elinor graduated in 1904, and Gertrude, the youngest, ten years later. Both Elinor and Gertrude, who lived together, taught at the Miss Fine school--Elinor for five years and Gertrude her whole life.

Some of the WCCP members had been students at the school themselves, like University President's daughter Elizabeth Hibben. Other WCCP members taught at Miss Fine's School too before they married, or after they became widows. The sister of Princeton's dean of the faculty Henry Burchard Fine and of John Burchard Fine, headmaster of the Princeton Preparatory School, May Margaret Fine was respected by her students and influenced many lives.

*Miss Fine school, c.1900. May Fine and Elinor Purves on middle row 3rd and 4th from left, Rebekkah Purves in front of them and Mildred Purves behind Elinor. Source (p.8)*

## VASSAR

**Beard, Elizabeth H.**  
**Foster, Helen Stewart**  
 (Mrs. William Foster)  
**Robinson, Anne Shaw Hamilton Robinson**  
 (Mrs. Chalfant Robinson)  
**Vanderbilt, Mabel T.**  
**Wilson, Ellen C. Howard**  
 (Mrs. Robert.D. Wilson)

## WELLESLEY

**Fine, May Margaret**  
**Morey, Sara Frances Tupper**  
 (Mrs Charles Rufus Morey)  
**Orcutt, Marion Leland**  
**Robbins, Emily Hawyard**  
 (Mrs. Edmund Yard Robbins)  
**Roberts, Helen Troth Chambers**  
 (Mrs. Erastus T. Roberts)

## OTHER WOMEN'S COLLEGES

**Mershon, Grace L. Olmstead**  
 (Mrs. Irving Mershon), *Elmira*  
**Preston, Frances Folsom**  
 (Mrs. Thomas Preston), *Wells*  
**Smith, Louise S., Wilson**  
**Tompkins, Lottie A .Young**  
 (Mrs David Tomkins), *Wilson*





Grace Olmstead Mershon at the  
50th anniversary luncheon in 1966

Grace Lucile Olmstead Mershon (1879-1974) graduated from Elmira College in 1903. She taught High School in New York State before she moved to Princeton, where she married Irving Mershon, a banker, in 1914.

A genealogist, she wrote several books about the history of the Mershon family. She helped found the Princeton History Society and wrote several articles about the history of Princeton in the *Nassau Herald*. Her papers, tombstone transcriptions, and oral histories that she conducted are kept at the Princeton Historical Society. She was a lifelong member of the Women's College Club of Princeton.



Miss Mabel T. Vanderbilt was the supervising principal of the school system then, and faculty and students alike say "she ruled with an iron hand and everyone was scared to death of her." "But she was absolutely fair, a great gal, a terrific person," adds Raymond A. Bowers, another member of the class and

Quote from a member of the Princeton High School Class of 1927 in *Town Topics*

Mabel Tilden Vanderbilt (1879-1957) graduated from Vassar in 1901 and taught history and English at the Princeton High School until 1906, when she became principal of the elementary division of the borough public schools. Eight years later, she became supervising principal. In 1915 she joined the Princeton Suffrage Committee. Mabel Vanderbilt retired and married Howard D. Eldridge in 1932.





May Fine (source, p 6)

May Margaret Fine (1869-1933) graduated from Wellesley in 1889. The sister of Princeton University's dean of the faculty Henry Burchard Fine, and of John Burchard Fine, headmaster of the Princeton Preparatory School, she founded the Miss Fine School, a college prep school for girls in 1899.

She was a member of the Princeton Suffrage Committee, founded in 1915, and was also a lifelong member of the WCCP.

**Louise L. Smith** '10 and **Corinne Ramsay Humer** '16. Miss Smith, secretary of the Class of 1910, received her M. A. in English from Columbia University, and has taught at Penn Hall, Prospect Hill School, Trenton, N. J., Columbus School for Girls, and at present is head of the English department at the Dwight School in Englewood, N. J. Following the first World War she did government work with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. She has been active in church and Y. W. C. A. work, having served as head of the work for colored girls under the latter organization. At present she is assistant chairman of sewing in the Presbyterian Church of Englewood. While living in Princeton, N. J., Miss Smith was a member of the Wilson Club there, and since 1931 has been a member of the New York Club.

After graduating from Wilson College in 1910, Louise Smith (1888-1964) got an MA in English at Columbia University.

In the census for 1850 she is listed as a 62-year old English teacher in Englewood, New Jersey, who never married.

She was class president and published regularly in the *Wilson Alumnae Quarterly*. Her resume for February, 1943, can be found in this clipping from the *Wilson Alumni Quarterly* featuring candidates for alumnae office.



Frances Fulsom Preston Cleveland (1864-1947) graduated from Wells College in 1885 and married President Grover Cleveland, whom she had known since a child, a year later. The youngest woman to have ever been First Lady, she was immensely popular, and scheduled social meetings for women at the White House on Saturdays, so as not to interfere with their work schedules. The couple settled in Princeton after they left the White House in 1896.

She supported women's education but opposed women's suffrage, believing politics were to be avoided and risked women's control of the domestic sphere. She served as the vice president of the New Jersey Association Opposed to Woman's Suffrage from 1913 to 1920.

A widow since 1908 and trustee of Wells College, she remarried Princeton professor of archaeology and acting president at Wells College in 1913.

Source: [Wikipedia](#)



## COLLEGES AND COSTS

Of the 49 charter members listed on the right, more than half graduated from the seven sister colleges (Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Mount Holyoke, Radcliffe, Smith, Vassar, and Wellesley.) Four members graduated from other women's colleges, and 19 from coeducational colleges. Even without counting the Purves sisters, Smith College was represented by the most graduates.

## TUITION/ROOM+BOARD

- **Bryn Mawr** (1918) \$125/275
- **NJ College for Women** (1918) \$100
- **Smith** (1916) \$100/350
- **Teachers College, Columbia** (1918) min. \$180/308
- **Wellesley** (1916) \$175/325
- **Wells** (1916) \$150/350
- **Wilson** (1916) \$125/235-310



Verna Bayles (front middle) as Editor-In-Chief of the Wilson College paper *Pharetra*, 1920  
(Photo courtesy C. Elizabeth Boyd '33 Archives, Hankey Center, Wilson College)

The first student who received financial aid in the form of an interest-free loan in 1916 was Verna Bayles, a Princeton High School graduate. She went to Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, which also gave her a scholarship (read an article in the *Princeton Packet*).

A total of three loans were provided in 1916: two for \$125, and one for \$200, a substantial part of tuition costs at the time.

## COEDUCATIONAL COLLEGES

**Bayles, Blanche Isabel Van Norman**,  
(Mrs. Frank Bayles), *Hunter*

**Brewer, Clair A.**, *Un. of Colorado*

**Coney, Harriot R. Reitze**,  
(Mrs. J.H. Coney), *Allegheny*

**Conklin, Isabelle (Belle) Adkinson**,  
(Mrs. Edwin G.), *Moore's Hill (Evansville)*

**Conklin, Mary**, *Goucher*

**Davis, Marguerite Scobie**  
(Mrs. John D. Davis), *U.C. Berkeley*

**Fetter, Martha Whitson**  
(Mrs. Frank Fetter), *Cornell*

**Hall, Cora E.**, *Teachers College Columbia*

**Hulett, Dency M. Pierpoint Barker**  
(Mrs. George Hulett), *Un. of Pennsylvania*

**Kemmerer, Rachel**  
Mrs. Edwin Walter Kemmerer), *Purdue*

**Loomis, Grace Woods**  
(Mrs Elmer H. Loomis), *Un. of California*

**Luehring, Emma A. Hatz**  
(Mrs. Frederick W. Luehring), *North Western*

**Macloskie, Lila Mansfield**  
(Mrs. George Macloskie), *Un. of Arkansas*

**McClenaghan, Marguerite**, *Teachers College, Columbia*

**Peck, Martha Elizabeth Van Hoesen**  
(Mrs. George M. Peck), *Cornell*

**Rahill, Flora Lewis** (Mrs. W.J. Rahill), *Lake Erie*

**Raycroft, Sarah Elizabeth Butler**  
(Mrs. Joseph E. Raycroft), *Un. of Chicago*

**Strong, Louise Potter** (Mrs Edwin D.) *Glendale*

**Van Hoesen, Ruth S. Hutchinson**  
(Mrs. Henry B. Van Hoesen), *Un. of Minnesota*

**CONEY, Harriot R.** (Mrs. John H. Coney), Washington Rd., Princeton, N.J.  
Born, Meadville, Pa., 1870; dau. John and Christina (Fautzman) Reitze; ed. Allegheny Coll., A.B. '87, A.M. '90; grad. student Bryn Mwr Coll. 1890-93; (Kappa Alpha Theta, Phi Beta Kappa); m. Meadville, Pa., 1902, John H. Coney (prof. Princeton Univ.); children: Christina, b. 1903; John H., Jr., 1906; Barbara, 1908. Teacher in Miss Stearns' School, Germantown, Philadelphia, 1893-95; principal Pelham School, Germantown, Philadelphia, 1895-98; associate principal Miss Baldwin's School, Bryn Mawr, 1898-1902. Pres. Princeton Village Improvement Soc. 1907-09 (vice-pres. 1909-10, sec. 1910-12); pres. Princeton Present Day Club, 1904-05. Unitarian.

Entry in the *Woman's who's who of America, 1914-15*

Harriot Reitze Coney (1866-1941) received her BA at Allegheny in 1887 and MA in 1890, and attended graduate school at Bryn Mawr 1890-1893. In the following nine years she was a teacher at the Miss Stearns' School, and principal of the Pelham School, Germantown, Philadelphia, and associate principal of Miss Baldwin's School, Bryn Mawr. In 1902 she married Princeton professor of History John Haughton Coney, with whom she had three children. A widow since 1913, she was the first president of the WCCP and was a lifelong member.



Marguerite McClanaghan (1890-1981) graduated from Maryville College, Tenn. in 1908 and from Teachers College, Columbia in 1910. Employed by the Princeton Bank and Trust Company from 1915 to 1950 in various positions, she was the first woman to hold an office in a New Jersey bank. She was treasurer and director at Marsh and Company for many years as well as a bookkeeper for a law firm. A charter member from 1916, she was the longest living member of the WCCP.

*(Trenton Evening Times, January 28, 1981)*

*Family photo of Marguerite Anna McClanaghan, Ancestry Library (retrieved 31 May 2026)*





served as a professor of physics at Princeton from 1894 to 1929, died in her home at 302 Nassau Street Wednesday after a long illness.

Mrs. Loomis, who was very active in participating in local civic affairs, at one time opened her home to Princeton undergraduates who could not afford to live in dormitories. She was a founder and president of the Princeton YWCA, and a member of the League of Women Voters, the University League, and the New Jersey Commission for the Blind.

A granddaughter of Dr. Charles Eaton, sixth president of Colgate University, Mrs. Loomis graduated from UCLA in 1914. She leaves a brother, Dr. Charles Woods, of Long Beach, California and also two grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held in the University Chapel at 3 p.m. tomorrow.

Grace Woods Loomis (1880-1951) graduated from the University of California and taught at Binghamton before she married physics professor Elmer H. Loomis, a widower, in 1911. She joined the Princeton Suffrage Committee in 1915, was a member of the League of Women Voters and the University League, and served as president of the WCCP in 1928-29. In addition, she was a founder and president of the Princeton YWCA, and did pioneer work in the New Jersey Commission for the Blind, transcribing books in braille.

(view obit in the *Princeton Herald*)



Isabella (Belle) Adkinson (1865-1940) graduated from Moores Hill College before she married Edwin Grant Conklin in 1889, who held the chair of Professor of Biology at Princeton 1908 to 1933. Belle Conklin was a member of the Woods Hole Woman's Equal Suffrage League (1913) and the Princeton Suffrage Committee (1915) and served as president of the WCCP in 1924-25. She was a lifelong member of the WCCP (Read obituary, 1940).

*Detail from a photo on the occasion of the 50th wedding anniversary of Edwin and Belle Conklin in 1939 (Woods Hole Historical Museum Archives, Isabel Conklin Collection)*

## Miss Cora E. Hall

PRINCETON — Miss Cora E. Hall of 135 Jefferson Road, a teacher at Princeton High School from 1912 to 1935, died yesterday in Princeton Hospital at the age of 87.

Born in East Dixfield, Me., she taught grade school in Winthrop, Me. from 1891 to 1898. Following her graduation from Columbia University Teachers College in 1912, she taught home economics at Princeton until her retirement.

Miss Hall was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Princeton and its Women's Association and the Women's College Club of Princeton.

Cora Hall (1873-1960) graduated from the Teachers College, Columbia University, in 1912, after which she was appointed to teach "domestic science" in the new high school in Princeton. She taught home economics there until she retired. She was a lifelong member of the WCCP, which instituted the Cora Hall Memorial Award after her death.



## 50TH ANNIVERSARY



*May Beggs (L) and Grace Mershon (R) honored at the 50th anniversary luncheon, 1966 (read clipping)*

They presented their findings in a history skit, with a different narrator for each decade, while others acted out parts in historic dress with music of the times. For the twenties Rachel Thompson danced the Charleston. One actress played the hospitality chairman, who repeatedly stumbled across the stage with a tray of china. (View the [script and photos](#)).

Three charter members were still alive to watch the skit: May Beggs, Grace Mershon, and Marguerite McClenaghan.

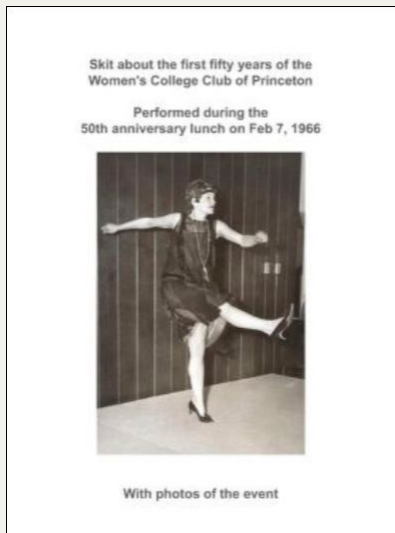


*Members of the WCCP practising their history skit before the anniversary (Trenton Times) Read article*

## PROMOTING WOMEN'S EDUCATION

The goals of the WCCP, formulated in the the articles and bylaws that were printed in the annual membership lists, changed slightly over time. But the essentials remained the same. The WCCP's first goal, was to promote women's education by making information available about colleges open to women and to encourage girls to apply. In the 1940s, the WCCP did this by working together with schools and sponsor annual "college guidance clinics," inviting

*Meeting of the history skit team (read clipping)*



To prepare for the the club's 50th anniversary, a group of women studied the WCCP archives to find out how the club had accomplished its goals in the first five decades.



### College Guidance Clinic Planned To Aid Those of High School Age

Princetonians of high school age will attend a college guidance clinic to be held Thursday afternoon at 1:15 in the gymnasium of the Princeton High School.

The meeting will be attended by pupils of the Princeton High School, Miss Fine's School and the Hun School. To be held under the auspices of the Women's College Club of Princeton, it has been arranged through the cooperation of Frederic S. Coffman of the High School, Robert G. McAllen of the Hun School and Mrs. Edward Mead Earle, former headmistress of Miss Fine's School. Parents may accompany their children to the meeting.

Alumni of 53 colleges and universities in the United States will be present to give first-hand information on their alma maters. The principal speakers will be Dr. Wilbur E. Saunders, headmaster of the Peddie School,

alumnae from different colleges to talk to students.

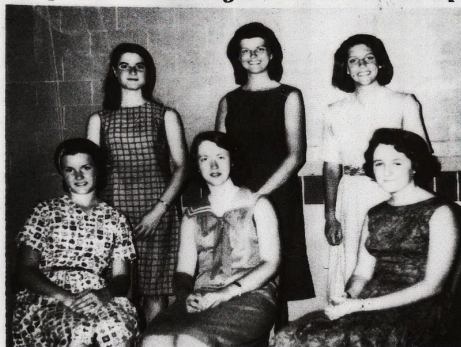
Teachers who were members were able to approach girls individually, such as Jeanne Wight, dean of girls at the PHS in the 1950s. In

addition, the WCCP encouraged girls to apply for college by awarding scholarships and prizes.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

In 1928, the College Club was able to award its first small scholarship of \$250. More fundraising and investments led to the increase of scholarships and awards, and in 1943 the loan fund was discontinued.

### Recipients of College Club Scholarships



The Women's College Club of Princeton awarded financial grants totalling \$1,900 to June graduates of Princeton High School and Miss Fine's School who are entering colleges this fall. Recipients, in the photograph, are, left to right: Standing Miss Constance O'Dea, recipient of the Founder's Award and also one of the two recipients of the President's Award in memory of Isabella Logan Hope; Miss Meta Hope, recipient of the Cora E. Hall Award; Miss Cary Smith, recipient of the President's Award in memory of Isabella Logan Hope. Seated — Patrician Brackney, recipient of the Isabella Logan Hope Memorial Award; Pamela Conover, recipient of the Memorial Award; and Diana Dillon, recipient of the Anniversary Award.

1964 scholarship recipients [\(read more\)](#)

In 2025 a total of \$51,700 was awarded to twenty young women from local high schools. The WCCP now

has an endowment. Scholarships, often established in memory of loved ones, are awarded annually during a scholarship tea.

2026 scholarship recipients [\(read more\)](#)



## FUNDRAISING



DESSERT AND CARDS ON THEIR MINDS: Mrs. Joseph Grazel, left, and Mrs. Paul Perry, reservations, are two of the members of the Women's College Club helping to plan for the organization's annual dessert-card party to be held Monday.

The first fundraising efforts were energetic endeavors, which ranged from growing vegetables to organizing dances, and selling sandwiches and drinks during Princeton University events. Two annual fundraising traditions, established by the 1930s, lasted over seventy years: dessert-and-card parties and ticketed fashion shows, held during lunch at the Present Day Club.



A fashion show and sale of dresses hats, and coats for the benefit of the Loan Fund of the Women's College Club will be held on Monday, October 17th, at the home of Mr. Rankin Johnson, 3 Greenholm. The hours of the sale will be from 10 in the morning until 6 in the evening.

First fashion show advertized in the Princeton Herald, October 14, 1932



Fashion show with clothes from the Dandeline shop, 2009. WCCP models Mary Lincoln (left) and Nancy Luck (above)

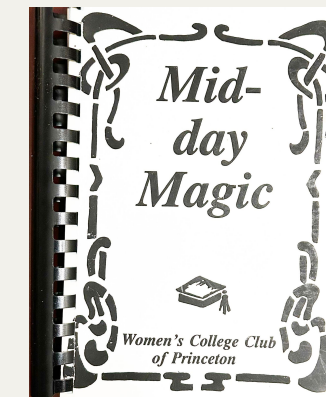
The fashion shows were organized with women's clothes and apparel stores from the area, which -- in the male dominated world at Princeton University -- were lacking in Princeton. Sometimes the shows were organized around a specific theme, like the show "Fashions of yesterday" in 1994,

Clippings in scrapbook, showing members modeling in a fashion show with the theme "Fashions of Yesterday" on May 16, 1994. Browse scrapbook.

Additional fundraisers included silent auctions and white elephant sales for more than three decades, starting in 1980 (view scrapbook)



Another fundraiser, organized by Edna (Tady) Hunter in 1992, was a cookbook that was sold for the holidays (click on the image to view a digitized version). An excellent cook, who always brought food



to club meetings, she was known as "Mrs. Hospitality." When she and her husband had to downsize she donated their silver coffee service to the WCCP.





## "FRIENDLY FELLOWSHIP"

Rather than coffees, however, members of the WCCP organized teas. The very first tea was recorded in the formal language of the meeting minutes: "Mrs Conklin's invitation to the club to give a tea at her home Saturday April the eight [1916] was accepted." It was agreed that all eligible members were invited (view minutes). From 1923 onwards, WCCP teas, held at members homes, could be found in the newspaper.

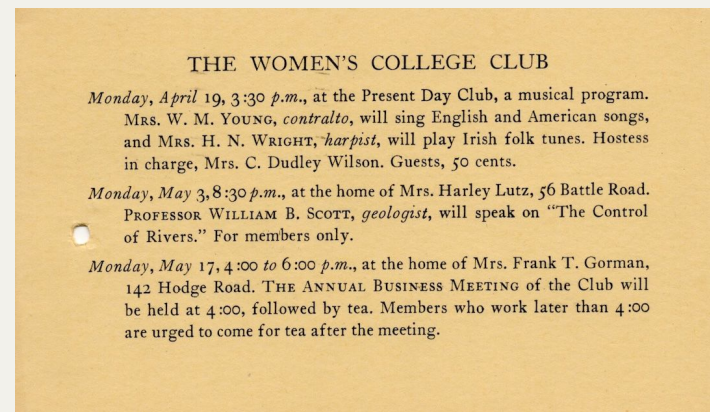
*Announcement in the Princeton Herald, 31 Jan, 1924*



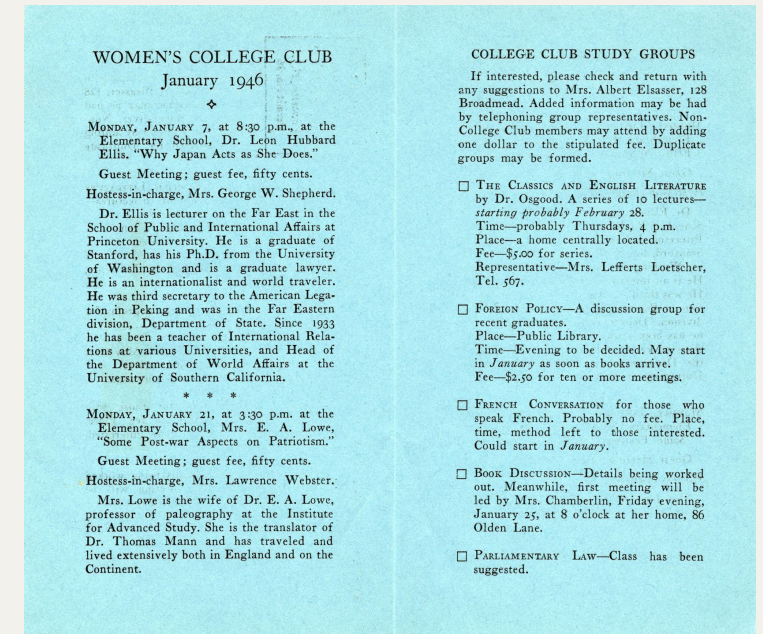
*Bonnie Larson at the General Meeting hospitality table pouring tea from the silver teapot, Dec 2017*



In 1946 the club bought a silver tea set for 58 dollars, the beginning of new season, when neighborhood teas were held by members in different areas to attract more members. By the 1970s new members teas were held annually.



*Monthly invitation with upcoming events for April-May 1937, sent to members as postcard*



*Mailed announcement of upcoming lectures in Jan 1946: "Why Japan acts like she does" and "Some post-war aspects on Patriotism"*

## Lectures

Like the Present Day Club, the WCCP organized lectures and events for its members from the beginning. In 1935 it arranged the first of a series of lectures, at the request of Princeton University. Usually taught by Princeton faculty, it was a precursor to the Princeton Adult School.



## COURSE IN CHILD WELFARE TO BE GIVEN IN PRINCETON

A course in "Children in Wartime" will be offered by the Women's College Club starting next Tuesday. Designed to train volunteers to participate in child health and welfare work, with its ultimate aim the formation of a group which would be qualified to care for young war refugees, this class is open to anyone interested in this phase of the war effort.

In 1942, as part of the "war effort," the WCCP arranged a course on "Children in Wartime," to train volunteers to participate in child health and welfare work "with its ultimate aim the formation of a group which would be qualified to care for young war refugees." The nine lectures, accompanied by observation visits, ended with "What we can learn from England" ([view clipping](#))

## Study groups and activities

In addition to lectures, the WCCP arranged a variety of activities over the years, from art appreciation study groups, to handicraft and French literature and conversation groups.

Though limited in number, outdoor trips started as early as 1925, when 54 members, packed in wind-and rain-proof clothes and blankets, traveled in late October per automobile to Doylestown to investigate the tile factory and visit the home of the owner ([read the article](#)).

## DOYLESTOWN TRIP TAKEN BY WOMEN'S COLLEGE CLUB

The members of the Women's College Club, wrapped in combination wind-and-rain-proof clothing, drove by auto last Saturday morning to Doylestown, Pennsylvania. Motors left Princeton at 10, carrying besides the blankets and extra coats, 54 club members. Their arrival before noon



**PLANNING FOR OPERA PROGRAM:** The Women's College Club will hear members of the Princeton Opera Association Monday at 1:30. Discussing the event, standing, left to right, are: Mrs. John Howard, club president; Miss Dorothy Wagner, club program chairman; and Mrs. Frank Schley, Mrs. Fred Bowers, Mrs. Wallace Hayes and Woodward Waesche, singers from the Association. Seated are Mrs. Preston Barnes, one of the singers, and Igor Chichagov, Opera workshop director.

*Opera workshop by the Princeton Opera Association, April 1964 ([view clipping](#))*

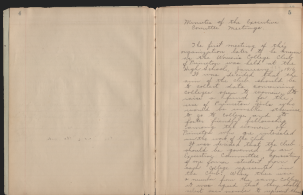
In 1982 college enrollment of young women surpassed men's enrollment for the first time. Although helping young women go to college is still the College Club's main goal, attending lectures and educational trips in "friendly fellowship" has become the foundation of the club.

Explore the club's history and women's history in the [timeline](#) that follows!

# TIMELINE

**1916, Jan**

First meeting of the Women's College Club of Princeton



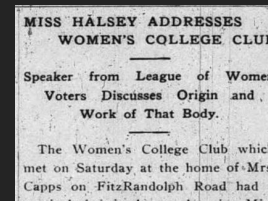
**1918, Dec**

Mabel Smith Douglass, dean of new NJ College for Women, visits WCCP



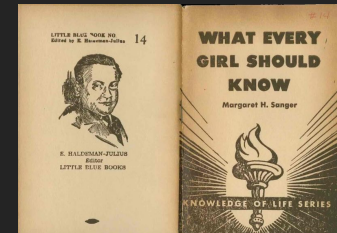
**1923, Oct 27**

Florence Halsey, League of Women Voters, gives talk



**1928, May**

First annual scholarship of \$250 announced



**1916, Oct**

Margaret Sanger opens the first birth control clinic in the US and is arrested.



**1920, Aug 18**

Ratification of the 19th Amendment gives women the vote



**1928, May**

Genevieve Rose Cline (Ohio) becomes the first female federal judge





*Mabel Douglass*

Mabel Smith Douglass (1877–1933) was the first dean of the New Jersey College for Women (later Douglass College) in New Brunswick, the first college for women in the state, which opened in September 1918. Only three months later, on December 7, 1918, Mabel Douglass visited members of WCCP to talk about the new college. "She told of the school's location and buildings, the girls' school life and good times and the ideals and standards they believed in." (Read the digitized minutes)

# TIMELINE (CONTINUED)

**1932, Apr 15**

Sarah Lawrence College Director of Education gives talk



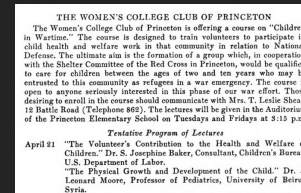
**1935, Nov**

First of series of lecture courses arranged by WCCP



**1942, Apr-May**

WCCP offers course on child welfare in wartime



**1946**

30th anniversary; WCCP buys its own silver tea service.



**1932, Jan**

Hattie Caraway, Arkansas, is first woman elected to the Senate



**1941, Dec 7**

Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor draws the US into World War II



**1945, Aug**

Capitulation of Japan brings an end to WWII

# TIMELINE (CONTINUED)

**1955, Mar 21**

WCCP's first annual trip:  
visit to the UN in New York



**1959**

Study groups include financial  
law, preschool child, home decor



**1961, Nov 6**

Talk about protection against  
radiation in atomic warfare

## College Club Will Hear Dr. Barach on Radiation

Dr. Richard Barach, assistant to the director of civilian defense and radiation protection officer of Princeton Hospital, will speak to the Women's College Club of Princeton on Monday evening at 8 o'clock in the Unitarian Church. His subject will be "Radiation—What It is, and Methods of Protection against It in Atomic Warfare".

**1966**

50th anniversary celebration  
with history skits

## College Club Planning 50th Anniversary



Members of the Women's College Club of Princeton are busy making plans for the 50th anniversary luncheon to be held in the Nassau Inn on February 7th. Meeting to discuss a dramatization of the past half-century are, clock wise, Mrs. John Howard, chairman, (back to camera); Mrs. Walton Van Winkle, Mrs. John Abrams, Mrs. Leslie Viriam, Jr., Mrs. Forrest Gresswald, Mrs. John de Groot, Mrs. Orrin Wessel, Mrs. Frank Beiche, Mrs. Frank Gorman, Jr., and Mrs. John Brinker. Committee members not present are Mrs. Peter Holmback, 2nd, Mrs. Robert Plumb, Jr., Mrs. James Stretch, Mrs. David Thomas and Mrs. Edward Marchione.



**1955, Dec 1**

Rosa Parks refuses  
to give up her seat.



**1960, May 19**

The FDA approves the first  
birth control pill



**1964, Jul 2**

President Lyndon Johnson  
signs Civil Rights Act



**1969, fall**

Princeton University  
admits women



# TIMELINE (CONTINUED)

**1970, Nov 16**

WCCP hears talk "New Frontiers for Black Women in Education"

**Women's College Club; 1:30 Monday, at All Saints' Chapel** Mrs. Peggy J. Taylor, assistant dean of Douglass College will speak on "New Frontiers for Black Women in Education." Mrs. Charles Burrill, Mrs. J. W. Gendron, Mrs. R. F. MacLeod, Mrs. Albert Westefeld and Mrs. J. E. Norton will serve as hostesses.

**1977, Feb**

Members finally addressed with first names, not Mrs. [Husband]

**Clubs and Organizations**  
Alma B. Field will be the speaker at the meeting of the Women's College Club Monday at 8 p.m. at All Saints' Church, Van Dyke Road. The subject will be, "19th Century Women in Princeton." Mrs. Field has been a member of the Princeton Society of Princeton for 10 years. It is a member of the executive board of the society and is chairman of the Princeton University 100th Anniversary Project.  
A companion event will be the club's proposed trip to the University of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia Art Museum on Thursday, March 10. The Dessert Card Party to be held on March 7 at the Unitarian Church for the benefit of the club's scholarship fund.

**CARD PARTY PLANNERS:** Cio Treves, left, and Nancy Olson, members of Women's College Club discuss the Dessert Card Party to be held on March 7 at the Unitarian Church for the benefit of the club's scholarship fund.

**1981, Mar 4**

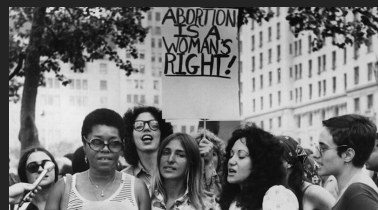
First recipient of financial aid in 1916 attends 65th anniversary

"If it hadn't been for the Women's College Club of Princeton, I wouldn't have been able to go to college."  
So spoke Verna Bayles, now 84, who was the first recipient of financial aid from the club in 1916, the year of its founding by the late Marguerite McClenaghan, along with May Ingalls Beggs and others.

**1988, Jan 18**

Visitor from New Jersey Bell talks about Fire Optic Network

**College Club to hear of fibre optic network**  
"Exhibition of tomorrow," is the technology that makes them possible will involve the audience. What the future may hold in telephone communication will also be discussed.  
Membership in the Women's College Club of Princeton is open to graduates of four-year, accredited colleges and universities. For information about the organization, contact Mary Lincoln, 524-8771.



**1973, Jan 22**

In Roe v. Wade decision, the U.S. Supreme Court grants a federal constitutional right to abortion



**1975**

UN organizes the first World Conference on Women in Mexico



**1982**

Women earn more than 50% of bachelor's degrees in the US

# TIMELINE (LAST)

**1994, May 16**

WCCP annual fashion show theme is "Yesterday/Today"



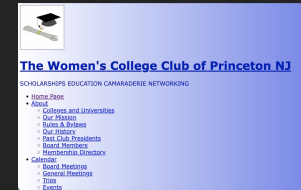
**2002-03**

Bylaws are changed to make membership more inclusive

Earlier in its history, the Women's College Club excluded graduates outside the elite circle of schools such as the Seven Sisters (Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Mount Holyoke, Radcliffe, Smith, Vassar and Wellesley), or notable institutions, such as Chicago, Cornell, Northwestern, Oxford and Oberlin. However, by-law changes in the last few years have made the club more inclusive, a change celebrated by club president Barbara Hynds Johnson.

**2013, Feb**

WCCP has its own website



**2026**

WCCP celebrates its 110th anniversary



**1997, Jan 23**

Madeleine Albright is sworn in as first female secretary of state.



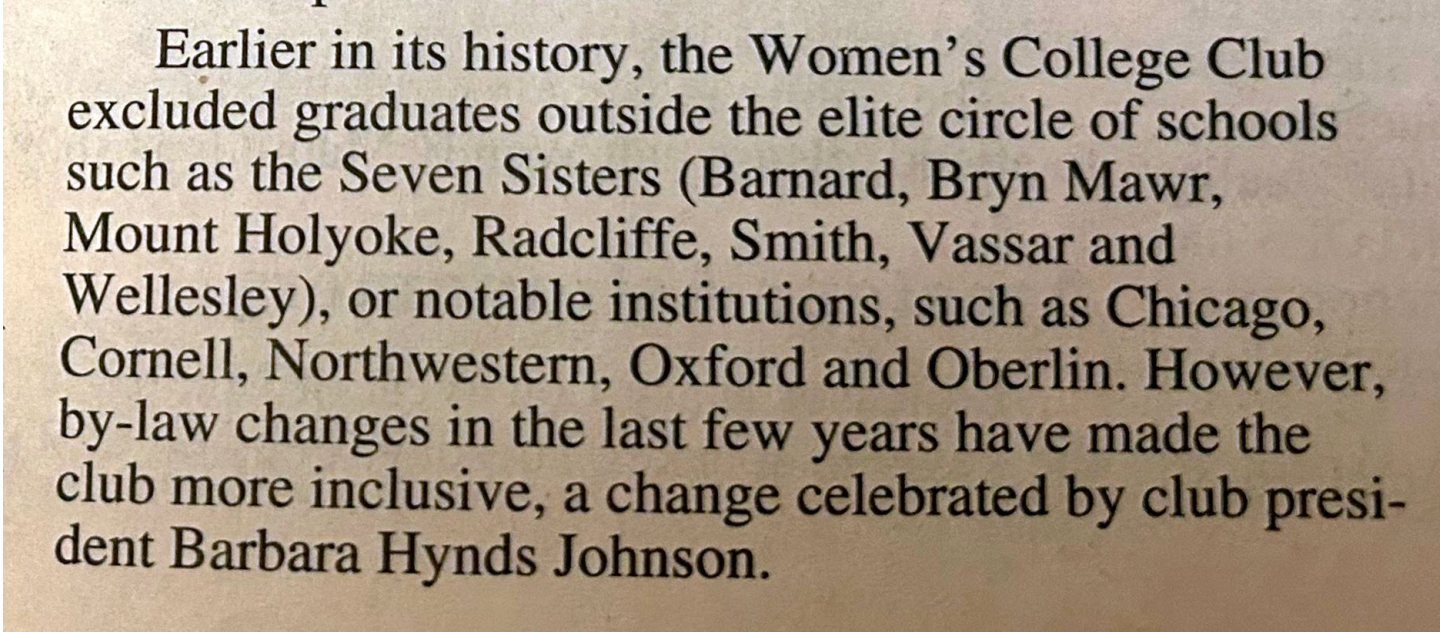
**2007**

Nancy Pelosi becomes first woman speaker of the House



**2016**

Hillary Clinton becomes the first female nominee of a major political party

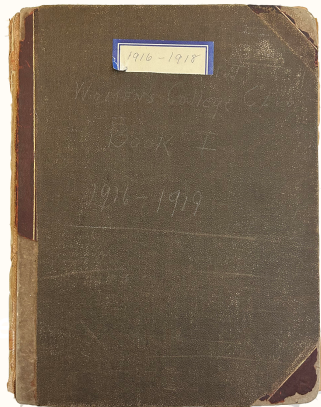


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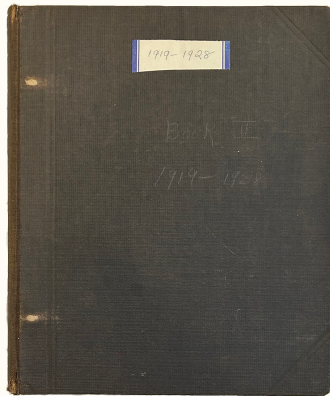
Quote from the *Princeton Packet*, February 7, 2006 about the club's 90th anniversary. Since 2002 membership was open to women with a 2- year college degree rather than a 4-year college degree. Since, all women who attended college for even a limited time are welcomed.



# ARCHIVES (1)

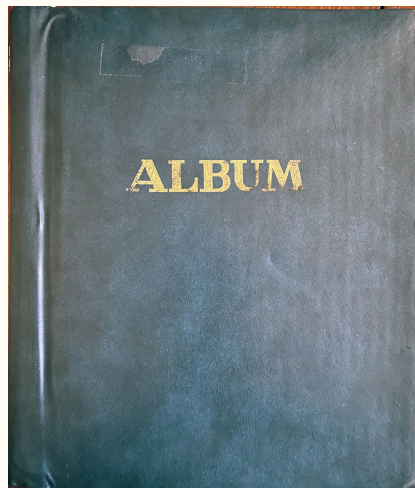


**Minute book  
1916-1919**



**Minute book  
1919-1928**

**Click on a  
volume to read  
the contents**



**Scrapbook 1975-77**



**Scrapbook 1977-81**



**Scrapbook 1979-81**



**Scrapbook 1984-94**

## ARCHIVES (2)

**WOMAN SUFFRAGE SENTIMENT IS RAPIDLY GROWING IN PRINCETON, WITH TWO TO ONE PERCENTAGE**

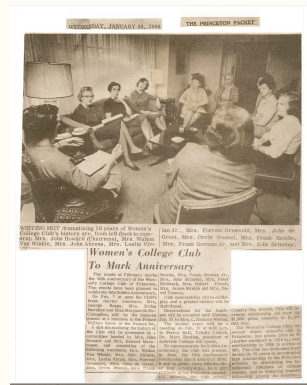
[illegible]

**Skit about the first fifty years of the Women's College Club of Princeton**

Performed during the 50th anniversary  
lunch on Feb 7, 1966



With photos of the event



Editor Michael Redmond • (509) 924-2244 ext. 125 • [mredmond@spokanejournal.com](mailto:mredmond@spokanejournal.com)

In *Friday's Lifestyle*, Christian Kitzbrink reports on the 18th annual Capital Ball, "Twentieth Century Capital of Industry." To benefit a national treasure, the Old Barracks Museum.



*Staff photo by Frank Provenzano*

The Women's Club of Princeton today includes alumnae from 66 colleges and universities in the United States, Canada and Europe. Representing the club's membership, from left, are Pamela Peyton of Pennington, Carol Stenseth of Pennington, Mary Lincoln of Lawrence, Mary Jane Hoffman of Plainsboro, Mary Beth Williams of Lawrence, and Barbara Wyck Johnson of Princeton.

## Making big strides

*The Women's College Club of Princeton celebrates 90 years*



## LINKS

[Women's College Club of Princeton](#)

[Women's College Club of Princeton -- History slideshows YouTube](#)

[Historical Society of Princeton](#)

[Digitized historical newspapers of Princeton](#)

[Princeton and Women's Suffrage \(online exhibit\)](#)

[Princetoniana Museum \(online\)](#)

*Digital exhibit by Helene van Rossum in Genially*

