

Finding Aid to the Fine Arts Club Photograph Collection

Fine Arts Club (Fargo, N.D.)

Fine Arts Club photograph collection, 1920s-1950s

41 photographic prints

Collection number: Photo 2003

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OVERVIEW

Links: Finding Aid to the initial accession of [Fine Arts Club](#) records
Finding Aid to the second accession of [Fine Arts Club](#) records
View images in [Digital Horizons](#).

Access: The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Institute.

Provenance: Donated by the Fine Arts Club of Fargo, North Dakota, 1980 (Acc. 2057 & 2058).

Property rights: The Institute for Regional Studies owns the property rights to this collection.

Copyrights: Copyrights to this collection remain with the original creators

Citation: Institute for Regional Studies, NDSU, Fargo (item number)

HISTORY

The Fine Arts Club of Fargo, North Dakota had its origins in the Fargo Amateur Music Club. In the spring of 1911, Mrs. Frank J. Thompson consented to assume the presidency of the Music Club on condition that it be merged into a new organization consisting of several departments. This was accomplished and in September 1911 the Fine Arts was formally organized at the home of Mrs. Thompson. There were five original sections representing Music, Writers (Quill), Drama, Art, and Sociology (Social Economics). The first meeting was held December 2, 1911 and the first yearbook published in 1912. The club became federated on October 4, 1912 and joined as a member of General Federation of Women's Clubs in 1925. The club continued to grow with the addition of the Home Economics Section in 1913, the Literature Section in 1922, the Women's Sports Section in 1926, and the History Section in 1926. Clubhouse facilities continually changed until November 5, 1930 when the gift

of Watson Hall (formally of Fargo College) from Mrs. John H. Watson was formally accepted as a permanent residence. A Fine Arts Library was projected for the 1934-35 season and dedicated March 29, 1935. An addition of a stage and auditorium was accomplished in 1937. The Fine Arts Club continues to function, today, at the Watson Hall location with all nine sections intact.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

There are a total of forty-one photographs comprising five folders. Four of the photographs are of buildings; of the rest, a handful are portraits and the remainder are of people engaged in performances, parties and dinners, and various preparatory activities relating to each. Most of these are candid shots, though a few are posed. With the exception of some of the portraits, which were taken by New Garden Studio (Fargo, ND), all of the photographs appear to be taken by an amateur photographer. Some of the photographs have descriptions on the back, including on occasion identification of the members. The collection is organized into the following files: Club Activities, Meetings Places of the Club, Sports Section, Historama Program, and Portraits.

The **Club Activities** file is the largest of the collection. Most of the photographs are Christmas-themed and depict parties, quilt-making, and visual displays. One is of members in costume and two are of administrative activity. One interesting photograph is of three women making Christmas packages, including the traditional "Christmas orange." The following individuals are among those photographed: Mmes. Harry Reynolds, M.L. Maleter, Sverre Aftedahl (Agnes Halland), Ralfemaible (Mary Darcaw), Reuk Darrow, Martha Hewitt, Groves, Marg Hall, Leeby, Forthen, and Miss Reynolds.

The **Meeting Places** file consists of four images, one each of club founder Mrs. Frank J. Thompson's home, the Fargo Chamber of Commerce, the American Legion Hall, and the Unitarian Building. On the back of each photograph is an extensive description that includes when the club met at that location, as well as a history of the building itself.

The **Performances** file consists of three images of members of the Women's Sports Club participating in patriotic-themed plays, and two posed images of musicians about to give a performance. Photographs of the plays include one of George Washington's mother reading a letter from her son, one of George Washington meeting Martha Custis, and a very good shot of Betsy Ross sewing the United States' flag. All were taken circa 1928-1930.

The **Historama** file is the second largest grouping with 12 images. A handful depict participants in a play and of members making preparations for what appears to be a party. The majority are of a social function, probably a Christmas party, many of which depict women drinking tea and apparently singing carols. Women depicted include: Mmes. D.M. Wade, Charles Wickert, H.E. Billing, J.C. Fish C. Schellenberger, Harold Sand, Winter, Johnson, Wilhan, M.O. Ryan, and N.P. Hanson. All were taken in 1951.

The **Portraits** file includes seven images. Five are professionally photographed and are of Mmes. H.S. Oliver, Albert E. Jones, N.C. Young, W.S. Lauder, and Jeanie Tuller. A photocopy of a 1933 newspaper article discusses each of these photographs. The other two images are posed group shots, and include Mmes. A.C. Forthum, Krueger, Lawer, Warner, Thorderson, Shaw, H.L. Walster, R.E. Weible, M. Baldurn, W.W. Wallwork, and Bertel.

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