

Inventory of the

**Belvidere Business and Professional  
Women's Club**  
Belvidere, Illinois

Records

In the

Regional History Center

**RC 122**

## INTRODUCTION

Patsy Meyer, President, donated the Belvidere Business and Professional Women's Club Records to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on January 31, 1981.

Property rights in the collection belong to the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 2.5  
Number of containers: 3  
Northern Illinois Regional History Center  
Collection 122

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The records in this collection partially document the history of the Belvidere Business and Professional Women's Club from 1932 to 1980, with the bulk of the material dating after 1950. A major portion of the meeting minutes is missing (1940-1973). Nevertheless, information on club activities during this time is available in the club history, newsletters, newspaper clippings, and scrapbooks. The correspondence, financial records, and membership lists and statements contain further information on the group's organizational policies, fund raising projects, and community concerns. Finally, files on the Equal Rights Amendment, club ceremonies, foundation donations, state and national legislation, and National Business Women's Week reveal local and national club policies and efforts to better women's lives throughout the world.

Researchers should note that the Regional History Center holds several other B.P.W. Clubs' records which can provide additional information on the organization. For further research in northern Illinois women's history, please consult the Center's guide index for a list of related collections.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH

Sponsored by the Rockford Business and Professional Women's Club, seventeen women gathered to organize the Belvidere B.P.W. in 1932. On March 5, 1935 the group received their charter. The members elected Rita McMillan, Margaret Whalen, Elizabeth Shattuck, Jennie Barringer, and Lenora Woodburn the first club officers. Each member worked for the club's objectives--as business and professional women they should fit themselves to assume real leadership in thinking on economic problems, with a view toward helping in the establishment, through scientific methods, of conditions which assure to women, and to men as well, the fullest possibilities, opportunities, and rewards for the development of their capacities.

Throughout its history, the club actively involved itself in civic affairs. In 1936-1937 members sponsored a Brownie Girl Scout Troop and in 1938-1939 supported the building of a swimming pool in Belvidere. The group initiated an educational loan fund for female high school graduates in 1938. In 1942-1943 the club sewed for Red Cross, attended a nursing class, owned \$12,800.49 worth of war bonds, and sponsored a silk and nylon salvage drive. During the 1950's members promoted many study classes, cleaned up some "no-good" literature being sold on local news stands, and donated \$500 to St. Joseph Hospital. The club also devoted meetings

to a study of the United Nations, printed milk bottle caps urging local citizens to vote on election days, and studied the “equal pay” status of men and women in local industries.

The club’s continuing cooperation in community fund drives and contributions to local citizens through scholarships, charitable donations, and educational classes, helps insure the fulfillment of the club’s objectives today.

#### SUBJECT TRACINGS

Belvidere  
Belvidere Business and Professional Women’s Club  
Business and Professional Women’s Club  
Professions, Women  
Women  
Women’s Organization

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	
1	1	Club History	
	2	Club Historian's File, 1966-1968	
	3	Constitution and By-laws, (1930's-1976)	
	4-5	Minutes, 1934-1940, 1961, 1973-1980	
	6-7	Correspondence, 1934-1979	
	8	Correspondence from Foster Children, 1969-1976	
	9	Budgets, 1955-1978	
	10	Treasurer's Reports, 1969, 1976-1980	
	11	Financial Statements, 1964-1968	
	12	Cash Book, 1939-1968	
	13	Financial Ledger Sheets, 1959-1966, 1974-1978	
	14	Illinois Federation Dues Receipts, (1954-1979)	
	15	Statements of Club Membership, 1954-1980	
	16	Membership Applications, 1977-1978	
	17	Lists of Members, Officers, and Committees, (1945-1978)	
	18	Biographical Information on Selected Members, (1950-1961)	
	19	Attendance Records, 1966-1968	
	20-21	<u>The Belvidere Beep</u> , Newsletters, 1958-1978	
	22-23	Yearbooks, (1936-1978) (23)	
	24	Newspaper Clippings, (1944-1966)	
	25	Equal Rights Amendment Materials, 1957, 1971-1975	
	26	Installation Ceremonies, 1972, n.d.	
	27	International B.P.W. Ceremonies and Information, 1972, 1975	
	2	1	B.P.W. Foundation Materials, 1970-1975
		2	B.P.W. Supported Legislation, 1970-1974
		3	Federation Membership Information, 1973-1978
		4	National Business Women's Week, 1973-1977
5		Fund Raising Project Programs, 1965-1972	
6		Program Outlines, 1939-1941	
7-8		Program Planning Material, 1964-1976	
9		Scholarship Information and Applications, 1973-1976	
10		Young Career Woman Data, 1973-1974	
11		Photograph, n.d. (1)	
12		District Meeting Programs, (1964-1978) (11)	
13		Boone County Heritage Days '78 Program	
3		7 volumes	Scrapbooks, 1932-1976