

Inventory of the

Blackhawk Trails Club

Rockford, Illinois

Records

In the

Regional History Center

RC 133

INTRODUCTION

Ms. Katheryn Thorne, President, donated the Blackhawk Trails Club Records to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on April 2, 1981. An addendum was added on December 19, 1988 by Austin Stadel and another on April 4, 2017 by Naomi Madden.

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: 5.50
Number of containers: 8
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 133

SCOPE AND CONTENT

Constitutions and by-laws, minutes, newsletters, bulletins, and club rosters document the organization and development of the Blackhawk Trails Club. The complete series of minutes and newsletters detail the club's business and recreational activities. Included in the newsletters, Talk O' The Trails (1931-), are gossip items, poetry, philosophical themes, presidents' messages, and news items. The bulletins supplement these records with additional writings on club activities. Anniversary booklets provide a brief synopsis of the club's history (Box 1, Folder 1). Photo albums and scrapbooks from 1926-2001, newspaper clippings, and travel and banquet plans complete the collection.

Researchers should check the Regional Collections Guide for additional records documenting groups organized for recreation purposes that are held by the Regional History Center.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

On January 26, 1926 Earle Ainsworth approached the Rockford Athletic Commission for assistance in starting a hiking club. With the commission's approval, Ainsworth began advertising the first hike for February 6, 1926--six men participated. After the fourth hike, Ainsworth organized the first business meeting and the club elected Oscar Anderson president over 22 charter members.

In June 1926 the group named the organization the Blackhawk Trails Club and in 1938 they incorporated. Two hikes from the first year remain a part of the annual program; the Cherry Valley hike in spring and the pilgrimage to the Blackhawk Statue in Oregon in fall.

In 1931 the group augmented the monthly bulletin with a newsletter entitled "Trails and Tributaries". The idea took hold and in 1932 a newsletter started coming out each month- "Talk O' The Trails." The club also instituted joint hikes with groups from Freeport and Milwaukee, had tennis tournaments, gave three-act plays to raise money, played bridge and golf, and sponsored annual Round-Ups. Today, the Blackhawk Trails Club provides recreational entertainment to over 200 members through a healthy and popular sport--hiking.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Blackhawk Trails Club
Hiking
Recreation
Rockford (Ill.)

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1	Historical Information
	2	Constitution and By-Laws, 1929-1965
	3-14	Minutes, 1926-1949, 1951-1970
	15-25	<u>Talk O' The Trails</u> , Newsletters, 1931-1951
2	1-13	<u>Talk O' The Trails</u> , Newsletters, 1952-1964
3	1-6	<u>Talk O' The Trails</u> , Newsletters, 1965-1970
	7-8	Bulletins, (1927-1938)
	9-10	Club Rosters, 1936-1969
	11	Newspaper Clippings
	12	Travel and Banquet Plans, (1938-1960)
	13	Photograph, Group Shot, May 1955

ADDENDUM

4	1-9	<u>Talk O' The Trails</u> , Newsletters, 1971-1987
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ADDENDUM

5	1-11	<u>Talk O' The Trails</u> , Newsletters, 1988-1998
6	1-17	<u>Talk O' The Trails</u> , Newsletters, 1999-2015
7		Photo Albums (3), 1937, 1974-2001

