

**McLean County Museum of History**  
**Margaret Fuller Club Collection**

Processed by  
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**Collection Information**

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	2 Boxes
COLLECTION DATES:	1893-2016
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	See also Photos – Margaret Fuller Club  Donated by the Club circa 1989.

## Brief History

The Margaret Fuller Club met for the first time on January 30, 1893, at the home of Emma Brown in Bloomington, Illinois. A women's literary club, it was originally called the Reading Club but took the name Margaret Fuller Club on April 4, 1893, after the early nineteenth-century feminist and writer, Margaret Fuller (1810-1850). According to the "History of the Margaret Fuller Club," found at the end of Record Book #4, the club was named after Margaret Fuller because she originated the first woman (sic) class for literary study.

The club's original objective was "to obtain a better and more accurate knowledge of the different countries and cities of the globe" and "the discussion of current events and the mutual improvement of its members". Over the years the club's purpose evolved into the "development of literary taste and the study of current topics." Book reviews have been emphasized since the latter half of the twentieth century.

The Margaret Fuller Club continues to meet on a regular basis, holding meetings every other Tuesday afternoon from late September through May. Each member typically hosts one meeting and also gives one presentation every year. Presentation themes have ranged from "The City of Rome," which was the very first topic, to "A Century of Progress in Science" to "Book Reviews." Members have also discussed current events, changes to the club's constitution and by-laws, and the paying of dues. In addition to regular meetings held in members' homes, the club has held holiday parties and other social events at local clubs and restaurants.

Members hold yearly election of officers, including president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer. There are also nominating, membership, program, and, during World War I, war work committees. Officeholders rotate on a yearly basis. Membership usually ranges from fifteen to twenty-two persons, depending on the by-laws in force at the time, and new members must be unanimously elected. New members have signed Record Book 4 (1903-1909), as recently as 2015.

The club's minutes reveal that the club's motto, *Sapere Aude*, is from Horace and means, "Dare to be wise." The minutes also reveal that former Illinois governor and Bloomington resident Joseph Fifer spoke to the club in 1912. In October of 1918, two meetings were canceled due to the Spanish Influenza epidemic. After that, the club dispensed with presentations and refreshments for the rest of the year in favor of sewing clothing for children and soldiers. In 1919, they donated money to "adopt" a ten-year old French orphan boy for one year. Member Fannie Fell donated the book files that are in the collection in 1922 in order to hold the club's yearbooks. The club began storing its collection in Milner Library in 1970 and donated it to the McLean County Historical Society around 1989.

## Scope

The Margaret Fuller Club collection consists of the club's minutes contained in record books, yearbooks, constitution, newspaper articles, handwritten notes and letters, copies of presentations, treasury statements and receipts, and other miscellaneous items. The collection also contains copies of the Bloomington Public Library's Literary History program, brochure, and form letter inviting the local literary clubs to attend a reception in their honor.

Unless otherwise indicated, all rights to the Margaret Fuller Club Collection have been transferred to the McLean County Historical Society/Museum of History. Material may not be reproduced without the express consent of the Museum.

## Box and Folder Inventory

### Box 1

#### Folder 1: Margaret Fuller Club Constitution and By-Laws

- 1.1.1 Constitution and By-Laws Margaret Fuller Club. Bloomington, IL. Undated. Membership limited to 18, dues 50 cents. [copy 1]
- 1.1.2 Constitution and By-Laws Margaret Fuller Club. Bloomington, IL. Undated. Membership limited to 18, dues 50 cents. [copy 2]
- 1.1.3 Constitution and By-Laws Margaret Fuller Club. Bloomington, IL. Undated. Membership limited to 18, dues 50 cents. [copy 3]
- 1.1.4 Constitution and By-Laws Margaret Fuller Club. Bloomington, IL. Undated. Membership limited to 18, dues 50 cents. [copy 4]
- 1.1.5 Constitution and By-Laws Margaret Fuller Club. Handwritten. Undated. Membership limited to 18, dues 50 cents.
- 1.1.6 Constitution and By-Laws Margaret Fuller Club. Typescript. Undated. Membership limited to 18, dues one dollar.
- 1.1.7 Constitution and By-Laws Margaret Fuller Club. Typescript. October 1988 handwritten on page 1. Membership limited to 20, dues \$5.

#### Folder 2: History of the Margaret Fuller Club – 1893-1903

- 1.2.1 List of 15 women and list titled "First ballot, May 31, 1893" with 3 names. Handwritten, undated.
- 1.2.2 List of Margaret Fuller Club presidents, 1893-94 to 2005-06, handwritten.
- 1.2.3 Tenth Anniversary of the Margaret Fuller Club at The Illinois, Bloomington, Illinois, program. January 20, 1903. Copy 1.
- 1.2.4 Tenth Anniversary of the Margaret Fuller Club at The Illinois, Bloomington, Illinois, program. January 20, 1903. Copy 2.
- 1.2.5 Photocopy of "History of the Margaret Fuller Club" written by Mrs. Christian Garver, Historian. January 20, 1904 [sic]. Typescript, 6 pp.

#### Folder 3: History of the Margaret Fuller Club – 1977-2016

- 1.3.1 The History of the Margaret Fuller Book Club – 1977 through 2016, typescript by Linda Stawick. Undated. 2 pp.
- 1.3.2 Photocopy of Record Book 4 pages with members' signatures through 1992. 4 pp.

#### **Folder 4: Margaret Fuller Club Presentations**

- 1.4.1 "The Spirit of Youth and Beauty in Life," handwritten presentation by Mrs. Campbell Holton, October 19, 1913. 29 pages. Accompanied by envelope with handwritten note that presentation repeated in 1954 and November 6, 2001.
- 1.4.2 "Then and Now", program for 96th Anniversary of Margaret Fuller Club. Presented by Ruth V. Werts. May 16, 1989. 12 pp. (numbered 1-8; 15-18: see Folder item 1.2.5. which was stapled between p. 8 and 15.
- 1.4.3 "Clean and Free", Illinois Wesleyan Evelyn Chapel address by Dirk Ficca, November 5, 1986. Typescript. 20 pp. Handwritten note indicates presentation given by Pat Ficca, October 16, 2001.
- 1.4.4 "Flags of Our Fathers," typescript presentation. Envelope indicates presentation by Mary Dooley, November 20, 2001. 9 pp.

#### **Folder 5: Miscellaneous**

- 1.5.1. "Report Normal Members of War Work Comm. Margaret Fuller Club" and "Prepared for the Meeting of the Margaret Fuller Club Called During Summer of 1919". Handwritten notes, 1918-1919.
- 1.5.2. "Margaret Fuller Club has been placed on our Honor Roll..." The Fatherless Children of France, Inc., certificate. Undated.
- 1.5.3. Names of members on committee to revise the constitution. Nov. 19, 1930. Handwritten note.
- 1.5.4. Minute book receipt, Pantagraph Printing & Stationery Co. 6-16-1934.
- 1.5.5. Reece-King Printing Co. bill to Margaret Fuller Club. June 1, 1951.
- 1.5.6. Financial Report 1963-64. Handwritten.
- 1.5.7. Financial information. 5-1-90. Handwritten.
- 1.5.8. Meeting minutes. April 7, 1964. Handwritten.
- 1.5.9. Meeting minutes. April 2, 1991. Typescript.
- 1.5.10. "The Margaret Fuller Club," Biaggi's Restorante Italiano. Program. May 20, 2003.
- 1.5.11. "The Margaret Fuller Club Luncheon," Bloomington Country Club. October 21, 2003.
- 1.5.12. "BCC Margaret Fuller Book Club Luncheon," program. September 15, 2015.

#### **Folder 6: Margaret Fuller Club Newspaper Articles**

- 1.6.1. "Mrs. Bach, 81, Garden Group Member, Dies". *Pantagraph*. April 2, 1954.
- 1.6.2. "YMCA campaign off to good start". August 4, 2000. "How Time Flies – 75 Years Ago". October 31, 1969. "Margaret Fuller Club". May 27, 1913. Three Pantagraph articles photocopied on one page.
- 1.6.3. "How Time Flies – 50 Years Ago". 1972. "Mrs. Van Leer Dies; Funeral Thursday". 1949. "Margaret Fuller Club". October 6, 1909. "Mrs. Burkholder

- ‘Alum of Year’’. 1969. “Delightful Luncheon Today”. October 13, 1914. “Mrs. Wright reviewer”. Undated. Six Pantagraph articles photocopied on one page.
- 1.6.4. “Oh, Christmas tree!” *Pantagraph*. December 23, 1999. Photocopy.

**Folder 7: Literary Societies**

- 1.7.1. “Thirteenth Annual Literary Congress, 1894-1906”. Bloomington. Program including 13 local clubs.
- 1.7.2. . Bloomington Public Library letter of invitation to reception honoring literary societies. January 21, 1987
- 1.7.3. Photocopy of part of “Bloomington/Normal’s Literary History, 1879-1987”. Bloomington Public Library. 3 pp.
- 1.7.4. Photocopy of Program of reception honoring Bloomington/Normal’s Literary Societies, March 22, 1987.

**Folder 8: Castalian Club Minutes**

- 1.8.1. Photocopy of meeting minutes. Nov. 2, 16, and 30, 1926. 4 pp.
- 1.8.2. Photocopy of meeting minutes. April 17, 1928.
- 1.8.3. Photocopy of meeting minutes. November 16, 1976

**Folders 9 – 14: Club Members Correspondence**

Members’ notes on such topics as acceptances and regrets to membership and invitations, thank-you’s for gifts and memorial donations, and remembrances of deceased members.

**Folder 9: Club Members Correspondence, 1934-1942, undated**

4 items

**Folder 10: Club Members Correspondence, 1977-1985**

27 items

**Folder 11: Club Members Correspondence, 1986-1989**

19 items

**Folder 12: Club Members Correspondence, 1990-1995**

14 items

**Folder 13: Club Members Correspondence, 1996-2000**

21 items

**Folder 14: Club Members Correspondence, 2000-2003**

15 items

Contains all of the club’s **annual programs** from 1902/03 to 2015/16, with the exception of 1999/2000, 2000/01, 2006/07 and 2009/10. The programs from 1902/03 to 1971/72 are contained in six **boxed files** in this box. Duplicate copies for the years 1911/1912 to 1931/1932 are in Folders 15 – 20. Programs from 1972/73 – 2015/16 are in Folders 21 – 29.

**Folder 15: Programs 1911/12 – 1914/15 (copy 2)**  
**Folder 16: Programs 1915/16 – 1918/19 (copy 2)**  
**Folder 17: Programs 1919/20 – 1921/22 (copy 2)**  
**Folder 18: Programs 1922/23 – 1924/25 (copy 2)**  
**Folder 19: Programs 1926/27 – 1929/30 (copy 2)**  
**Folder 20: Programs 1930/31 – 1931/32 (copy 2)**  
**Folder 21: Programs 1972/73 – 1975/76**  
**Folder 22: Programs 1976/77 - 1979/80**  
**Folder 23: Programs 1980/81 – 1983/84**  
**Folder 24: Programs 1984/85 – 1988/89**  
**Folder 25: Programs 1989/90 – 1992/93**  
**Folder 26: Programs 1993/94 – 1996/97**  
**Folder 27: Programs 1997/98 – 1998/99; 2001/02 – 2002/03**  
**Folder 28: Programs 2003/04 – 2005/06; 2008/09**  
**Folder 29: Programs 2011/12; 2013/14; 2014/15 – 2015/16**

## **Box 2**

Contains the club's **record books** from 1893-1894 to 2011. Contents include meeting minutes, book review summaries, financial business, and lists of officers. Book 4 (1903-04 to 1909) includes signatures of new members, the most recent being 2015, in the early pages. 14 books.