

McLean County Museum of History

Normal History Club Collection

Processed Spring 1995  
Eric Morgan  
Reprocessed June 2022

Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 box
COLLECTION DATES:	1949-1988
RESTRICTIONS:	
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:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	

Brief History

In the late 1800s, life in a small university town did not offer many opportunities for artistic and cultural pursuits. In winter 1894, two women, Mrs. David Felmley and Mrs. J.M. Gray, both of Normal, invited a group of women interested in meeting regularly for a program of study to meet at the home of Mrs. R. G. Bright, 603 Broadway, Normal. Here the Normal History Club was formally organized on February 10, 1894 with Mrs. Felmley as president, Miss McCann as vice-president, and Mrs. Bright as secretary. The first topic chosen for study was English History. . . In 1896 meetings changed to Friday afternoons twice a month, a schedule still followed. At the beginning of its 94<sup>th</sup> year, the Normal History Club with 25 active and 7 honorary members continues to adhere closely to the purpose for which it was organized – mutual improvement through a program of study. *Adapted from "Bloomington-Normal's Literary History, 1879-1987"*

Scope

This collection includes annual program booklets from 1949-1988, research papers presented during the 1963-64 year, and miscellaneous ephemera. Annual program booklets include planned activities

and topics plus member lists with contact information. Research papers for 1963-64 focused on McLean County history.

## Folder Inventory

### Folder 1: Club History

- 1.1 "A Thumbnail Sketch of the Purposes of the Normal History Club with Apologies to Abraham Lincoln," by Mrs. Frank Whitman, 1974. Handwritten copy and typed transcription.
- 1.2 "Biographical Sketches of the Twelve Charter Members of The Normal History Club Founded February 10, 1894, compiled by Better Porter, 1993. 6 pp including photocopy of 1894 club program and 1949 *Pantagraph* article.
- 1.3 "Our Founders" by Betty Porter, 1993. 12 pp.
- 1.4 "Normal History Club – the First 100 Years." 2 pp.
- 1.5 "Normal History Club takes its place in books as it turns 100 years old," *Pantagraph*, 3 Apr 1994.
- 1.6 Hand printed copy of *Pantagraph* article of 10 Feb 1894 on new reading and literary circle in Normal.

### Folder 2: Annual Program Booklets

- 2.1 Yearly program booklets, 1949-1987.
- 2.2 Program for 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary banquet, 1969.
- 2.3 Program for 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner, 1994.

### Folder 3: Research Papers for 1963-64

- 3.1 Anderson, Gladys: "County and Town Organization" on early history of the county including early landmarks and platted settlement, 10 pages.
- 3.2 Anderson, Mildred: "The Good Earth and its Early Inhabitants, McLean Co." 14 pages.
- 3.3 Bone, Karin: "Call to Arms" on county residents' participation in wars from the Revolution to WWII, 16 pages.
- 3.4 Dalluge, Shirley: "Ghost Towns and Landmarks," 20 pages.
- 3.5 Johnson, Frances: "The Early History of Industries, Business, and Agriculture in McLean County," 11 pages.
- 3.6 Montgomery, Ruth: "Transportation from Trail to Air," 9 pages.
- 3.7 O'Connor, Mildred: "Circus Lore" on circus/flying acts originating in McLean County, 17 pages.
- 3.8 Watts, Charlene: "Leaders in the Fine Arts" on prominent figures in the fine arts with ties to McLean County, 15 pages.

### Folder 4: Research Paper

- 4.1 Brown, Helen: "Travel and Transportation," 12 pp. 1994.

### Folder 5: Miscellaneous