

**Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont
Records, 1936-2011
Doc 162 & MSA 617**

Introduction

The records of the Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont (FGCV) document the activities of that organization from its beginnings in the 1930s to 2011. Substantial focus is on the efforts of the FGCV in support of legislation limiting and prohibiting billboards, primarily from 1938-1969. Most of the records in the collection were “deposited by the Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont; by Mrs. Schaefer, Historian,” sometime in the period, 1969 to ca. 1975 when Mary Coyle Schaefer was FGCV Historian; additions were made in 2011. The collection fills one document storage box and one flip top archival box (1.5 linear foot) of shelf space.

Institutional History

The Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont were formed in the 1936-1937 calendar year and are currently responsible for coordinating the goals and activities of the various garden clubs within the state. Activities and responsibilities undertaken by the FGCV include support or direction of the following: civic development projects, garden therapy projects, a flower show school, educational programs in the fields of horticulture, forestry, ecology, landscape design and flower design, establishing and maintaining nature trails, and increasing environmental awareness. The FGCV also provides a scholarship to one Vermont student interested in the study of horticulture, forestry, ecology or other gardening subjects and works to keep their membership and the general public informed about both environmental problems and any legislation that will have an environmental impact.

Historically, the FGCV have been active participants in supporting and campaigning for legislation to improve and maintain the environment. From 1938 to 1969 they lent vocal support to legislation designed to restrict the use and placement of billboards on both the state and national levels. The FGCV joined other voices against billboards in 1938 and remained fairly active supporters of prohibiting billboards up to and beyond the point at which Vermont’s billboard law was passed in 1968. Other legislation which they have supported includes the Endangered and Nongame Species Conservation Act and legislation pertaining to the establishment of a National Garden Week and a Vermont Garden Week. One of the founders of the FGCV was Hortense Ferguson Childs; the first president of the FGCV was Miss Ethel Winnik of Fair Haven.

Other significant projects in the history of the FGCV include the designation of Route 4 between Fair Haven and White River Junction as a Blue Star Memorial Highway. The national Blue Star Memorial Highway project was envisioned as a memorial to those who had served in the country’s armed forces. In 1947, the stretch between Fair Haven and White River Junction had four markers placed honoring General Leonard F. Wing, who served with the 43rd Division in the Pacific Theater during World War II and was a Vermonter.

The general histories within the collection contain detailed chronologies of the activities and achievements of the Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont for the period 1936-1999.

Scope & Content

This collection consists primarily of the records of the Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont (FGCV) and documents the activities of that organization from its beginnings in the 1930s to 2011. The collection includes general organizational records ranging from bylaws and resolutions passed by the FGCV to official reports, primarily from 1944-1947, given to the executive board and general membership during annual meetings. There are also annual meeting programs and records of awards given during annual meetings in the period, 1961-1971. The awards records include both lists of award recipients and remarks made in relation to many of the awards. Correspondence, papers, and newspaper articles document the dedication of a stretch of Route 4 from Fair Haven to White River Junction as part of the Blue Star Memorial Highway with markers honoring Vermonter and World War II general, Leonard F. Wing. After the dedication in 1947, care for the markers and their sites was taken over by the FGCV and their efforts in relation to this stretch of highway from 1945 to 1966 are documented in the collection. Additional organizational records, including meeting minutes, can also be found in the papers accumulated by past FGCV presidents, 1988-2009 (found in series V: Presidents' records).

Other correspondence and papers of the FGCV in the collection pertain exclusively to various pieces of legislation. Between 1938 and 1969, correspondence, papers, and newspaper articles document the FGCV's support of legislation to restrict and prohibit billboards. Their support of Vermont's billboard law of 1968, prohibiting the roadside advertisements within the state, as well as its precursors is well-documented. The Highway Beatification Act is also frequently mentioned and correspondence with other groups and individuals supporting billboard restriction is abundant. Correspondence in 1978-1981 addresses concerns about the effect later highway legislation would have on the billboard restriction law. Other correspondence documents the FGCV's understanding of the Endangered and Nongame Species Conservation Act in 1981 and their support of efforts to designate a National Garden Week and a Vermont Garden Week from 1980-1982. One of the Vermont Garden Week activities involved planting flowers in window boxes in the Pavilion building in Montpelier.

Also in the collection are publications and pamphlets of the Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont, including issues of their newsletter the *Vermont Leaf* from 1960-1986 and in 1940 and 1941. Both general histories containing detailed chronologies of the activities and achievements of the Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont for the period 1936-1999 and more specific historian's reports, covering a period from 1930-2001 are included in the collection. The historian's reports were typically prepared either annually or biannually and document the achievements of the FGCV over the previous year or two years.

Organization

The FGCV records have been organized into four series:

- I. General Organization Records
- II. Legislation
- III. Pamphlets and Publications
- IV. Histories
- V. Presidents' records

Related Materials

A scrapbook entitled, "Horticulture in Vermont," assembled ca. 1942-1944 by the Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont, which tells stories of Vermonters' contributions to the field of horticulture can be found in the VHS library collections at call number MS Folio 635 F317.

Inventory

I. General Organizational Records:

- Doc 162:1 By-laws, 1970-1998
- 2 Resolutions, 1969-1999
- 3 Reports, 1944-1947, 1999-2001 (see also series V: Presidents' records)
- 3a Financial records, 1975-2001 (see also series V: Presidents' records)
- 3b _____, accounts, 1982-1998 (see also series V: Presidents' records)
- 3c _____, bills and vouchers, 1998-1999
- 4 Awards, 1961-2011
- 5 Meetings, annual programs, 1937-1986, 1998-2001
- 6a _____, guest registers, 1937-1949, 1971-2001
- 6b Membership, 1960-2009 (bulk: 1989-2009)
- 7a Blue Star Memorial Highway project, 1945-1966
- 7b Programs, 1990-1999
- 8 _____, undated
- 9 _____, clippings, 1948 and undated

II. Legislation:

- 10 Anti-billboard legislation, 1938-1949
- 11 _____, 1951-1962
- 12 _____, 1965-1966
- 13 _____, 1967-1969, 1978-1981
- 14 _____, clippings, 1940-1967, and undated
- 15 Endangered and Nongame Species Conservation Act, 1981
- 16 National Garden Week/Vermont Garden Week, 1980-1982

III. Pamphlets and Publications

- 17 Newsletters, *Vermont Leaf* 1940-1941, 1960-1966
- 18 _____, 1967-1973

- 19a _____, 1977-1986, 1997-1998
- 19b _____, 2003-2011
- 19c *Vermont Leaf* committee, 1995-1997
- 20 Handbooks, 1963 and 2003
- 21 Flower shows, 1967-2011
- 22 Vermont trails, 2000-2001
- 22a *The Cook is in the Garden* cookbook, 2001

IV. Histories

- 23 Histories, general, 1929-1999
- 24 Historian's reports, ca. 1930-1960
- 25 _____, 1960-1979
- 26 _____, 1979-1990
- 27 _____, 1991-2001
- 28a Historian, job description and miscellaneous
- 28b *Burlington Garden Club, 1934-2009: 75 Years and Still Growing!*

V. Presidents' records

- 29 Minutes and papers, 1988-1989 (Regena Cote)
- MSA 617:1 _____, 1989-1991 (Virginia Allen)
- 2 _____, 1991-1993 (Helen Symons)
- 3 _____, 1993-1994 (Marge Wilbur)
- 4 _____, 1996-1997 (Pam Hebert)
- 5 _____, 1997-1999 (Victoria Bergeron)
- 6 Reports, 1997-1999 (Victoria Bergeron)
- 7 Minutes and papers, 1999-2000 (Bobbie Mankey)
- 8 _____, 2000-2001 (Bobbie Mankey)
- 9 Reports, committees, 1999-2001 (Bobbie Mankey)
- 10 _____, clubs, 1999-2001 (Bobbie Mankey)
- 11 Minutes and papers, 1999-2003 (Frankie Gibson)
- 12 _____, 2004-2007 (Caroline Frey)
- 13 _____, 2005-2007 (Elaine Dates)
- 14 _____, 2007-2009 (Susan Robinson)

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