

## **GUIDE TO THE PORT WASHINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY RECORDS**

### **Collection Abstract:**

The Port Washington Public Library was founded as a cooperative book club in 1892 by the Port Washington Woman's Club. The club, whose original officers included Caroline Hicks, Mrs. J.H. Tredwell, Mrs. Walter Cornwell, Miss L.P. Onderdonk, and Miss Wilhelmina Mitchell, established the library soon after their first meeting. Books donated by the club's members and other townspeople were made available in the front hall of Wilhelmina Mitchell's home. The records of the Port Washington Public Library span the years 1892-2004 and include accession books, ledgers, budget information, minutes, correspondence, circulation statistics, alphabetical files, clippings, photographs, printed matter and artifacts pertaining to the history of the library.

**Collection Title: Port Washington Public Library Records**

**Inclusive Dates: ca. 1892-2004**

**Size: 30 boxes and 7 volumes Boxes (15 l.f.)**

**Source: Port Washington Public Library**

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**Repository: Port Washington Public Library Local History Center**

## PORT WASHINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY RECORDS

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The Port Washington Public Library was founded as a cooperative book club in 1892 by the Port Washington Woman's Club. The club, whose original officers included Caroline Hicks, Mrs. J.H. Tredwell, Mrs. Walter Cornwell, Miss L.P. Onderdonk, and Miss Wilhelmina Mitchell, established the library soon after their first meeting. Books donated by the club's members and other townspeople were made available in the front hall of Wilhelmina Mitchell's home. The library was so successful that after two months it moved to larger quarters at the Baxter House on May 11, 1892. The Library received its official charter from the State Department of Education on November 21, 1895. The library had two other locations: the "Burtis store" (1903-1926) and Belleview Avenue (1926-1970) before moving to its present location. A major renovation and extension project was completed in 2002.

### **SCOPE AND CONTENT:**

The records of the Port Washington Public Library span the years 1892-2003 and include accession books, ledgers, budget information, minutes, correspondence, circulation statistics, alphabetical files, clippings, photographs, printed matter and artifacts pertaining to the history of the library. Accession books and ledgers are among the earliest records in the collection dating back to 1895. Minutes date from 1892 through 2003 with a gap for the years 1919-1943. The collection also includes early records of the Port Washington Woman's Club, records relating to the library's buildings, the Friends of the Library, the Art Advisory Council, files on the "Most Influential Books" projects (1942 and 1992) and a box of Wilhelmina Mitchell's personal papers. Among Wilhelmina Mitchell's papers are photographs, books, and a watch inscribed to her from the Library Association of Port Washington in 1921.

To celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary (1942) and its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary (1992) the Library asked a number of scholars and writers to "choose and comment on the books of the past fifty years that have most profoundly affected the thoughts and actions of humankind". Although only one original reply exists from 1942 (from Edmund Wilson), 1992 respondents include Rosamond Bernier, Daniel J. Boorstin, John Cage, Jimmy Carter, Maxine Hong Kingston, Eugene McCarthy and Sandra Day O'Connor.

The photographs are filed in binders and include images of the Belleview Avenue building as well as the current location, photographs of library events, programs and staff. Photographs from the Business Oral History Project, sponsored by the Friends of the Library, include images of Lewis Oil Company, Falconer Florist, Greenfield Pharmacy, Hunold Pharmacy, Quality Fish Market, Fairview Service Station, and other Port Washington businesses. [Oversized photographs of the present building are located in Box 16.]

A full list of the alphabetical files is included in the box list for the collection. Files contain bibliographies, brochures, committee files, memorabilia and property files. Clippings from the *Port Washington News* (ca. 1913-1991) are filed in boxes 23-25. A binder of publicity clippings (ca. 1961-1973) was created by the Library's Community Relations Department.

**OTHER SUBJECTS:**

Art Advisory Council (A.A.C.)  
Friends of the Library

**BOX LIST:**

<b><u>Box</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Content</u></b>
1		Accession Books, Ledgers, 1901-1920
2		Accession Books, Ledgers, 1920-1927
3		Accession Books; Books Purchased, 1895-1926; Financial Ledger, ca. 1949-1955; Catalog System Table (Cutter Table)
4		Statistics – Circulation, 1899-1927
5		Statistics – Circulation, 1927-1934
6		Board of Trustees Minutes, 1892-1918
7		Board of Trustees Minutes, Jan. 1944 – Dec. 1963
8		Board of Trustees Minutes, Jan. 1964 – Dec. 1970
9		Board of Trustees Minutes, Jan. 1971- Dec. 1977
10		Board of Trustees Minutes, Jan. 1978 – Dec. 1984
11		Board of Trustees Minutes, Jan. 1985 – June 1991
12		Board of Trustees Minutes, July 1991 – June 1997
13		Board of Trustees Minutes, July 1997 – June 2003
14		Woman's Club – Reports, Membership Lists, Misc., 1892-1914; PW Free Library, 1913

<b><u>Box</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Content</u></b>
15		Board of Trustees – Correspondence, 1993-94 Buildings – Belleview Ave. Building
16		Buildings – Modern Library Building (1960’s) [Includes oversized photographs]
17		Buildings – Modern Library Building – 2002 Opening
18		Buildings – Modern Library Building – Media Center
19		Friends of the Library [ <b>See also: Photograph Albums – Friends</b> <b>of the Library</b> ] (Includes Book & Author Lunch)
20		Friends of the Library Art Advisory Council (A.A.C.) [ <b>See also: Scrapbooks - AAC</b> ]
21		Art Advisory Council (A.A.C.)
22		Most Influential Books
23		Clippings, 1892-1903 <i>Port Washington News</i> Clippings (Copies), 1913-1938
24		<i>Port Washington News</i> Clippings (Copies), 1966-1977
25		<i>Port Washington News</i> Clippings (Copies), 1978-1991;2004
26		Miscellaneous Clippings
27		Wilhelmina Mitchell Personal Papers
28		<b>PWPL Alphabetical files (A- E):</b>
	1	Advisory Council Policy, 1982
	2	Awards – John Cotton Dana Publicity Award, 1966
	3	Bibliographies, ca. 1950’s-1960’s
	4	Brochures – Instructional booklets
	5	Brochures – “Unlocking the Past”, 1964
	6	Brochures – Miscellaneous
	7	Budget, 1971; 2000
	8	By-Laws and Constitution, 1913; 1951; 1989
	9	Catalogue (printed), undated
	9A	Centennial Celebration – Exhibit text and photocopies, 1992 [ <b>See also: Photograph album 6 –Friends of the Library</b> ]

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Content</u>
28	10-11	Centennial Celebration – Printed matter, 1992
	12	Committees – Garden Committee, ca. 1930's
	13	Committees – Garden Committee notebook, 1934-36
	14	Committees – Planning Committee, 1919
	15	Correspondence – General, 1918-1963
	16	deSciora, Edward – Term papers, 1951; 1954
	17	Employees – Retirement party (Marie Cosolito), 1995
	18	Employees – Contracts and policies
29	<b>PWPL Alphabetical files (F-W):</b>	
	1	Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration, 1941-42
	2	Foundation
	3	Insurance Policy, 1895
	4	Memorabilia
	5	Memorabilia – Bookmarks
	6	Miscellaneous papers and documents, ca. 1892-1990
	7	Non-user Questionnaire, 1969
	8	Policy Statements, ca. 1944-1977
	9	<i>PWPL News</i> , 10/68; 11/69 & Budget Message, 1967-68; 1968-69
	10	Programs, ca. 1914-1967
	11	Programs – Publicity materials
	12	Programs – Children's – Publicity materials
	12A	Programs – Oral History – "It Looks Like Yesterday to Me" – Brochure and publicity, 1985.
	13	Property – Deeds, Mortgages, 1874; 1903
	14	Property – Deeds, Mortgages, 1912-1941
	15	Property – Correspondence, Receipts, 1903; 1925-1947
	16	University of the State of NY – Correspondence and Charter Transfer documents, 1895-1929
	17	Wills and bequests, 1918-1935
	18	WPA Project, 1935
30		Guest Books, ca. 1964-71 & undated Award from Concrete Industry Board, 1970 Printing blocks

**Scrapbooks –**

- 1) Publicity Clippings, (Community Relations Department)  
ca. 1961-1971
- 2) Art Advisory Council – Clippings, programs, exhibit publicity  
1988-1997

## **Photograph Albums**

### Volume 1 –

Board of Trustees  
Friends of the Library (including Book & Author Luncheons)  
Art Advisory Council  
Staff

### Volume 2 –

Baxter Homestead  
Burtis House  
Bellevue Ave. (includes PW Garden Club decorations, 1940's-1950's)  
Modern Building (1960's) – Plans, Construction, Models

### Volume 3 -

Modern Building – Construction (1968-1969), Exterior Views

### Volume 4 –

Modern Building (ca. 1960's) - Interiors, Children's Room, Contact  
Sheets, Post Cards  
Children's Services

### Volume 5 -

Most Influential Books Respondents, 1991  
Programs – General  
Publicity – General  
Publicity – Head Shots  
Miscellaneous

### Volume 6 –

Friends of the Library –  
Exhibit and Publicity -“Century: 100 years of the Port Washington  
Public Library”

### Volume 7 –

Friends of the Library – Business Oral History Project

## **Oversize material**

Library Charters from the University of the State of New York - In Janet West's office

- 1) Port Washington Free Library, 1895; 1913
- 2) Port Washington Free Library (Amendment), 1913
- 3) Port Washington Public Library, 1925