



# WOMEN'S HISTORY AND RESOURCE CENTER

## ADVANCEMENT PLAN

### WHRC: Preserve, Promote, and Inspire

2022-2024 Emphasis: Encourage member participation in diverse club and community projects developed to preserve the past, promote the present, and inspire the future.

From the Federation's founding in 1890, GFWC members have understood the historic significance of the organization's mission to improve communities through volunteer service. The Women's History and Resource Center of the General Federation of Women's Clubs officially opened at GFWC Headquarters in Washington, DC, on May 1, 1984.

Regardless of the focus of a community service project, it may benefit from an historical perspective. The WHRC strives to educate and inspire GFWC members and potential members, the research community, and the public to explore the rich, historical role of women volunteers through GFWC's expansive collections.

The WHRC offers access to readily available reference services, an online research catalog, educational programs and publications, creative exhibits, and dynamic partnerships to all those interested in using its resources. Benefits of membership made possible through the WHRC include preservation of historic records, buildings, and artifacts; and creative ways to use GFWC's history for community outreach.

GFWC's history is full of examples of successful projects that demonstrate the important relationship between grassroots and international efforts, the significance of long-range planning and thoughtful organization, and the value of community service in developing strong and compassionate leaders.

The *GFWC Women's History and Resource Center Advancement Guide* encourages every club to investigate and document its own history by learning about GFWC's past. Use the guide to explore and share GFWC's amazing history while documenting your own!

### 2022-2024 WOMEN'S HISTORY AND RESOURCE CENTER COMMITTEE

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## HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS:



### Women's History and Resource Center Birthday Party

GFWC Eldorado Woman's Club (IL) hosted a Women's History and Resource Center (WHRC) birthday party for attendees at the GFWC Illinois State Convention. A short history of the Women's History and Resource Center was given by the state WHRC chairman and a birthday cake was served by the club. Each attendee was given a WHRC brochure and instructions to become a member.



### Scrapbooking Club History

GFWC Woman's Club of Paramus, New Jersey (NJ) spent over 300 hours preserving their club's history with a scrapbooking project. Members worked on the current scrapbooks by taking pictures and posting them. Members then identified and logged events and photographs chronologically, preserving not only the pictures but the history of the club.



### "Service is our Special-TEA"

GFWC Kanawha Woman's Club (VA) founded in 1978, counted down the days to May 20, 2019, the 40th anniversary of the club's charter. The President's theme, "Service is our Special-TEA", inspired the idea to celebrate with an afternoon tea. An authentic tea was researched. The history and etiquette of royal traditions were shared. The club's programs and projects of the past 40 years were also featured.



### Windows Into the Past

GFWC Miami Woman's Club (FL) hosted a meeting featuring Bee Hines, the first black woman hired by the Miami Herald as a writer, and Enid C. Pinkney, who worked to ensure the role of African Americans in Miami's history is acknowledged. The two "windows into the past" communicated what life was like growing up in Miami from the 1950's to the present day.

**OVERVIEW OF GFWC COLLECTIONS**

The GFWC Women's History and Resource Center manages the organizational archives of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, related special collections, and a complementary research library. Our Archives document GFWC's historical development from 1890 to the present, including the role of GFWC clubwomen in promoting education, leadership, and social and political advocacy in the broad programmatic areas of art and literature, conservation, personal and public education, public and international affairs, and home and community life. GFWC members encompass some of the most prominent women of their respective eras, including Julia Ward Howe, Jane Addams, Julia Lathrop, Alice Lakey, Mary Belle King Sherman, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Margaret Chase Smith.

GFWC programs have included advocacy for women's suffrage, child labor and juvenile court laws, community and family health reform, the establishment of national parks, the preservation of Native American culture, peacetime uses of technology, libraries and literacy, wartime service, the Equal Rights Amendment, and international humanitarian efforts.

Special Collections held by the WHRC include State Federation and club histories, oral histories, photographs, and art and artifacts. GFWC's most significant "artifact" is its Washington, DC Headquarters, which was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1991.

GFWC's Research Library consists of nearly 5,000 publications that provide a broad context for researching the history of GFWC and women volunteers. The GFWC Collections Management Policy, which defines how GFWC collections are acquired, managed, and preserved, can be found at [www.GFWC.org/what-we-do/WHRC](http://www.GFWC.org/what-we-do/WHRC).

**HOW DOES THE WOMEN'S HISTORY AND RESOURCE CENTER SUPPORT MY CLUB?**

- WHRC can help you preserve your club's archives, record the oral history of longtime members, and write an engaging historical narrative. The WHRC has prepared two guidelines to help you with these projects: *A Guide for Recording Oral History* and *A Guide for Preserving and Writing Club History*. Email [WHRC@GFWC.org](mailto:WHRC@GFWC.org) or call 202-347-3168 for a free copy of these publications.
- The WHRC can help you develop programs using GFWC history to promote interest and membership. (Refer to "Suggested GFWC History Projects" below.)
- The WHRC helps manage the preservation of GFWC's National Landmark Headquarters building.
- The WHRC can help you navigate catalog and online exhibits and provide advice to clubs and State Federations on how to make their own collections accessible online. The WHRC uses the latest technology to make collections available to GFWC members throughout the world. Visit [www.GFWC.org/what-we-do/WHRC](http://www.GFWC.org/what-we-do/WHRC).
- GFWC publishes the *WHRC Newsletter*, a publication available for complimentary subscription, and other publications to assist and promote clubs doing projects related to GFWC history or historic preservation.
- With approved appointment, GFWC offers complimentary tours highlighting exhibits at GFWC Headquarters for groups and individuals.
- The WHRC provides research opportunities for members and the public.

**HOW CAN MY CLUB SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE WOMEN'S HISTORY AND RESOURCE CENTER?**

- Join Friends of the WHRC. (Form provided.)
- Become an onsite volunteer. The WHRC needs help to make the thousands of club histories and hundreds of oral history transcripts accessible online. Onsite volunteers may work as GFWC Headquarters tour guides or under the guidance of WHRC staff. Members can also volunteer through participating in the newsletter.

**WOMEN'S HISTORY AND RESOURCE CENTER**

- Help make the WHRC an internationally recognizable resource on the historical role of women volunteers by promoting WHRC collections, services, and student field study opportunities to local colleges, universities, and historical institutions.
- Participate in events that feature WHRC services and benefits, such as tutorials and workshops, as well as the Women's History Month event held each year in March at GFWC Headquarters.
- Encourage the appointment of a WHRC Chairman in State Federations and clubs.
- Keep the WHRC updated on the location of club and State Federation archives.
- Report your WHRC program activities to GFWC. We want to share your success stories to inspire others.

**PROJECT IDEAS**

Develop and incorporate club and community projects aimed at preserving women's history. Educate club and community members on the current relevance of GFWC and club histories. Develop diverse and creative projects to encourage active member participation.

- Invite members to take turns each month giving a report on a well-known woman in history or one currently making history.
- Write your club history. "*WHRC Guidelines for Writing Club Histories*" is available from the GFWC Marketplace.
- Prepare a PowerPoint video presentation of past and present members, major service projects, and historical artifacts to be used at membership events, fundraisers, and community events.
- Hold a club scavenger hunt to help members learn about the history of your club or GFWC. Divide members into groups of three and give them a list of 40 things to find. Some items can be found in club yearbooks or scrapbooks, while others may require a "seasoned" member for an answer. After 20 minutes, provide the answers to the group using pictures and information in the scrapbooks to recount the founding of the club and past projects. Long-time members can add interesting facts.
- Choose a member each month who will be celebrating her birthday. Interview her and prepare a presentation for your meeting. Also highlight a member from the past or an event from the past.
- Educate the public about your history by inviting history teachers and students to visit your club. Share scrapbooks from early days and club histories.
- Observe Women's History Month in March by presenting a "Woman of Distinction" award to a club member or community member who exhibits outstanding service to their community and exemplifies all the qualities set forth in Mary Stewart's *Collect for Clubwomen* in the Member Portal Digital Library.

**SUGGESTED GFWC HISTORY PROJECTS**

- Contact the WHRC for tips for using WHRC publications and electronic resources for club program ideas. Use the booklet *Rising by Light to Higher Things: Highlights of GFWC's Collections* to create programs on GFWC's support of American Art; the GFWC Timeline to relate GFWC national service programs to local ones; or GFWC photographs of events, people, or unique publications and memorabilia to illustrate a PowerPoint presentation.
- Contact the WHRC to receive a scripted PowerPoint presentation that provides an historical and interior tour of 1734 N Street.
- Highlight your club's history to demonstrate the importance of your club to your community. For more information on membership recruitment activities, review the *GFWC Membership Advancement Guide* in the *GFWC Club Manual*.
- Gain inspiration for fundraising and community outreach by reviewing past GFWC Community Improvement Program Award winners in the WHRC online catalog. GFWC history is relevant to ALL program areas.
- Develop a proactive public awareness program by offering GFWC history stories to your local news media for Women's History Month (March), Federation Day (April 24), and Archives Month (October).
- Partner with local historical institutions to promote the role of your club in local history.
- Work with your local public schools to assist students with National History Day projects on women's history; offer to serve as judges for local History Day competitions.

# WOMEN'S HISTORY AND RESOURCE CENTER

## BECOME A FRIEND OF THE WHRC

Donate to the GFWC Women's History and Resource Center in support of its mission and become a Friend of the WHRC. By joining the Friends of the WHRC, you will help:

- Preserve and maintain GFWC collections
- Increase research library acquisitions
- Provide student field study opportunities

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Club \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

For club memberships, please provide contact information for the club president.

Club president \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email edition of *WHRC News*:  Yes  No  
 Check donation status:  Individual  Club

Checks, with "WHRC" in the memo line, should be made payable and sent to:  
 GFWC  
 1734 N Street NW  
 Washington, DC 20036-29990

## FRIEND LEVELS

### PRESIDENTIAL—\$1,000 per year

- Special donor gift
- Name of individual or club added to large plaque outside the WHRC Library

### BENEFACTOR—\$500 per year

- Contribution acknowledged in *GFWC Clubwoman Magazine*
- Full day archives training workshop for individual or club representative using the collections at WHRC (Small group format; certificate provided)

### PATRON—\$250 per year

- 20 percent discount on library research services, including photocopying

### FRIEND—\$50 per year

- Friends of the WHRC pin
- Subscription to *WHRC News* (name listed)
- Identification as Friends member with Convention name badge ribbon

## WHRC HERITAGE PIN

In 1892, the Committee on the Federation Badge Pin was created to design an image that would reflect the aim of GFWC. Appointees included GFWC's founder, Jane Cunningham Croly, and its first president, Charlotte Emmerson Brown. The Committee chose the sun's rays and the color blue as elements to symbolize the Federation. The resulting pin, GFWC's original emblem, featured an image of the rising sun in a blue sky above snow-capped mountains with its rays illuminating "GFWC" in block lettering. An upturned, russet colored banner displayed the motto, "Unity in Diversity."

The WHRC Heritage Pin offers a faithful facsimile of the original emblem on an updated lapel pin with a magnetic back. Proceeds from the Heritage Pin will be used to repair or replace the picture frames that display GFWC's historic collection of International Past President Portraits. Cost of pin - \$15, available through the GFWC Marketplace.



**PLEASE COPY THIS FORM**

**HOW CAN I OR MY CLUB ARRANGE A TOUR OR SCHEDULE A RESEARCH VISIT?**

A National Historic Landmark, 1734 N Street NW, is a Washington must-see for GFWC clubwomen and their guests. The WHRC manages access to GFWC's historic archives and collections, including tours of GFWC Headquarters. Group tours and research appointments must be scheduled in advance by emailing [GFWC@GFWC.org](mailto:GFWC@GFWC.org) or calling 202-347-3168. Tour and research hours are between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. GFWC is closed on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, the Wednesday-Friday of Thanksgiving week, and the week between Christmas and New Year's Day. Tour admission is free for GFWC members and by suggested contribution for non-members.

**GUIDE TO USING THE WHRC ONLINE CATALOG**

A primary goal of the WHRC is to make GFWC's valuable historical records more accessible to our members, the scholarly research community, and the public. Improved access will promote greater recognition for the contributions of GFWC clubwomen and inspire members to use the lessons of past successes to build solid membership, strong leadership, and meaningful community service projects.

The WHRC online catalog allows GFWC members and website visitors, including those who come to the catalog via a general web search engine such as Google, to explore a wide range of GFWC collections. The tips in this Guide are meant to be a quick outline to navigating the WHRC online catalog. For additional guidance, please do not hesitate to email [WHRC@GFWC.org](mailto:WHRC@GFWC.org) or call 202-347-3168. To access the catalog through the GFWC website:

1. Go to [www.GFWC.org/What-We-Do/WHRC](http://www.GFWC.org/What-We-Do/WHRC)
2. Click on the "Search the Collections" button to bring you to the WHRC home page.

**NAVIGATING THE ONLINE CATALOG FROM THE MAIN CATALOG PAGE**

**KEYWORD SEARCH** - This search field casts the widest net for information, like the simple keyword search feature of Google. The search covers all fields included in the catalog records, including donors, who may be individuals, clubs, or State Federations. As with Google, enclosing a multi-word search term in quotation marks will limit results to that phrase; for example, "South Dakota."

Interactive features in each record:

- Email Page (top, right)—send this image to a friend.
- Send Feedback (top, far right)—contact the WHRC with comments or questions.
- Order Image (below image)—request a copy for a club presentation or publication.
- Search Term (in record)—may provide additional information on that topic. For example, click on "GFWC Headquarters" to read details on the history of GFWC Headquarters.
- Person (not shown)—Click on the name of any GFWC International Past President to see her biography.
- Related Hyperlinks (not shown)—If digital content is available, a link will be provided to read a book, club or state history, or oral history online.