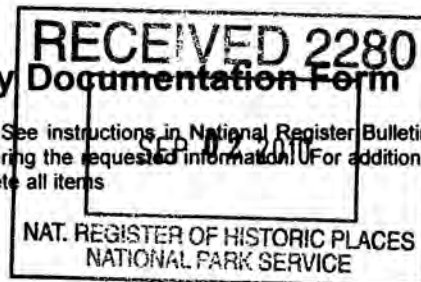


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National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.



X New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Clubhouses of New Jersey Women's Clubs

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

"Women's Clubs and the Progressive Ideal"

C. Form Prepared by

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date July 21, 2009

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D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature and title of certifying official

Date

4/30/10

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

9/25/10

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

Page Numbers

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

(if more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)

See attached pp 1-23

F. Associated Property Types

(Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)

See attached pp 1-3

G. Geographical Data

The geographical limits of this nomination are the state boundaries and coastal limits of New Jersey

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

(Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)

See attached p 1

I. Major Bibliographical References

(List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)

See attached pp 1-6

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

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SECTION E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Women's Clubs and the Progressive Ideal

By the turn of the 20th century, the nation was on a new path toward urbanization and industrial efficiency. Consequently, there was a growing middle class that found new opportunities for leisure activities. The role of women in society was changing too. Although educational and professional opportunities for women were still relatively rare, they were on the rise. Urban working class women, often of immigrant backgrounds, were tied to their factory jobs with long hours and squalid conditions. Upper - and middle-class urban women, with the advent of labor-saving devices at home, coupled with an increase in disposable income and leisure time, were able to engage in the social, cultural and civic-minded activities of the burgeoning progressive movement. Much like their male counterparts they began forming clubs, associations and societies outside the home. The period of the 1880s through the mid-1920s can be viewed as the age of voluntary organizing for women. It followed that the most active period of growth and engagement for women's Clubs was the late 1800s through the mid-1920s as well. By the turn of the 20th century, millions of women were members of clubs¹. Across the nation, women of all classes and races formed clubs, associations and societies that were literary and cultural in nature, dedicated to civic and social reform, and to suffrage and temperance. Some women founded and worked in settlement houses, helping urban working women, while others formed collegial alliances. Through these new volunteer organizations they formed social and intellectual bonds. Unlike their male counterparts who used their clubs as an escape from home and work, women used these organizations as vehicles for extending the values and culture of domestic life into the social, cultural and political life of their communities. Some organizations were strictly social in nature and provided a safe and acceptable place outside the home to interact with other women, but many were tightly organized and dedicated to effecting real societal change.

Karen Blair, a Professor of History at Central Washington University, has extensively researched, written and lectured about the role of women's voluntary organizations in America. In her lecture presented March 29, 2007 at Washington State History Museum², she argues that for white women, the parlor replaced the Church as the new and acceptable gathering place, with much of the focus of these newly formed associations on self-improvement through the study of literature, the arts, world travel and current events. Programs designed around social gatherings served to expand women's knowledge of the world. Additionally, even though this movement began along the East Coast, it spread throughout the country, from large cities to small towns. Activity was designed to accommodate a mother's schedule; these early organizations would generally meet from September to June and during the week while children were in school. Even though many clubs were organized along economic and racial lines during this time period, the club movement predominantly became the domain of the white middle class, that is, "the wives and daughters of middling businessmen, professionals and landowning farmers"³.

¹ (Blair, 1980) p. 119² www.washingtonwomenshistory.org/themes/clubs/default.aspx³ (Scott 1992), p.4

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All this new activity by women was scrutinized by some men in power. In 1905, for example, former President Grover Cleveland said "There are woman's clubs whose objects and intents are not only harmful, but harmful in a way that directly menaces the integrity of our homes."⁴ In response, women tended to reply by addressing the fact that what they were doing was taking care of "municipal housekeeping." This is the role they were particularly comfortable with as their missions rapidly evolved from being strictly study clubs to advocating for civic improvement and social change. These clubwomen began to lobby their local, state and federal government for reforms that directly affected their own communities on issues such as school reform, the development of recreational parks, clean streets, and anti-billboard campaigns, public health issues related to food, hospitals, mental health, child labor, free lending libraries, and village improvement. One fact remained, however, that women's clubs thrived completely outside the constraints of acceptable societal business structures and institutions. They served as a means of empowerment for women for the future – in politics, as a means of self-worth, as business professionals and leaders in their own communities and schools.

In discussing women's clubs and the women's club movement in American and in New Jersey, it may seem that there are inconsistencies between the use of "women's club" and "woman's club". In this context study, "woman's club" will only be used when it was the name of a particular club, since several of the early women's clubs did use the term "woman's club" in their names.

General Federation of Women's Clubs Formed

The first stirrings of the idea of coalescing into a formal alliance across the nation can be traced to the post-Civil War period. Although as early as 1800 women of means were organizing around religious activities to help the poor, it was not until after the Civil War that women began to organize albeit with a literary or cultural focus in mind. These activities offered women social interaction and intellectual self-improvement outside of their domestic responsibilities, while providing them with the rare opportunity to develop and hone their organizational and leadership skills in an acceptable environment.

While most women in the post-Civil War period did not work outside the home, there were a few professions where women were beginning to push their way into the working world: teaching, medicine, ministry, journalism and writing. It was the field of journalism that produced Jane Cunningham Croly, who has been called "the single most important figure in the woman's club movement."⁵ Croly, a professional New York journalist who wrote under the pen name of "Jennie June" had been concerned for many years about women's place in American society. When she was turned away from an all-male press club dinner in New York City honoring British novelist Charles Dickens, she called upon her female friends, primarily fellow writers, to form a club for women to challenge the status quo. The first meeting of the newly formed club, Sorosis, was held on April 13, 1868. Sorosis was a botanical term for a plant with an aggregation of flowers that bore fruit, and symbolized the women's determination to transform the "delicate and lovely ladies" into active participants in public life. Sorosis' articles of incorporation stated that the club was "formed for the promotion of useful relations among women, the discussion of principles which promised to exert a salutary

⁴ (Blair 1980), p 105⁵ (Blair 1980), p. 15

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effect upon women and on society, and the establishment of an order which should render women helpful to each other and actively benevolent to the world."⁶ So even early on, the women's club movement had at its foundations the belief that the clubs should work for positive societal change. Sorosis attracted white women who were mostly well-educated, career-oriented women, and many came from the arts and literary fields. The club stressed the importance of education, and opportunities for women to pursue careers and be financially independent. During the same year that Sorosis was founded, the New England Woman's Club (NEWC) was formed in Boston by Caroline Severance, a reformer who worked for such causes as temperance, abolition and women's suffrage. While the purpose of NEWC was similar to Sorosis, to increase women's influence outside of the family, the membership differed from Sorosis because it consisted of primarily progressive reformers, many not as career-oriented as the members of Sorosis.

Encouraged by the success of Sorosis, in 1890 Jane Croly proposed a conference in New York to bring together delegates from women's clubs around the country. Representatives from 61 women's clubs attended the meeting and formed the General Federation of Women's Clubs. The General Federation combined the reformist ideals of the NEWC and the self-improvement goals of the Sorosis Club into one organization seeking higher educational and social goals for women. The General Federation decided to meet every two years for conventions called Biennials, where members gathered together to discuss their goals, activities, organizational and social issues. The Biennials also served as an opportunity to hold elaborate receptions and parties, which were often covered by society pages reporting on the latest fashions.

Almost immediately, state federations began to form, and by the Second Biennial Convention in 1894, there were four state federations (Maine, Iowa, Utah and Massachusetts) and three hundred and fifty individual clubs. The General Federation legally incorporated in the state of New Jersey in December 1895, by which time its membership was composed of 440 individual clubs and 17 state federations, including the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs (NJSFWC), formed in November 1894.⁷

Founding a New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs

The particular New Jersey Women's Clubs described in this context study were selected because of the availability of primary source material and the time period in which they were at the height of their activities. The primary sources consisted of primarily unpublished work in the form of commemorative booklets on the occasion of an anniversary year, copies of the Club constitution and/or by-laws or selective runs of club yearbooks. Although the New Jersey Women's Clubs referred to in the narrative were founded in or around the same time period as the National and New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs, or the last decade of the 19th century, nearly half of those studied pre-dated the larger federations: The Woman's Club of Orange which was founded in 1872, the Woman's Club of Paterson, founded as The Tuesday Club in 1883, the Present Day Club of Princeton, founded in 1889, The Travelers' Club of New Brunswick, 1890, the Kalmia Club in Lambertville, founded as The Reading Circle in 1892, The Porch Club of Riverton in 1890 and The Monday Afternoon Club in Plainfield 1888.

⁶ (Wood History of General Federation, c. 1912), p.27

⁷ (Houde 1989), p. 70

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In New Jersey, local women's clubs began springing up as early as 1872, with the formation of the state's first, the Woman's Club of Orange. Women from this first club played important roles in the founding of both the General Federation and The New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs (NJSFWC). Created only a year after the General Federation was founded in 1893, the New Jersey State Federation had a close relationship with the General Federation of Women's Clubs from the beginning -- the first president of the General Federation was Charlotte Emerson Brown, of Orange.

The New Jersey State Federation was created as an umbrella group for existing local women's clubs. Susan M. Johnson, president of the Woman's Club of Orange, invited 150 women from 36 existing clubs throughout the state to meet at Union Hall, Orange, to discuss the "advisability of forming a state federation".⁸ By the end of the first meeting, a constitution and by-laws were written and adopted, and officers were elected. The New Jersey State Federation's first president was Mrs. Charles B. Yardley of the Woman's Club of Orange. The organization's objective, as stated in the constitution, was "to bring the women's clubs of the state into communication for acquaintance and mutual helpfulness."

Among these 36 charter members, there were several clubs from the more populated urban communities of northern and central New Jersey such as Bayonne, Elizabeth, Jersey City, Newark, Orange, Passaic, Plainfield, Roselle and Rahway. Most of the larger cities had several clubs on the list of founding members. The names of these charter clubs, which often changed as time went on, reflected the early literary purpose of some clubs with names like Woman's Literary Club in Arlington, the Felipsa Magazine Club, Ladies' Political and Social Society or Woman's Musical, Literary and Study Club of Bayonne, El Mora Women's Literary Club or Shakespeare Club of Elizabeth, or the Home Reading Circle of Rahway to name a few. A few women's clubs representing the less developed more rural or suburban areas of the state were also charter members. Northern towns of Morristown and Madison each had a club on list, and southern New Jersey was represented clubs from Bridgeton, Haddonfield, Merchantville and Salem.

The membership of the New Jersey State Federation in 1904 stood at 104 clubs with a total of 11,000 members. It was around this time, in 1906, that the club's organizational structure changed to accommodate their growing ranks. They divided the State into a hierarchy of Districts run by District Vice-presidents and county committees run by County Chairmen. This new structure made it easier to coordinate New Jersey State Federation efforts and disseminate information throughout the state. They held annual meetings beginning with the first in 1895 in Newark; the meetings were held in the fall until 1906, when the annual meeting date was changed to May, where it has remained to this day. Like the General Federation and the other state federations, these meetings were used for organizing and educating the membership. By 1917, there were over 200 clubs that belonged to the NJSFWC, with a total membership of approximately 18,000 women, a marked increase over the 1904 membership of 104 clubs and 11,000 members.

From the research of nearly sixteen geographically diverse women's clubs across New Jersey during the period of significance from the 1890s through the 1940s certain organizational trends and patterns have

⁸ (Fuller 1917), p. 8

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emerged. Regarding meeting times, these clubwomen usually met on weekdays (and often the club name was derived from this meeting time) once or twice a month and generally from October to May, in tandem with the school calendar. It seems that for the most part, the initial membership of local women's clubs was small, a number of 50 or below, and clubwomen often first met in each other's homes. By the early 20th century, clubs generally experienced a spike in membership and began building their own clubhouses or looking for larger public facilities in which to meet. At this point, membership in these clubs often numbered in the hundreds. For example, one of the early women's clubs in New Jersey (founded in 1872), the Woman's Club of Orange reportedly had 51 members in 1885, and by 1903 it had increased to 700 members. The Flemington Woman's Club had 34 charter members. Early figures were not available for Paterson, but in a 1921-22 Yearbook of the club there were 737 members and 17 on the wait list. The Woman's Club of Red Bank had 355 members in 1921; The Present Day Club of Princeton had 250 in 1928 with a waiting list of over Relying only on the scant documentation available, it nevertheless seems that for the most part, the initial membership of local women's clubs was small, a number of 50 or below, and clubwomen often 60; The Haddon Fortnightly had 405 members in 1927; and the Monday Afternoon Club has 125 members in 1905 and, according a history of the Club, had as many as 600 "over the years."

Literature and self-improvement

It is clear from the list of charter members of the New Jersey State Federation that the majority were literary clubs, as was the case with the early members of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. Similarly, like the General Federation members, it did not take long for the New Jersey State Federation members to expand their interests beyond those literary in nature, moving from self-improvement into areas of community improvement, or "municipal housekeeping." In fact, several early women's clubs in New Jersey used the term "village improvement" in their names, such as the Cranford Village Improvement Association, the Metuchen Borough Improvement League and the Bloomfield Town Improvement Association. These organizations were begun with the primary purpose of "municipal housekeeping", and usually did not include literary activities, too. At the first regular annual meeting of the New Jersey State Federation, held in Newark in October 1895, clubs reported on "doing a variety of educational and cultural work", such as establishing local libraries, providing scholarships for girls and working for school reform. A Library Committee was established in 1895, and the New Jersey State Federation's early interest in helping to establish and support local libraries became a focal point of the organization's activities.

Following the lead of the General Federation and other state federations, the New Jersey State Federation immersed itself in a wide range of activities from a cultural and literary focus to issues of social reform, and during the first two years, in addition to a Library Committee, it formed committees for: Town Improvement; Kindergarten; Reciprocity Bureau (a committee to facilitate the sharing of papers and lectures with other clubs); and Education. In 1899, the New Jersey State Federation endorsed an organizational plan adopted by the General Federation, and set up a similar committee structure to effectively deal with organizing and implementing a wide range of programs and issues. As in the case of the General Federation and many other women's clubs, this type of extensive and sophisticated organizational management in areas of membership, fundraising and public relations, for example, was being carried out by women volunteers who had no previous business or organizational experience, except for that gained by running their households.

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All of these Clubs provided a way for women to gather socially outside of their home for both personal and civic betterment. In the formative years, the New Jersey clubwomen gathered in towns and cities for companionship to explore what could be considered the liberal arts – lectures, programs and discussions covered a variety of topics on science, literature, art and philosophy. For example, the mission of the Quiet Hour Club of Metuchen was stated that “the club provide time for women to pursue their own intellectual interests away from the concern of domestic life.” The Woman’s Club of Red Bank was originally named the Philomathian Coterie, for “a love of learning.” The mission of the clubs quickly expanded to include civic improvement. Broadening women’s ever widening sphere of influence, this has been characterized as a form of “municipal housekeeping: The mission of the Woman’s Club of Paterson was “to promote civic betterment of the City of Paterson; to encourage the study of Philosophy, of Literature, Science and the Arts; to assist actively in promoting the passage of any legislative enactment which may receive the endorsement of the Club”; as was the Flemington Woman’s Club, who took on issues such as the “cleanliness of streets, promotion of literary interests, and every other thing tending to the advancement of the best interests of the village.” The Borough Improvement League of Metuchen, which began as a village improvement society with the Mayor’s wife as the first president, and both men and women members, eventually became a women’s club and joined the New Jersey State Federation of Women’s Clubs in 1936.

Environmental conservation

Environmental conservation was an issue in which the New Jersey State Federation had significant influence early in its history, even before the General Federation’s official involvement in the issue. The campaign to protect the Palisades, the rocky cliffs, waterfalls and rock pillars along the Hudson River in Bergen County, from destruction by quarrying activities was begun by citizens of New Jersey and New York in 1890. In 1894, the New Jersey State Federation joined other interested citizens to fight for legislation to protect the Palisades. As a result of their joint efforts, New Jersey Governor Foster Voorhees and New York Governor Theodore Roosevelt formed an Interstate Park Commission, whose responsibility was to acquire land along the Palisades to preserve the cliffs and shorefront. The New Jersey State Federation assisted the Commission in its fundraising, and the destruction of the Palisades was halted. The General Federation members first heard a presentation calling for the better protection of forests and woods at their convention in 1896, and subsequently formed committees to promote conservation. The key role of the New Jersey State Federation in preserving the Palisades was recognized in 1929, when the Women’s Federation Memorial was dedicated in Alpine Borough, along the Palisades.

Social Reform

The 1917 history of the New Jersey State Federation lists hundreds of topics discussed by speakers at Federation meetings during the first 20 years of the Federation’s history, including: Child Labor Laws; Conditions of Women and Girls in Jails; Standards for Public Recreation; Infant Mortality; Mothers’ Congress; Objectionable Billboards; Abolition of Soft Coal Smoke; Support of Anti-Polygamy Movement; State Truancy Legislation; Civil Service Reform; Teachers Retirement Fund; Women on School Boards; Suffrage for Women; Teaching of Sex Hygiene in Schools; and the Work of the Red Cross. There were also some speakers who addressed lighter

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topics such as Preservation of Wild Flowers; Early Christmas Shopping; The Mountain Laurel as the National Flower; and a discussion of the subject, "That There is a Lack of Humor in the Club Life of Women."⁹

The New Jersey State Federation, like the General Federation, continued to maintain an interest in cultural programming with supporting committees for art, literature and music, while expanding its work in the areas of social and educational reform and conservation with the remaining committees. In 1917, the following committees existed: Art; Civics; Conservation; Education; Home Economics; Industrial and Social Conditions; Legislation; Literature; Libraries; and Music.

Health and Food Safety

In the area of food safety, the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs was an early champion of the Pure Food Movement, thanks to Cranford Village Improvement Association member Alice Lakey. Lakey heard Dr. Harvey W. Wiley, chief of the Bureau of Chemistry of the Department of Agriculture, speak in 1903 before the Cranford Village Improvement Association about food safety and sanitation issues, and she became an instant supporter of the Pure Food Movement. She brought the issue to the New Jersey State Federation and in 1904 the organization passed a resolution calling for federal pure food legislation. Alice Lakey then brought the pure food issue to the General Federation the same year, and convinced the members to join in New Jersey's advocacy efforts. Thanks to the efforts of the New Jersey and General Federations, and the leadership of Alice Lakey, The Food and Drugs Act passed Congress in 1906.

Education

Education was an early and consistent cause championed by the New Jersey State Federation and the General Federation of Women's Clubs. In 1897, the General Federation identified education as the first of its nationwide efforts, and in the same year the New Jersey State Federation's Education Committee began to lobby the Governor to appoint a "state commission" for education. The New Jersey State Federation also advocated for establishing kindergarten classes in public schools as part of a national movement that was gaining momentum in the late 19th and early 20th century; before that time, most kindergarten classes were found in private schools, social settlements, charities and orphanages.¹⁰ According to Fuller's 1917 history, the New Jersey State Federation was successful in getting a state law passed "empowering cities of a certain class to establish Kindergartens in public schools under specified conditions; one being the request of a number of parents."

By the early 20th century, the organization was also successful in education reform efforts including the inclusion of domestic science, civics, music and art in the public school curricula and providing school lunches. They also called for a teachers' retirement fund, that school buildings be used for recreational purposes and that laws be amended to allow women to serve on local school boards.

⁹ (Fuller 1917)¹⁰ (Ross 1976)

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Continuing its strong tradition of working on behalf of education for women, the New Jersey State Federation began discussing the issue of making a college education available to girls in New Jersey as early as 1903. Under the leadership of Mabel Smith Douglass, a member of the College Club of Jersey City, the Federation undertook a campaign for higher education for New Jersey women. At its 1915 Convention, the membership adopted a resolution to attempt the founding of New Jersey College for Women, and spent \$2000 for a professional survey to determine the needs of a women's college. Mabel Douglass herself conducted exhaustive research by gathering statistics about the number of girls going out of state to attend colleges, visiting coed and women's colleges elsewhere, and meeting with many public officials to advocate for a women's college in New Jersey. In September 1918, the New Jersey College for Women opened with a class of 54 young women adjacent to Rutgers College campus in New Brunswick. The college was located in a renovated Italianate-style house built between 1855-1860 by U.S. Senator Levi D. Jarrard, and which was leased to the college by its owner at the time, John Neilson Carpender. Mabel Douglass became the first dean of the college, a position she held until 1933; the college was named in her honor in 1955.¹¹ After its founding, the New Jersey State Federation continued to be involved with the New Jersey College for Women, primarily in raising funds for campus construction projects. The Federation raised \$25,000 to build a Science building, dedicated in 1922, with the inscription, "This Hall of Science is presented by the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs in commemoration of the vision which led to the founding of the New Jersey College for Women. May the spirit of this place inspire high endeavor and great achievement." The Federation also raised \$100,000 by 1927 for the construction of a "Music Studio" at the college, which was dedicated on October 3, 1928, as the college celebrated its 10th Anniversary.

General Programs

Generally speaking, the programs run by local women's clubs were as impressive in their breadth as in their depth. In exploring the general local histories published as pamphlet or booklets, one can describe some basic generalities about the activities during the period of significance, or the first quarter of the 20th century. There were programs focused on literature, drama, art and music as well as programs and projects that served their communities' health, education and welfare. They brought in outside experts as speakers on political and cultural topics, as well as assigned members to prepare papers to be presented on different themes of interest. The majority of clubs were interested in establishing a circulating book collection, which often led to the founding of a public library in the community. They all became advocates for municipal improvements, including advocating for clean streets, anti-litter and anti-billboard campaigns, recreational open space and beautification campaigns. They advocated for issues related to mothers and children, as these clubwomen quickly assumed this role of "municipal housekeepers." All contributed to the war effort. All the volunteer work of the clubs was carried out through a committee structure.

The Woman's Club of Orange boasted speakers such as Woodrow Wilson, Susan B. Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt. Starting in 1913, they hosted plays, musicals, dramatic readings and theater parties for fun and benefits. They were particularly focused on education opportunities for girls and joined the New Jersey State Federation's effort to establish the New Jersey College for Women. In a pamphlet entitled *One Hundred Years*

¹¹ (Past and Promise, 1997)

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of *The Woman's Club of Orange: 1872-1972*, club highlights included the sponsorship of evening school for girls in Orange in 1873; advocacy against sweat system and child labor in 1902; the founding and management of a playground in 1912; the use of their clubhouse by the Red Cross during WWI.

The Flemington Woman's Club's first activity was to establish a Reading Room for the public. The club held a social at which everyone was asked to bring a book, and the Free Public Library was established in 1899. In 1910, the town was asked to take over the Library, which at that point consisted of 600 books. In addition, they immediately began to make civic improvements in Flemington by placing litter baskets around town in 1899 and erecting a stone fountain in front of the Court House in 1901. The club opened a public rest room in 1923; they supported girls in leadership training programs and provided college scholarships to both boys and girls; they helped homeless women and children; and the club contributed hundreds of volunteer hours to the Red Cross.

The Quiet Hour Club of Metuchen was founded as a study club and in the early years, focused programming on intellectual topics such as "New Jersey in the Time of the Revolution," "A Visit to Athens," "The Effects of a College Education on a Woman's Ability to Manage her Home." Current events were discussed at every meeting. During this time, the club also played a part in civic improvement, purchasing waste receptacles for Main Street, working for clean streets and the preservation of trees. They made a sizable contribution to the Metuchen Library and supported the New Jersey State Federation's effort to establish the New Jersey College of Women.

The Woman's Club of Red Bank began by gathering to explore a variety of subjects through literature, and after a year, they also began studying the histories of foreign countries. By the turn of the century, they had a growing desire to voice their own opinions and began a debate program. By 1903, "debates were touching on unthinkable subjects for women – politics." In 1912, they began to direct their efforts outwards when there was a tuberculosis epidemic. They advocated and offered financial and moral support for the building of a facility for TB patients. They became active in the War effort during WWI – adding *The Canteen*, *Red Cross*, *Woman's Motor Corps* and *Financing* to their existing list of committees. The Woman's Club became the coordinator of all volunteer groups in town formed to help the War effort. Even before the war they had First Aid classes in which participants could receive certification. After the War ended in 1918, they continued their community work and began the search for a clubhouse. Once established, the clubhouse served not only as a meeting place but "it also provided a comfortable and safe haven for teachers, nurses, and social workers who needed a home away from home." The Club played an important role in the formation of the Red Bank Library.

In 1898 The Present Day Club of Princeton formed the Village Improvement committee to deal with civic improvement, sanitary conditions, streets and vacant lots; they advocated for the prohibition of posting of notices on trees; in 1903 the club activities were divided into four committees—Literature, Art and Music, Education and Science, and Economics; in 1912 they formed the Department of Town Activities to keep up with civic work; in 1913 they worked toward securing a county Tubercular Hospital, fly extermination, regulations for dance halls and the formation of a colored women's club of Princeton. During WWI lectures became topical and they worked for the Red Cross raising money for the War Relief Fund. In the 1920s they sponsored art exhibitions, theater productions and tableaux, and bridge parties which "continued to thrive

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through 1931"; Throughout the 1930s, lectures and cultural programs continued, often with distinguished speakers of national note residing in the Princeton community; they boasted that amongst their members were Mrs. Grover Cleveland and Mrs. Woodrow Wilson.

Activities for The Haddon Fortnightly Club began with lectures on art, music and literature and the world but, in 1897, in discussing the work of other clubs in the federation, "it was thought we ought to aim to accomplish something more than our entertainment." So the Secretary looked into the idea of traveling libraries as philanthropy. Areas of interest in first quarter of 20th century included civic, literary, music, art and drama, and health and welfare programs such as providing trash receptacles, planting shade trees, better train, trolley and bus service, quality control on moving pictures, involvement in school board issues, public health; playgrounds; the creation of the Mountwell Dam and park, chaperoning girls at the community pool, support for the war efforts; prison work; women's higher education; world peace; and gardening.

Early committees of the Borough Improvement League of Metuchen illustrate how their mission focused on municipal issues. They included: Sanitary, Poison Ivy, Public Buildings, Natural Beauties, Beneficent, Outlook, Children's Auxiliary, Human, Street, and Mosquito. In addition, they also offered programs that taught sewing, home economics, cooking, natural history and gymnastics to children. In the early years they established street signs, garbage collection, formed a Mothers Club, enlarged the library, numbered houses in conjunction with the Water Company and formed a shade tree commission. In 1928, a scholarship fund was established for a Metuchen student going to college. The Borough Improvement League grew into an organization focused on charitable and social concerns rather than Borough improvements. During WWI, the Clubhouse was open to soldiers for one afternoon and evening a week for recreational purposes.

The Jersey City Woman's Club, in self-reflection, felt that it played a significant role in the lives of women "letting down the bars socially for the women of this city." They offered programs of a social nature, as well as those for civic improvement such as sweeping the streets – the club paid for the workers until the city saw the benefit and adopted it for their own. They inaugurated free Kindergartens – paying the expense until the school authorities were convinced and took it over. Among other things, they promoted city beautification by giving two fountains to the city as well as providing for a public restroom. They participated in The Plant Flower and Fruit Guild; the Tuberculosis League as well as the effort to establish a State college for Women.

The Woman's Club of Little Falls was another women's club that founded a public library. In 1908, the library function was held in a rented room next to the First Reformed Church Parsonage on Main Street, and members of the club donated books, organized them, served as librarians and had high school girls in the community conduct story hours for children. The rental fee for this space was \$100/year. In 1911, the library was moved to the basement of an old brownstone house at 103 Main Street. Club members continued to donate books and funds and held door-to-door drives until 1917 when the town took over the function.

In the early days, the women of the Kalmia Club of Lambertville gathered weekly to discuss literature, recite poetry or read an occasional essay. Each year members would choose a theme – usually an author – and learn all they could about the author and his work for the weekly discussions. By 1913, the club members had expanded the scope of their discussions to include social and civic issues, like many other local women's clubs.

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Some of the topics discussed by the club members that year were: "The Business of Being a Woman", "Broaden Yourself Through Music" and "A Woman's Part in the Government: More Effective With or Without the Ballot?" In the 1920s, some topics discussed were: "Ideas for Securing Electric Power from the Delaware" and "Enforcing Prohibition."

The Porch Club of Riverton began with activities that ranged from studying literature, current events, parliamentary law, world politics, religions, and history to studying the lives of artists, musicians and authors. The Porch Club had a strong interest and commitment from the beginning to improving education and welfare of children. The Porch Club was responsible for instituting Burlington County's first public school Kindergarten in Riverton. In 1897, a Porch Club representative was sent to Washington, D.C. to participate in the formation of the National Congress of Mothers, the forerunner of the PTA, and in 1900 the club was instrumental in forming a State Congress of Mothers in Riverton, with one of the Porch Club's founding members, Mary Grice, as the first president (who later served as the first woman elected to a Board of Education in New Jersey). The Club also initiated a well-baby clinic and childcare classes, as well as establishing a Visiting Nurse Service. The Club's Village Improvement Department actively worked for programs that improved public health and sanitation in town, by distributing town trash cans, helping to institute regular town garbage collection.

The Monday Afternoon Club in Plainfield promoted activities and programs in art, music, public affairs, drama, gardens, and literature. At one time members had to present scholarly papers before an audience in order to be accepted into the Club. In 1916, during World War I, the Club established the Kenyon Garden Association in memory of their founder, Miss Kenyon. The gardens were small plots provided to children in the summer to teach them about nurturing plants as well as exercising their own bodies. In 1925, the gardens were discontinued and the land was sold to the Union County Park Commission.

Sustaining the Women's Club Movement in New Jersey: Junior clubs

By the 1920s, the opportunities for white women in society as a whole were changing and, no doubt, this contributed to the changing role clubs played in communities. The first generation founders were aging and one can see that in this period many clubs began trying to attract younger members by opening up a junior membership category. They began offering evening meetings and separate programs. Some of the volunteer organizations we have today, such as the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), the American Association of University Women (AAUW), the Soroptimist (an organization of business and professional women), the National Consumers' League, garden clubs and public libraries, grew out of this early period of women's club activities.

On the heels of its tremendous success in establishing The New Jersey College for Women, the New Jersey State Federation realized that the future of the organization would depend on these same young women making the same commitment to carry on club activities into the future. While a few junior clubs already existed in New Jersey, like the Clio Junior Club of Roselle which was organized in 1890, they were officially sanctioned in 1923 when the New Jersey State Federation created a Junior Membership Department. The General Federation had made the establishment of Junior Departments in each state a priority in 1922, and many

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other states joined New Jersey in reaching out to younger members. The first Junior Membership convention in the United States was held in New Jersey in 1928 at The New Jersey College for Women.

The New Jersey State Federation was by far the largest women's organization in New Jersey by 1920, with club 20,000 members. They continue to work on behalf of many of the same issues they had been tackling for years -- education, libraries and conservation -- while maintaining an emphasis on cultural and social programming for its members, too.

National and New Jersey Federation of Colored Women's Clubs

The impact on both communities and the lives of women themselves of the women's club movement from the post-Civil War era through the 1920s was great. What began as a movement of social betterment clubs expanded to civic engagement driven by the progressive ideals that characterized the larger social and civic movements of the time. Yet the clubs also reflected another aspect of their times: little tolerance for class or racial differences. The realities of segregation and/or racism led to the parallel emergence of a separate black women's club movement. In examining several scholarly articles that have been written on black women's clubs, there is much discussion about what shaped their activities during this time period and if, in fact, they were parallel or divergent in motives.

The colored women's club movement, which officially began in 1896, was also founded by progressive women to improve social and economic ills. In 1895 Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin organized the First National Conference of Colored Women in Boston out of which the National Federation of Afro-American Women was formed. At the same time in Washington, DC another organization with a different tenet called the National League of Colored Women under the leadership of Mrs. Mary Church Terrell was formed. In 1896 the two groups became one as the National Association of Colored Women.¹² "The women who organized the National Association of Colored Women, Inc....recognized the handicaps of all women in social, industrial, and educational opportunities, but were especially interested in the problems of women of color who had the added disadvantage of discrimination because of race and economic status. They recognized the need for uplift work in all levels of community life, so they concerned themselves with relieving existing social evils."¹³ They concerned themselves with equality of pay and child care issues by providing nurseries and other child care opportunities to help working mothers help for working girls adjusting to urban industrial life and delinquent boys and girls. During the Wars, they also helped with war relief and morale. At its inception, there were 25 states and less than 5,000 members. After 50 years, 44 states were represented, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, and Haiti, and more than 100,000 members.¹⁴ Today, according to their website, there are 32 state members made up of youth and women.

Some have argued that black women's clubs had quite a different focus from their white counterparts. The motto "Lifting as We Climb" adopted by the National Association of Colored Women's Club has been summed

¹² (Lerner 1974), p 161-2¹³ (Kendrick 1954)¹⁴ (Kendrick 1954)

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up by Lynda Dickson in her article "Toward a Broader Angle of Vision in uncovering Women's History: Black Women's Clubs Revisited." These clubwomen were anxious to address the "retrogressionist tendencies of the times."¹⁵ She continues, white women's club development meant the best women were working for the best in womanhood, whereas the black movement was led by a few competent women on behalf of the many incompetent in order to "elevate the image of black womanhood."¹⁶ Kathleen Berkeley writes in her article "Colored Ladies Also Contributed" that the membership policy of the NACW was about using the gender issue to bridge class difference by allowing an alliance between middle class and working class black America – The national organization encouraged "...the more traditional church clubs, sewing circles, and sisterly societies to trade unions, self-improvement/literary associations, and college organizations..." to join.¹⁷ Berkeley concludes that the formation of the National organization was a culmination of thirty years of activities after the Civil War related to "social housekeeping." "Although the agenda of black women essentially remained unchanged during the transitional years, the stage they chose for collective action seemed to shift away from grass-roots, church-based organizations to a more formalized, centralized, and secular-based network at the state and national levels." By the early twentieth century, like the GFWC, the NACW was the leading organization for social change for women. "In 1914, the organization claimed fifty thousand dues-paying members and more than a thousand affiliated clubs."¹⁸

Moses in his article Domestic Feminism ...posits that "The black women's clubs came into existence, not only because black women were barred from participation in white women's clubs, but because black women felt they had special work to do. The movement was no mere imitation of parallel white institutions." Early in the 1800s, a small number of black women had formed literary and mutual aid associations.¹⁹ He argues that the scars left by slavery were of deep concern to the black women's club movement in the 1890s. At the time of the founding of the National Organization there were two competing purposes – one concerned with agitation and an anti-lynching campaign and one that wanted to promote "racial uplift and domestic feminism."²⁰ Overall, though, the early days of the NACW was "conservative rather than radical; and its attitude towards fundamental American institutions was admiring, rather than critical."²¹

Whereas many attribute the increased racism of the late 19th century as the catalyst for the rise of activist the black clubwomen at the turn of the century, Stephanie Shaw, in "Black Club Women" finds this conclusion flawed. She argues that the formation of The National Association of Colored Women in 1896 when the Colored Women's League and the National Federation of Afro-American Women combined, was a continuation of a long "historical process of encouraging and supporting self-determination, self-improvement, and community development." The Clubwomen drew upon the traditional experiences of the black mutual association – individual and community self-help and uplift.²² The major difference in membership in the late 19th-early 20th century, due to the heavy migration of blacks across the country to urban centers, was that often

¹⁵ (Dickson 1987)¹⁶ (Dickson 1987), p. 14¹⁷ (Berkeley 1985), p. 196¹⁸ (Berkeley 1985), p. 185¹⁹ (Moses 1987), p. 166²⁰ (Moses 1987), p. 173²¹ (Moses 1987), p. 176²² (Stephanie J. Shaw and Reed 1995), pp. 433-436

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they "did not share the common local history that the earlier church and/or community society members shared." This geographic diversity amongst members led a more national focus to their activities. Shaw does document the many activities they engaged nationally, including the establishment of Settlement Houses, nursery schools and kindergartens, public health clinics and more all in the interest of "improving conditions for the race."²³

The activities of black clubwomen can be said to be a reflection of the deficits in the communities to meet the needs of primarily black women and children. According to Gerda Lerner, the clubs "contributed to the survival of the black community. Black women's clubs were, like the clubs of white women, were led by educated, often by middle-class women, but unlike their white counterparts, black club women frequently successfully bridged the class barrier and concerned themselves with issues of importance to poor women, working mothers, tenant farm wives." They were concerned with education and individual and community improvement but through "race pride and race advancement."²⁴ The Tuskegee Women's Club, founded in 1895, served as a prototype of other black women's clubs – a relatively small membership, social and recreational programs, literary discussions, lectures and topics of self-study such as health and hygiene. Additionally, they focused on domestic issues for mothers as well as Bible study. The Tuskegee Club also ran a small library and some political activities.²⁵ The Atlanta Neighborhood Union founded in 1908 became a prototype for its effectiveness at its organization and the scope of its services.

The church played a prominent role in the life of the black women and figured prominently in the club work as well. This cannot be said of the women's club movement of the white middle class. The NACW held its organizing meeting in the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church in Washington, DC in 1896. The New Jersey State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs was founded in Trenton, New Jersey on October 29, 1915 at the St. Paul AME Zion Church by a female Methodist minister Dr. Florence Spearing Randolph. As a leader in public service most of her life, Randolph became well known amongst the African American social elite. She was active early on in the Women's Christian Temperance Movement (WCTU). According to Associate Professor of History at Temple University Bettie Collier-Thomas, it was her early work lecturing for temperance that began to attract followers, drawn to a persona that combined a fiery conviction of her religion with a gentle womanly manner. Their objectives were inextricably tied to some of the same objectives of the Women's Christian Temperance Union as 30 chapters of the WCTU of the Colored Women of New Jersey (WCTUCWNJ), an affiliate group of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, banded together to form this association. The NJSFCWC membership grew rapidly in one year. Activities were focused on solving many problems confronting the racial inequities of the day. In 1918, three years after its establishment, the NJSFCWC sent a delegate to the 11th Biennial Convention of the National Association of Colored Women in Denver, Colorado in 1918. Florence Randolph served as president for 12 years and, in 1925, when the organization had reached a "position of permanence" she "refused to accept renomination in 1927..." On July 28, 1916 the first convention of the NJSFCWC was held in the First Baptist Church, Englewood, NJ with Randolph presiding. The organizers had initiated a letter writing campaign to invite all women's clubs and organizations "working together in the interest of church, civic betterment and education to join with them in their crusade for advanced

²³ (Stephanie J. Shaw and Reed 1995), p. 441²⁴ (Stephanie J. Shaw and Reed 1995), p. 167²⁵ (Lerner 1974), pp. 159-160

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womenhood." According to the 1957 history of the NJ State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, at this first convention it was decided that the Federation adopt a girl from the Gold Coast of Africa to educate. Charity K. Zormelo of Keta, West Africa came as a ward of the NJ State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs and was responsible for her education through high school and college. By all oral accounts, while here, Charity was "adopted" by Randolph with whom she lived. The NJSFCWC's focus on civic betterment and education for African Americans was demonstrated by the program at their Second Annual Convention of the NJSFCWC held in 1917 in Plainfield -- speakers' topics included race history and anti-discrimination, calling for members to organize for change. The message was often directed at women and children. In 1917 for example, as the membership was growing, topics included "Race History", "The Value of Race History to Instill Race Pride", and "Phillis Wheatley and her Work." In 1919, an address by Florence Randolph at close of the convention Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Newark, July 25, 1919 stated:

Remember we shall get nothing in this country, or I might say the world, unless we demand it. Let us cease to gather in small groups and complain about American discrimination -- but rather let us become strongly organized and prepare ourselves for real aggressive work, then demand our rights in the only sensible way -- by organized effort. If we are simply going to meet every year after year and then go home and take it easy until the next convention, all the injustices we now suffer and the barbarism of the white south will continue. But if we each would be willing to sacrifice some of her time, and a little money, with much prayer, we are sure to win. It should be the aim of every club in this federation to organize at least one Civic club in its respective town, undenominational and free from church obligations if we expect to do any big things for the race in our state.

By 1917, at the end of the third Annual Meeting, it was reported that ninety-two clubs were enrolled in the NJSFCWC with combined membership of 2,616. Markedly, there is no evidence to date that the New Jersey Federation of Colored Women's Clubs ever built their own clubhouses. They met in churches and homes until they purchased their headquarters at 40 Fowler Street, Trenton, NJ in 1976.²⁶

Business, Professional and Working Women's Clubs

Business and Professional women's clubs did not begin to appear around the country until World War I, as more women began to work outside the home in professional and office positions. In 1917, the U.S. War Department established a Women's War Council, made up of leaders of the Young Women's Christian Association, to collect data on working women in each state as part of a national movement to create an organization of white collar working women. The War Department allocated \$65,000 to create a national organization, and in May 1918, one hundred women met in New York for a planning meeting to create a new organization, the National Business Women's Committee.

The first club of this type in New Jersey was the Trenton Business and Professional Women's Club, which was founded in 1916, pre-dating the national effort. This club took the lead in 1919 in organizing a

²⁶ Oral interview with Jeonia McClish, President, 2009.

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meeting in Trenton of various professional women's clubs in New Jersey, such as the Philanti Club of Paterson, the Young Women's Club of Orange, the Girls Service Club of Jersey City, and the Business Girls Club of Camden. As a result of this meeting, the New Jersey Federation of Business and Professional Women (NJBPW) was founded on May 30, 1919. The purpose of the NJBPW, as expressed in its state constitution, was: to promote the interests of Business and Professional Women; to secure beneficial legislation for women; to encourage co-operative efforts among women and an interchange of ideas; to gather and distribute information relative to vocational opportunities; and to bring about a great solidarity of feeling among business and professional women throughout the State.²⁷

An example of a New Jersey club of this type is The Business and Professional Women's Club of Newark, Inc, which was organized in May 1921 with 96 charter members. According to a 1961 history by Alice M. Garthwaitto, the Business and Professional Women's Club of Newark is the "outgrowth of a small group of women who were engaged in personnel work during the First World War. These women derived so much pleasure and profit by meeting monthly to exchange opinions and discuss the problems of their work, that they conceived the idea of forming an organization through which women in every line of business could be benefitted."

The Newark Club had its own clubrooms at 56 New Street in Newark and a full-time paid executive secretary and assistant, until 1933 during the Depression, when the clubrooms were given up and a room at the Hotel Douglas was leased instead. Some of the early activities of the club included assisting students at the local Girl's Vocational School with carfare and lunch money, and holding an annual "Old Ladies Party", where a number of underprivileged elderly ladies without family or friends were invited to a Christmas party at their club and given holiday gifts.

In 1928, the club began giving student loan and scholarship funds for training at colleges, business schools and hospitals, as well as supporting students to study abroad. In the same year, the organization joined the New Jersey Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs. The Business and Professional Women's Club of Newark was dissolved in 1967.

Very little research has been done on working girls' clubs in New Jersey or elsewhere. These "clubs" generally seem to have been established in industrialized cities by more affluent clubwomen as a means to "moral uplift" for the working class girls and women. They also provided social and educational opportunities in safe havens for wage-earning women by offering classes, entertainment and in some cases, room and board.²⁸ There is a reference to this kind of club in New Jersey mentioned in *Past and Promise*²⁹ about Emma Ward Edwards, a 19th-century physician and reformer, who worked on the medical staff of the Working Girls Club boardinghouse in Newark, which was run by the YWCA. A "New York Charities Directory" published in 1909 by the Charity Organization Society of the City of New York also lists the following working women's "clubs" located across the river in New Jersey: The Industrial Society in Hoboken; Working Girls' Circle in Jersey City; Young Woman's Club in Newark; Woman's Club in Newark; Memorial Junior Working Girls' Club of

²⁷ (Perrone 2001)²⁸ (Blair 1980), p. 84-5²⁹ (Joan N. Burstyn, ed., *Past and Promise* 1997), p. 134

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Paterson; Holly Club of Union in West Hoboken; and New Brunswick Girls' Club in New Brunswick. More research needs to be done in this area.

Other Volunteer Women's Organizations

This thematic study is exploring a particular type of women's club model -- a local organization begun by women who were interested in self-education and/or community improvement. Many of these clubs started as social gatherings outside of the home and as a substitute for the formal education women were generally not receiving, since most women (as well as men) at the time did not attend college. The focus of many of these local clubs expanded to include goals for community improvement, sometimes after the members studied a particular issue or local problem and felt empowered to work for change and civic reform in their community and state. This process can be seen happening across the country at the time, and can be seen in New Jersey's many local women's clubs, the majority of whom joined the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs. While these local clubs sometimes took on statewide campaigns directed by the New Jersey State Federation, much of their attention was directed to "municipal housekeeping" in their own communities.

Between 1880 and 1930 there was widespread growth of many other organizations in which women began to take an active role in reform efforts, both nationally and in New Jersey, that do not necessarily fit the above women's club model, but deserve mentioning here. It was not unusual for a woman during this time period to belong to a number of women's organizations, reflecting her growing interests in social issues and current events outside of her domestic realm. In her book Joining In: Exploring the History of Voluntary Organizations, Karen Blair makes the case that the local women's clubs were so successful in solving social problems, that they inspired special interest groups to address particular social and political issues with greater focus. Blair says that eventually the term, "woman's club" was used to label any group of women united for reform, including the organizations listed below, most which are not the focus of this study, but play a major role in the Women's Movement in general. Many of the women's organization of this type in New Jersey and elsewhere were state chapters of national organizations, not "clubs" founded by New Jersey women with a strong local interest. Some examples of these special interest organizations that were formed by women were: The National Congress of Mothers (which later became the PTA), investigating and working to solve problems in schools; the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, devoting itself to pacifism; the Women's Trade Union League, lobbying for woman suffrage and improved conditions for factory women; the National Consumers League, pressuring business to improve workers' lives by appealing to consumers who would shop for goods produced under fair manufacturing conditions; the American Woman Suffrage Association, working for the right of women to vote which grew into the League of Women Voters, informing citizens on legislative matters; the American Association of University Women, dealing with concerns of college women; and the Junior League, doing charity work for benevolent causes.

The New Jersey Woman Suffrage Association was founded by Lucy Stone in 1867, became inactive after Stone moved out of New Jersey, but was revived again in 1890 to work for women's right to vote. The New Jersey League of Women Voters was organized in New Jersey in 1920, shortly after the state ratified the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. The New Jersey Chapter of the American Association of University Women was founded in 1927.

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Women organizing along religious, racial and ethnic divisions were also evident in New Jersey and elsewhere in the late 19th and early 20th century. These organizations were founded by women who were advocating for reform but were often not welcome into the membership of many local women's clubs because they were not white, Anglo-Protestant, middle-class counterparts such as The National Council of Catholic Women, The National Council of Jewish Women, and, in particular, the National Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, which is detailed in the section above.

Women also formed patriotic organizations that became popular in New Jersey and around the country beginning in the 1890s. Patriotic organizations, the best known being the Daughter of the American Revolution (DAR), were founded at a time of an increase in patriotic fervor in the United States, most likely due to fears about the large increase in the numbers of immigrants arriving in the country. The DAR was founded by women "who felt the desire to express their patriotic feelings and were frustrated by their exclusion from men's organizations formed to perpetuate the memory of ancestors who fought to make this country free and independent."³⁰ The DAR was founded in Washington, D.C. on October 11, 1890, and the New Jersey society of the DAR was founded on April 29, 1891. The objectives of the DAR have been to promote patriotism and knowledge about US history, and the DAR has been involved in preserving historic buildings largely from the colonial era as part of their mission from the beginning. The local DAR in Trenton was responsible for raising awareness and funds between 1899 and 1903 to preserve the Old Barracks historic site, significant for its role in the Battle of Trenton during the Revolutionary War.

New Jersey Women's Clubs and Clubhouses: 1890-1940

Clubwomen began meeting in various members' homes but as membership grew, they needed to find larger quarters. Some built their own clubhouses, many met in other community buildings, and others met in historic buildings and became stewards of the historic property and adapted it for their new use. In some cases, early 20th century preservation ideals advocated by women played a part in choosing a meeting place. In other words, saving a locally significant historic site was a part of clubwomen's activities during the period of significance. The clubs that built their own clubhouses raised funds through a variety of fundraising events and often by selling bonds to their membership. Most of the clubs that bought their own buildings raised enough money in short order to buy the building outright. Each of these types of Clubhouse had certain defining characteristics. Of the Clubhouses that were built solely as clubhouses, they were predominantly designed in the Colonial Revival style. All clubhouses, including those that adapted a historic structure for new use, had a large meeting space, often with a stage area, a large kitchen to accommodate cooking for large groups, an office, restrooms and several small ancillary meeting rooms. Some of the larger clubhouses could accommodate up to 1000 people in the large "auditorium" spaces with a full proscenium stage area. They also had a library, especially for storing and displaying materials related to the Club including club yearbooks, scrapbooks, newspaper clippings and photographs. Many of the interior furnishings and art work tended to be donated by members or community members.

³⁰ (www.dar.org/natsociety/history.n.d.)

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The Kalmia Club's clubhouse at 39 York Street in Lambertville may be the first clubhouse in New Jersey. The building was given to the club in 1893, a year after the organization was founded by the local Society of Friends, who had been using it as a meetinghouse. The building had been erected in the mid-1800s as a private school before being acquired by the Quakers.

The Woman's Club of Orange, for example moved into its own Clubhouse at William and Prospect Streets in 1906 where they met until it was destroyed by fire in 1931. By 1925 they were free and clear of debt and boasted "(t)he training in business affairs that resulted from this purchase and the subsequent rental program that enabled us to carry our property was invaluable in an era when most women had little to do with financial matters." After that they moved into an existing house at 369 Park Avenue and on its grounds built a 900-seat auditorium and remodeled the Carriage house for Junior Club headquarters in 1934.

The Flemington Woman's Club purchased a lot behind the Court House on Park Avenue in Flemington. They raised funds through carnivals, an ice cream concession at the Flemington Fair and private donations. The current Club house was built in 1936 and the remainder of the lot was turned into a community park.

In 1921 The Woman's Club of Red Bank bought the Anthony Reckless Estate at 164 Broad Street in Red Bank for their Clubhouse, which, by 1940, they owned debt-free.

The Present Day Club of Princeton bought the home of Mrs. Joseph Delafield at 72 Stockton Street for their club and paid for remodeling the house and adding an auditorium. An architect named Rolf Bauhan donated his services. It opened October 29, 1930 and by 1948 the debt was retired.

After meeting in the home of Miss Margaret Bancroft, a well-known pioneer in education for children with special needs in Haddonfield, The Haddon Fortnightly Club met for a time in the Indian King, where they met for 26 years. In the late 1920s they considered building their own clubhouse with a large auditorium for 400 but plans fell through and they ended up purchasing Artisans' Hall at Kings Highway and Grove Street in May 1930. They borrowed funds to make the purchase but it was reported at the Annual Business Meeting May 24, 1936 that all loans were paid off.

The Woman's Club of Upper Montclair, organized in 1900, in a decade outgrew members' homes so they began meeting in the Commonwealth Club, a space for which they competed with men who wanted to spend their free time there. By 1916 they decided to build a clubhouse of their own and began fundraising through teas, recitals, luncheons, dramatic productions and pledges by members. They purchased a property in 1922, broke ground in 1923 and dedicated their building in 1924. The Clubhouse was designed by an architect named Francis Nelson, whose wife was a member of the Club. Another member, Mrs. Antwerp, volunteered her services for interior decoration. The building had a large lounge area and later a 1000-seat auditorium with full proscenium arch stage was added. In five years all loans and bills were completely paid off.

Frank and Mary Pattison played a major role in connecting the preservation of the Old Academy building (Old Franklin School House) in Metuchen with the Borough Improvement League for use as a

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clubhouse. Mary Pattison was a pioneer in the field of domestic engineering. On July 14, 1910, the founding members deeded the property to the Club for \$1.

One of the earliest clubhouses built in New Jersey was by the Jersey City's Woman's Club in 1911. It was designed by Charles H. Detwiller, an alumnus of Columbia University's first architecture class in 1885. Their mortgage was burned in 1926.

The Woman's Club of Little Falls built its own clubhouse in 1928 at 93 Prospect Street, Passaic. The Clubhouse, designed by architect W. Leslie Walker Architect in 1927 in the colonial revival style, is a 2-story building whose interior is predominantly a large two-story meeting room with a small raised stage at the rear. The second floor rooms are on the periphery and function as smaller spaces for meetings and storage. It is in a residential neighborhood.

In 1912, The Contemporary club in Trenton purchase the c.1855 Italianate townhouse at 176 West State Street, Trenton at auction. The auditorium was added in 1922 with a stage.

The Porch Club members originally met on the porches of its 25 members until 1903 when they rented a clubhouse at 609 Main Street, a building that had been an Episcopal Sunday school building. The Club purchased a lot at Fourth and Howard Streets, broke ground in January 1909 and moved into the building in May of the same year. The building originally had a front porch but was enclosed in 1931 to enlarge the meeting room.

The Monday Afternoon Club first met in the Library of the Plainfield Seminary for Young Girls, an institution started by their founding member Eliza Kenyon. After Kenyon's death, they moved to the Parish House of the Congregational Church. In 1924, they bought the Jewett property at 1000 Central Avenue and met there until 1942.

Many of the clubhouses surveyed in New Jersey have a high level of architectural integrity. The challenge facing most clubs is the dwindling membership and, as a consequence, difficulty meeting maintenance and operating expenses. Many of the clubs have had to develop ways to keep income flowing through outside rentals and public fundraising events.

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SECTION F. Associated Property Types

Name of Property Type: Clubhouses of Local New Jersey Women's Clubs**Description:**

New Jersey has a small but significant collection of historic clubhouses associated with local women's clubs during the 1890-1940 period of significance, including but not limited to those affiliated with the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs. Preservation Partners conducted a preliminary survey of New Jersey clubhouses, with the assistance of the NJ State Federation of Women's Clubs, and identified 21 extant historic clubhouses associated with local women's clubs. All of these clubhouses continue to serve the function for which they were built, or for which they were adaptively reused, and most retain their architectural integrity. Further research will most likely yield additional historic clubhouses with properties and features similar to those already identified.

Of the 21 extant historic clubhouses identified, 9 were built as clubhouses and 12 were purchased by women's clubs and modified to serve the functions of a clubhouse. The 9 clubhouses that were built specifically for this particular use were, for the most part, designed by architects, and varied in massing, scale and design features depending on the individual club's needs, funding and particular neighborhood setting. With the exception of one clubhouse, the Craftsman-style Porch Club in Riverton, all others were built in variations of the Colonial Revival style. All of the buildings built as clubhouses are either one or two stories in height, and forms vary, with side-facing and front-facing gable or hipped roofs. Many original roof surfaces appear to have been replaced with composition shingles, and many also have brick chimneys and dormers piercing roof lines. The exterior of the clubhouse are clad with a variety of materials, including stucco, clapboard, and wood shingles. A few have ornate decorative features, like Palladian windows, decorative cornices, broken pediments and French doors while others are more vernacular in appearance. Most have symmetrical facades typical in Colonial Revival designs, and most have front entry porches supported by Classical columns. The massing, scale and design usually reflected that of the surrounding neighborhood buildings. Some clubhouses are located in downtown commercial areas, while others are in areas that are primarily residential, but close to the downtown area. Most of these clubhouses possess a high degree of architectural integrity.

There are, to date, twelve Women's Clubs housed in buildings adaptively used as Clubhouses during the period of significance. The pattern is varied, except that the majority of them were originally mid-19th century residences. In addition, two were carriage houses, three were religious buildings and one was a 19th century school. The architectural context for these adaptively used buildings would be the time period in which they were originally built as well as the style indicative of the neighborhood or commercial district in which they were built.

Clubhouses are a specialized building type designed, constructed or modified to serve a particular type of social function. Interior plans were often similar and consisted of a centrally-located entry hall, small spaces used for office or meetings, a large kitchen, a library, a reading room, restrooms and an auditorium, often with a

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stage, for lectures, plays, movies or performances. Circulation patterns offered freedom of movement between rooms to move from one function to the next, while at the same time, wood paneled doors offered the privacy between public and private club administrative functions. The historic buildings that have been adaptively re-used as clubhouses have often been modified to allow similar uses, with added auditoriums and enlarged kitchens.

Significance:

The historic clubhouses of New Jersey women's clubs are significant at the local level under the National Register Criterion A.

Criterion A: Since these clubhouses served primarily as places for women to gather and socialize with members and guests for various beneficial purposes, these buildings possess significance for their association with New Jersey's social history relating to women. Significance will be determined based primarily on the interior use of the space, that is, the building must be in current use as a meeting place for a women's club. Most clubhouses will have large, furnished, public meeting rooms and ancillary rooms for smaller gatherings, a large-scale kitchen of adequate scale to accommodate large and small meetings, and an auditorium-style space which usually includes a stage area. In addition, many women's clubhouses have a coat room, public rest rooms and an office. The significance of local women's clubhouses contributes to the historic trend in New Jersey during the period of significance of women joining together outside of their homes to organize clubs where they formed social and intellectual bonds, and worked together to bring societal change in their communities. Many of the community activities undertaken by these women's clubs are associated with areas of significance such as conservation, education, entertainment/recreation, performing arts, community planning, art, politics/government and literature; these areas of significance will vary by local clubs, and should only be attributed to a property's area of significance if it contributed to the broader pattern of the local history of a community.

Registration requirements:

For a building to be eligible for nomination as an historic New Jersey women's club clubhouse, it must have been used as a women's clubhouse during the period of significance, and it must retain a majority of the following character-defining common interior spaces present in clubhouses: a large public meeting room or auditorium, which often includes a stage; a central hallway reception area; ancillary rooms for smaller gatherings or reading; office space; a large-scale kitchen to accommodate food service for events; public rest rooms; and a coat closet. Since a number of the clubhouses were originally built for another use, such as a residence, the sizes of rooms will vary, as will the existence of every interior element listed above. For a clubhouse to be eligible for nomination, however, it must possess a majority of the interior spaces associated with clubhouses that were present in the building during its use as a clubhouse. In addition, the following character-defining features must be present in a clubhouse for it to be eligible for nomination: a large public meeting room; a kitchen; public rest rooms; and a space or room designated for use as an office. It is desirable,

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but not necessary, for the following spaces to be present in a clubhouse for it to be eligible for nomination: a central hallway reception area; a stage area; smaller ancillary meeting or reading rooms; a coat closet.

Since many of these buildings have been in continuous use as a clubhouse for more than fifty years, there will be instances where the clubs will have undertaken kitchen and bath renovations to provide a more comfortable and efficient environment for members and guests. A clubhouse is eligible for nomination if the kitchen and bath fixtures have been upgraded in a way that does not have a negative impact on the historic character of the building. A building will also be eligible for nomination as a clubhouse if additional interior alterations have been made that are sensitive to the original design of the building. A building is not eligible for nomination if alterations have been made that have a negative impact on the character-defining elements of the building, such as the removal of decorative wood trim, removal of original wood doors, removal of original wood flooring, removal of original fireplaces and other similar alterations.

The exteriors of women's clubhouses do not necessarily have significant common features associated with the use of the building as a clubhouse. While some have porches and outdoor patio meeting areas, these elements are not required for a club to be eligible for nomination. Any exterior alterations that are sensitive to the historic character of the building should not preclude its nomination, including additions, replacement windows, and replacement siding. Replacement siding must be similar in appearance to the original siding, and must be reversible. Replacement windows must display original sash, trim and glazing appearance. Additions to clubhouses should be in scale to the original clubhouse building, and display a similar fenestration pattern, as well as similar siding and trim appearance, as the original section of the building.

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SECTION H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Whereas the activity of the State and National Federation of Women's Clubs is well-documented through yearbooks, minutes, publications and other primary documentation, the records and documents of the activities of early local women's clubs are often kept by members in their home or in storage in a Clubhouse. This presents some difficulties for research purposes. Primary research on women's clubs from public holdings at such repositories as the Rutgers' University Special Collections, New Brunswick, the New Jersey Historical Society Collection in Newark and the New Jersey State Library in Trenton. The information was often gleaned from what was available, which was at times single pamphlets or booklets on the history of the Club and sometimes part of a series of yearbooks, by-laws, anniversary publications. The study is limited to the period between the inception of these Clubs in the late 19th century through the 1920s. It is important to note that the New Jersey women's clubs featured in this section were selected in part because accessible documentation exists, scant though it may be. Constraints presented by funding did not enable us to conduct extensive outreach to individual clubs, many of which may be the keeper of their own archival materials.

Preservation Partners conducted a limited study of extant clubhouse using the research and documentation of the New Jersey Women's Heritage Trail Project and a survey sent to the membership of the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: COVER DOCUMENTATION

MULTIPLE Clubhouses of New Jersey Women's Clubs
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW JERSEY, Multiple Counties

DATE RECEIVED: 09/02/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/18 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/17/10
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 64501086

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N
NEW MPS: Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 9/29/10 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

MPS Cover doc. for Women's Clubs.
Excellent context + good example of
Section F. Associated Property Types using
NR Criterion A.

RECOM./CRITERIA

REVIEWER

DISCIPLINE

Phone

Date

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



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State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

NATURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER
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Trenton, NJ 08625-0404
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CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

BOB MARTIN
Commissioner



Paul Loether, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Loether:

I am pleased to submit the Clubhouses of New Jersey Women's Clubs MPDF for National Register consideration.

This nomination has received majority approval from the New Jersey State Review Board for Historic Sites. All procedures were followed in accordance with regulations published in the Federal Register.

Should you want any further information concerning this application, please feel free to contact Daniel D. Saunders, Acting Administrator, New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, P.O. Box 404, Trenton, New Jersey 08625 or call him at (609) 633-2397.

Sincerely,

Amy Cradic
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer