



International Women of Columbia Records (C4355)

Collection Number: C4355

Collection Title: International Women of Columbia Records

Dates: 1965-1992

Creator: International Women of Columbia

Abstract: Records of a women's organization dedicated to assisting foreign women living in Columbia, Missouri. Generally, women who were wives of husbands working at the University or attending the University, but also for women who were working at or attending the University themselves. The organization provided help which included English language assistance, various social events, child care, advice on renting an apartment, opening a bank account, obtaining a driver's license, and tips on shopping at local stores. The organization provided hostesses, many of whom were also from other countries, but had been in the U.S awhile, to assist other foreign women living in Columbia.

Collection Size: 0.4 cubic feet
(22 folders)

Language: Collection materials are in English, with some flyer material in Arabic and Asian.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Columbia](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at research@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: The Donor has given and assigned to the University all rights of copyright, which the Donor has in the Materials and in such of the Donor's works as may be found among any collections of Materials received by the University from others.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *International Women of Columbia Records* (C4355); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Columbia [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Columbia].

Donor Information: The records were donated to the University of Missouri by Mary S. Cowgill on July 11, 2000 (Accession No.5846).

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Historical Note:

The International Women of Columbia (I.W.C) was patterned after a program that existed in the state of Michigan. Mary Catherine Strain Cowgill founded the organization. She received her M.A. in Math from the University of Kansas and taught high school and college math for 30 years. She and her husband, Dr. Donald O. Cowgill were active in humanitarian efforts in their community and other parts of the world. Both taught at Chiangmai University in Northern Thailand in the late 1960s. The couple moved to Columbia, Missouri, in 1970. Mary Cowgill tutored international students in English, U.S. Customs and edited their PhD theses. The purpose of the I.W.C. was to offer friendship, understanding and assistance to women from other countries during their stay in Columbia. The I.W.C. became an official organization in 1976. Women of all nations were invited to participate in the monthly meetings. The programs and entertainment were designed to represent every country. The organization was based on pure friendship and was not a political or religious organization. The organization continued into the early 1990s, at which point it disbanded.

Arrangement:

This collection is arranged into one series.

Scope and Content Note:

The records of the I. W. C. include by-laws and constitutions, event and program material, hostess and membership records, newsletters, meeting minutes and committee reports of the organization.

Container List:

- f. 1 By-Laws/Proposed Constitution. Articles and Constitution of the International Women of Columbia stating purpose of organization and operating procedures, 1965-1982.
- f. 2 Events/Programs. Welcome parties for new members; program calendars; concert; puppet show; pot lucks; cooking demonstrations; Japanese, Korean and Latin American folk song programs, music and song program; slide shows; picnics and children's party; Hospitality Committee and various other international women's groups; Speaker's Bureau of international students; manual program for foreign wives; friendship groups; English discussion groups, and Halloween party, 1977-1991.
- f. 3-4 Handbooks. *Living in Columbia-A Handbook for Families from Other Nations; Handbook for Hostesses, or How to Neighbor Internationally; Tenant's Handbook*, 1972-1984.
- f. 5 Hostess Material. Letter addressed to IWC hostesses, March 13, 1990 on whether organization can continue to function as an organization; Annual Hostess Membership Meeting; Letters expressing need for

- continued growth of hostess membership; Invitations to become a hostess; Hostess-Member information; Hostess Guidelines, 1976-1990.
- f. 6-8 Meetings. I.W.C. Executive Board Meetings; Hostess Meeting; International Women's Club, Fall Reception and Tea; Meeting agendas, minutes; Hostess-Member information Annual Meeting, 1969-1990.
- f. 9-16 Name Lists/Directories. Guest Lists; Executive Board Lists; Hostess Lists; Active and Inactive Guest Lists; Directory of Community Services; I.W.C. Directory; Friendship Group lists; English Conversation Group lists; Hostess and Guest Rosters; Prospective Hostess lists; Active Hostess Roster; Friendship Groups; Baby Congratulations list; New Guest lists; University of Missouri-Columbia foreign student Commencement list, 1988; partial list of hostesses for Nominating Committee; Possible new member list, and Columbia community services contact guide taken from newspaper, 1975-1991.
- f. 17-20 International Women of Columbia newsletters announcing upcoming events, such as pot luck suppers, welcome parties, and birth announcements, along with announcements of field trip excursions; events dressing in native costume; Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas special holiday events; special messages and contests, along with various group meeting schedules; International Women's Club newsletters; listed calendar of events, 1975-1991.
- f. 21 Reports. I.W.C. Treasurer's Reports; Guest Committee Reports; Guest Participation Committee Reports and Annual Report; Newsletter Committee Reports and Annual Report; English Study and Discussion Committee Annual Report; Report on I.W.C. newsletter; Reports of English Conversation Chairman; Comments made at workshop for new hostesses, 1975; Report of Field Service Consultation, Univ. of Missouri-Columbia, International Wives Club of Columbia, and other community organizations, Oct. 1972; Report of Publicity Committee; President's Report; Reports of Newsletter and Publicity Chairman; Annual Historian's Report; Annual Report of Special Services Committee, 1972-1992.
- f. 22 Slides. International Women of Columbia Reception, Sept. 1980.

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