

## Information Sheet

**R**      **Lebanon Shakespeare Club (Lebanon, Mo.).**  
**300**      **Records, ca. 1882-1982.**  
            **Twenty-three folders and four volumes.**

This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri](http://The State Historical Society of Missouri). If you would like more information, please contact us at [shsresearch@umsystem.edu](mailto:shsresearch@umsystem.edu).

These are records of a women's literary club at Lebanon, Laclede County, Missouri. The collection includes minute books, financial reports, attendance records, annual programs, scrapbooks, photographs, and miscellaneous papers.

The Lebanon Shakespeare Club was a women's study club, the first of its kind to be organized in Laclede County. It was established in January 1882 by Mrs. Mary P. Wallace, who was said to have been inspired by Lillie Langtry's performances of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. Informal meetings to study Shakespeare and his works led to weekly gatherings and formal organization by the end of 1882. Membership was limited to the maximum number the homes of its members could accommodate for meetings. The waiting list for membership was extensive and invitations to join the club or attend its meetings were highly prized. For many years its annual birthday celebration was an important in the social and educational life of the community.

Shakespeare was generally the theme at the weekly meetings, but members also delved into literature, history, and natural science. The club's greatest impact on the community was the creation of a public library. It began as a small collection of books made available to the public at various local businesses and schools. The collection gained a permanent home in the 1930s, when the club was given the chapter house of the American Woman's League. The club donated the building to the city of Lebanon after a library tax was approved by voters in 1938.

The membership in the Shakespeare Club began to dwindle in the 1940s. The gradual decline continued until 1982, when it became apparent that the demise of the club soon would be accomplished by attrition. The remaining members voted to disband on 23 April 1982.

The club's records consist of minutes of meetings, data on membership and finances, annual programs, scrapbooks, and miscellaneous papers. The records are generally more complete for the first half of the club's existence. The most complete series consists of the annual programs, which list the officers, club meetings, and committee assignments for the year. The earliest years of the club are best recorded in the minute books and scrapbooks. Among the materials in the scrapbooks are ephemera connected with the club's events, as well as photographs of most of the earliest members.

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12 March 1986

Harriet N. Davies

Gift

## Shelf List

These are records of a women's literary club at Lebanon, Laclede County, Missouri. The collection includes minute books, financial reports, attendance records, annual programs, scrapbooks, photographs, and miscellaneous papers.

Folders 1-8: Minute books, 1885-1964.

Folder 01: Minute book, 26 January 1885 -- 9 December 1888.

Folder 02: Minute book, 28 March 1898 -- 28 April 1900.

Folder 03: Minute book, 8 March 1902 -- 27 March 1904.

Folder 04: Minute book, 6 October 1906 -- 9 October 1909.

Folder 05: Minute book, 16 October 1909 -- 25 May 1912.  
Folder 06: Minute book, 5 October 1912 -- 19 February 1916.  
Folder 07: Minute book, 26 February 1916 -- 27 February 1923.  
Folder 08: Minute book, 13 October 1959 -- 26 May 1964 (unbound).

Folders 9-11: Treasurer's report and attendance records, 1907-1974.

Folder 09: Treasurer's report, 1930-1931/1973-1974.  
Folder 10: Attendance record, 1907-1908/1915-1916.  
Folder 11: Attendance record, 1916-1917/1922-1923/1932.

Folders 12-19: Annual programs, 1891-1982.

Folder 12: Programs, 1891-1900.  
Folder 13: Programs, 1900-1910.  
Folder 14: Programs, 1910-1919.  
Folder 15: Programs, 1920-1930.  
Folder 16: Programs, 1930-1940.  
Folder 17: Programs, 1940-1950.  
Folder 18: Programs, 1950-1960.  
Folder 19: Programs, 1960-1982.

Folders 20-23: Miscellaneous papers, newspaper clippings, and photographs, 1908-1982.

Folder 20: Miscellaneous papers, Lebanon Shakespeare Club, 1908-1982.  
Folder 21: Miscellaneous papers, General Federation of Women's Clubs, 1903-1966.  
Folder 22: Community achievement contest, 1956-1958.  
Folder 23: Photographs, undated.

Volumes 1-4: Scrapbooks, ca. 1882-1982.

Volume 1: Scrapbook, ca. 1882-1970.  
Volume 2: Scrapbook, 1956-1957 (75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary scrapbook).  
Volume 3: Scrapbook, 1896, 1964-1970.  
Volume 4: Scrapbook, ca. 1882-1982.

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### **Index Cards**

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Societies.  
Women—Societies and clubs.