

Excerpts from 1932-33 Minutes

Page 1 – Early in June – no date given.

“It was a perfect early June afternoon, at the lovely home of Mrs. Friday, in a setting of gorgeous iris, columbine and early roses that a new Garden Club was organized. There were sixteen women present whose qualifications for such a group were only that they were interested in gardening and that they actually worked in their gardens.”

“Moved by Mrs. Beebe, seconded by Mrs. Barber that the annual dues be 25 cents.”

“Moved by Mrs. White, seconded by Mrs. Ballard that the monthly meeting be held on the last Friday of the month at 2:30 in the afternoon.”

“The following officers were elected:

Mrs. P.B. Friday – President
Mrs. F.W. Richter – Vice President
Mrs. H.B. Merrell – Secretary
Mrs. Frank Porter – Treasurer
Mrs. J.W. Wood & Mrs. Ralph Ballard – Directors”

“The president appointed a program committee, Mrs. Plym, Mrs. Griffin & Mrs. Beebe.”

“The business meeting adjourned and the hostess invited the ladies to walk thru her lovely gardens.”

Pages 3 & 4 – June 24, 1932

“The first regular meeting of the newly organized garden club was held on Friday afternoon June 24th at the country home of Mrs. Walter Wood near Summerville [sic] with 17 members and one guest present.”

“A pot luck luncheon with a great array of delicious food was served at one o'clock on the bank of her lovely stream. Following this, the ladies moved to the veranda where the business meeting and program were held.”

“Slips were passed out giving each member the privilege of suggesting a name for the club. Several were handed in and each discussed & finally voted upon. The “Club of Home Gardens” suggested by Mrs. Griffin was the final choice & became the name of this interesting organization.”

"Moved by Mrs. Plym, seconded by Mrs. Richter that the membership be extended to 35 and the men be placed on the associate list with all the privileges of the club." (*The beginnings of women's lib!*)

"Mrs. Ballard...gave a most complete discussion of wild flowers and roadside things."

Pages 5 & 6 – July 29, 1932

"Mrs. Wood reported that the Progressive League were willing to turn all arrangements for the "Flower Show" over to this club."

"It was decided that no charge be made in connection with the show and that ribbons only be given as prizes; that the entire object of the affair be to stimulate a real interest in the splendid things that are being raised in our city."

"The club decided to dispense with the next regular meeting (Aug.) in favor of the Flower Show." (*The first flower show was dated Aug. 27, 1932*).

Pages 7 & 8 – September 30, 1932

"A bill to Fox Dry Goods Co. for \$1.44 for ribbon for the Flower Show was allowed."

"Plans were made for an informal meeting in October in the form of a trip to the Dunes." "...the day to be determined by the coloring of the autumn foliage and by the weather conditions..." "It was suggested that... we have a simple luncheon of steak, bread & fruit around a beach fire."

"...the ladies were invited by Mrs. Tonkin to walk thru her gardens in which so much has been accomplished in a few years."

Pages 8 & 9 – October 18, 1932

"A most delightful trip for the members of the Club of Home Gardens took place on Oct. 18 when eleven members in cars driven by Mrs. Plym, Mrs. Beebe and Mrs. Wood drove for miles along the highways of Berrien County with their gorgeous outline of autumn foliage."

"At noon, the party stopped...where there was easy access to the lake. A bonfire was soon crackling in a sheltered corner and...very soon the odor of bacon, sausage and steak were tempting us."

"The day was perfect; quite warm but the sun stayed under a cloud and permitted the Gardeners to 'hole in' the sand to protect ankles from hosts of flies & to lazily discuss, not gardening, but politics."

Pages 9 & 10 – November 18, 1932

"It was voted to dispense with the December meeting which would occur during the holidays."

"An exchange meeting was discussed. It was decided that the exchange idea be carried out at any or all meetings." "Mrs. Boardman offered lily and gladiola bulbs, Mrs. Tonkin dahlia bulbs, and Mrs. Beebe small money plants."

"Mrs. Plym then presented Harold Hunziker who spoke very ably on 'Appreciation of Landscape Architecture.'"

Pages 10 & 11 – January 20, 1933

"Various members offered shrubs from their gardens, Mrs. Ballard, Syringa, Sorbaria & Forsythias; Mrs. Jerome and Mrs. Griffin sweet shrub."

"The program committee announced the discussion of items in the new seed catalogues for the next meeting in Feb."

"Mrs. Plym...presented the subject of evergreens. She named the seven different classes, presented specimens of various trees in each group and discussed their peculiarities and adaptations to soil, climate and location." (Mrs. Plym was one sharp lady!)

Pages 12 & 13 – February 25, 1933

"...it was decided to schedule the date of the meeting of the club in the "Coming Events" column in the Niles Daily Star, one week in advance of the meeting."

"A discussion was held in regard to the Annual Flower Show and decision made to hold it in Aug. at an earlier date than last year."

"Mrs. Plym...reported that at the March meeting Mrs. Beebe would talk upon the flora of the countries she had just visited."

"Mrs. Ralph Ballard invited the club to visit the woods near her home at hepatica season."

"...Mrs. Plym offered pussy willow shoots and Mrs. White, moon flower vines." (*Referring to the plant exchange held at every meeting*).

Page 13 – March 31, 1933

“Mrs. Plym, as chairman of the program committee presented Mrs. Beebe who gave us a splendid picture of the flowers, shrubs and trees which she enjoyed seeing on her recent trip to Mexico.”

Pages 14 & 15 – April 18, 1933

“Immediately after their arrival, the members were taken by the hostess for a walk thru the ravine to see the hepatica which were in gorgeous bloom ...”

“Mrs. Friday then led a discussion considering the federation of the club. Moved by Mrs. Ballard, seconded by Mrs. Beebe that the Club of Home Gardens join the State Federation.”

“The president...asked Mrs. Martin to collect 20 cents state dues from each member, that amount due each year at this time.”

Pages 16-17 – May 26, 1933

“Mrs. Friday presented a letter from Mrs. Hoffman inviting the four garden clubs, two from St. Joseph, one from South Haven and one from Niles to a lecture to be given at the Y.M.C.A. at Benton Harbor on June 29th on the subject of ‘Highway Beautification.’”

“The secretary was instructed to write our state senator and representatives to support Senate Bill No. 10, which concerns the same subject.”

“The Club then discussed making the June meeting a trip to St. Joe and Benton Harbor to visit the gardens there that are open to the Federated Garden Clubs.”

“The program for the day was in charge of Mrs. Plym who conducted a round-table discussion on favorite trees.”

“This meeting had been planned as a trip to Newton Woods but on account of rain the out-door meeting was post-pined until a later date.”

Pages 17 & 18 – June 24, 1933

“The June meeting of the Club of Little [sic] Gardens was observed by a trip to the home of Mrs. Max Hoffman...and by a visit to some of the St. Joseph and Benton Harbor gardens.”

“Mrs. Hoffman has an Italian Villa with a most attractive Italian Garden. After the luncheon the party strolled through the grounds of Mrs. Hoffman’s home and

those of her brother which adjoins. Both estates have fine views and beautiful trees, shrubbery and vines.”

“A letter was also read from the Federation of Garden Clubs of Michigan asking members of affiliated garden clubs to send into them pictures of gardens. From the pictures sent in the judges will select what they consider the best, these to be used to illustrate a lecture on Michigan Gardens.”