The Neighborhood Music School, 1919-1972

The papers of The Neighborhood Music School deposited in the Library on April 6, 1978 by Kenneth Wendrich, Director in converted the deposit to a gift.

Linear feet of shelf space occupied: 1 ft., 8 1/2 in. (plus 10" added 12/78)
Approximate number of items: 1,100 (plus 160 items added 12/78)

Restrictions: None

Literary rights of the unpublished writings of in these papers, and in other collections of papers in the custody of the New Haven Colony Historical Society Library, have been dedicated to the New Haven Colony Historical Society.

Press release was issued on

Biographical note:
In 1910 George Leslie Armstrong gave a house at 56 Olive Street, New Haven, to St. Paul's Parish to be used for classes, social meetings and missionary work among the Italian population, most of whom had settled in St. Paul's neighborhood. The settlement work that began there was transferred to 221 Wooster Street and renamed Neighborhood House in 1911. By 1913 it was incorporated as St. Paul's Neighborhood House Settlement. Music lessons were given starting in 1912.

Susan Dyer, a teacher of violin at the House and a composer, was made an assistant to the resident head and first music director of the new Neighborhood House Music School in 1915. Jessie Clarke Beecher, a piano teacher at the School since 1912, was appointed worker and director of the Music School in 1919, a position she retained until 1947.

The Neighborhood House Music School's first policy stated that "the fundamental purpose is not so much to make a professional musician as to bring happiness and refining influences into the lives of the boys and girls."
When fees were charged for lessons, they ranged from twenty-five cents to two dollars and were determined "after a careful study had been taken of the living conditions of the family."
The first students were all of Italian descent, but by 1929 the school averaged fifty pupils of ten different nationalities; by 1947, two hundred students came from eighteen different national backgrounds.
Most of the teachers were drawn from the Yale School of Music and the New Haven Symphony.

In 1920 the Neighborhood House became an independent corporation and purchased 213 and 221 Wooster Street from St. Paul's Church, at which time it became a member of the Community Chest. In 1932 the School moved to 612 Chapel Street, where it remained until it moved to its present home at 100 Audubon Street in 1969. By 1943 the Neighborhood House and Farnam Community House formed a combined settlement; the Neighborhood House Music School became a branch. The Music School established its independence in 1945 and became the Neighborhood Music School, an independent agency of the Community Chest.

Miss Beecher resigned in 1947. She was followed by Mrs. Emily Adler, who left in 1953. Mr. Robert Baisley served as director from 1953 to 1961, and Mr. Lee Howard from 1961 to 1967, when the present director, Mr. Kenneth Wendrich came to the Neighborhood Music School.

The Neighborhood Music School became a member of the National Guild of Community Music Schools in 1949.

For further source material and information see The Dana Collection, New Haven Old and New, Manuscript #1, New Haven Colony Historical Society, under 100-Welfare, family, and The Dana Supplement, Neighborhood House - Neighborhood Music School.

See also They Who Speak in Music: The History of the Neighborhood Music School, by Clarence Grimes, New Haven, 1957.

VII. Analysis:

This collection consists of four boxes of documents and one oversize item. It is an incomplete assortment of material, ranging from Miss Beecher's first Annual Report made in 1919 to a 1965 press clipping. The first box includes an almost complete set of monthly and annual Director's Reports. The early ones give backgrounds and anecdotes about students and the settlement. Also included are minutes and reports of advisory meetings, miscellaneous financial reports and statistics, by-laws, and board and council lists. The collection also contains correspondence, notes, cards, and flyers relating to fund-raising work, National Guild of Community Music Schools correspondence and programs, historical sketches, press clippings and school announcements. The final section contains photographs dating from 1919 and three scrapbooks, which belonged to Miss Beecher, of press clippings and programs for the years 1922-1944. The scrapbooks and clippings are extremely fragile. Except for the Director's Reports, there are large gaps in all of the material.
In December, 1978, more material was added to this collection, beginning with Box IV, Folder E. Included are five more scrapbooks, about fifty additional photographs and several miscellaneous items, among which are Dr. Leonard Bacon's music manuscripts and photographs belonging to Rudolph Steinert signed by prominent musicians.

Within the folders the arrangement is chronological. The number in parenthesis following the title of the folder gives the approximate number of documents in each folder. For a more complete breakdown of the collection, see the Table of Contents.
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Box I: Administration

Folder A: Advisory Board Meetings, Minutes and Reports (53)

June 13, 1934
October 9, 1943 - October 19, 1943
January 18, 1944 - October 21, 1948 (Contents of notebook)

Folder B: Board of Directors Meetings, Minutes and Reports (44)

February 15, 1949 - December 19, 1951

Folder C: Board of Directors Meetings, Minutes and Reports (54)

March 4, 1952 - November 6, 1956

Folder D: Director's Monthly Reports for Advisory Board Meetings (38)

December, 1923 - October 30, 1940 (Miss Beecher)

Folder E: Director's Monthly Reports for Advisory Board Meetings (31)

January 29, 1941 - November 27, 1945 (Miss Beecher)

Folder F: Director's Monthly Reports (37)

Advisory Board Meetings:
January 22, 1946 - April 22, 1947 (Miss Beecher)
Board of Directors Meetings:
November 5, 1947 - February 12, 1952 (Mrs. Adler)

Folder G: Director's Annual Reports (18)

1919 - 1936 (Miss Beecher)

Folder H: Director's Annual Reports (19)

1938 - 1943, 1946 (Miss Beecher)
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Folder I: Annual Meetings, Minutes (8)

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Box I: Folder J: Financial Reports (40)

Miscellaneous statements and statistics:
1933, 1937, 1939, 1940, 1942, 1943, 1945, 1946,
1947, 1948, 1949
Treasurer's Report:
Finance Committee Report:
1953
Pay schedule:
1955

Folder K: By-laws (5)

Farnam Neighborhood House, Inc., 1943 (draft)
Neighborhood Music School, adopted February 27, 1945
Neighborhood Music School, adopted April 2, 1948,
amended January 22, 1957

Folder L: Board and Council Lists (16)

1939, 1945-1946, 1949-1955

Folder M: Miscellaneous (11)

Faculty Meetings:
Minutes, 1951
Report, 1952
Instructors Contract, n.d.
List of Former Teachers, n.d.
Parent-Adult Student Association Report, 1953
History of Pupils, 1956
Report on Students, Teachers, Concerts, Activities,
History of School, 1947
Speeches:
Howard Bauer, "Growth of Music in America," 1923
Howard Whittaker, "American Music and the Search
for Tradition," 1955
Max Kaplan, vita, 1960

Box II: Scholarship Fund, National Guild of Community
Music Schools, Financial and Statistical Material

In Folders A and B, letters have been arranged according
to the following categories:
1. Requests for donations, outgoing
2. Acknowledgements and thanks, outgoing
3. Notes accompanying contributions, incoming
4. Rejections for requests for contributions, incoming
5. Scholarship Fund Committee notes and correspondence
6. Miscellaneous
Box II: Folder A: Scholarship Fund Correspondence, 1958 - 1960 (85)

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Folder C: Scholarship Fund: Handwritten Record Cards (63)
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Folder D: Scholarship Committee (35)
Lists of potential donors and contributors, 1954, 1958, 1959
Lists of donors, 1963
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Annual and monthly reports, 1958, 1959, 1960
Students considered for scholarships, 1959
Fund-raising material and photographs, 1949, 1952, 1963
Public relations report, 1953

Folder E: Lists of Contributors, 1938 - 1947 (1)
Handwritten notebook, 69 pages

Folder F: Correspondence, Miscellaneous (6)
Community Chest Secretary to Miss Marguerite Le Jeune, 1927
Frederick D. Grave to Miss Beecher, 1937
New Haven Woman's Club to Miss Beecher, 1938
Bruce Simonds to Daggett Lee, 1947
Clarence A. Grimes to Mrs. Adler, 1949
Mrs. K.D. English to New Haven Foundation, 1950

Folder G: National Guild of Community Music Schools, Correspondence (34)
Mrs. Emily Adler, incoming and outgoing:
October 21, 1949 - November 17, 1951
November 3, 1952 - May 8, 1953
Most of 1952 - May, 1953, is missing

Folder H: National Guild of Community Music Schools, Correspondence (85)
Mr. Robert Baisley, incoming and outgoing:
July 9, 1953 - December 16, 1955

Folder I: National Guild of Community Music Schools, Correspondence (78)
Mr. Robert Baisley, incoming and outgoing:
January 4, 1958 - April 9, 1958
Mrs. Boris I. Bittker, incoming: February 7, 1961
Box II: Folder J: National Guild of Community Music Schools, Miscellaneous (12)

Annual Conferences:
- Programs, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1961
- Press release and letter to members of New Haven Community Music Council, 1953(?)
- President's Report, March 22, 1953
- Proposed budget, 1954-1955
- Historical data, 1954
- Report of Ways and Means Committee, 1954
- Minutes, October 5, 1958
- Survey of Existing Music Schools, 1958
- Herbert Zipper, biography, n.d.

Folder K: Monthly Statistics (1)

"Daily Service Records," notebook, 91 pages, 1939 - 1945, not complete

Folder L: Bookkeeping Records (1)

Notebook, 31 pages, January, 1940 - January, 1945
- Income, monthly and year-end accounts, receipts and expenditures

Folder M: Bookkeeping Records (4)

Notebook, 49 pages, January, 1941 - June, 1942
- Disbursements, expenses, collections, deposits, fees, income and investments, contributions, scholarships
- Cash disbursements and receipts, 1947, 3 pages

Box III: Programs, Flyers, Press Clippings, Historical Sketches, Manuscripts

Folder A: Programs for Recitals and Concerts (47)

1923 - Neighborhood House Music School assisted by Neighborhood House String Orchestra
1927 - Elm Dramatic Club (auspices Neighborhood House)
1936 - Recital program (incomplete)
1937 - Music social, recital, Annual Concert
1938 - Recitals, radio broadcasts, Annual Concert
1939 - Recitals, broadcasts
1940 - Recitals, broadcasts
1941 - Recitals, Annual Concert
1942 - Annual Concert
1943 - Annual Concert
1944 - Recital, Annual Concert
1947 - Annual Concert
1948 - Script for radio broadcast
N.d. - Recitals
Box III: Folder B: Flyers, Announcements, News Bulletins (17)

1937 - Annual Concert
1936-37 - School flyer
1941 - Annual Concert
Summer 1941 - Announcement
1942 - Annual concert, school flyer
1943 - "National Defense through Music"
1945 - School flyer
1946 - Annual Concert
Summer 1948 - Announcement
1954 - News bulletin, summer session announcement
1955-56 - School flyer

Folder C: Press Clippings - Neighborhood House (28)

1920 - 1927, 1936
From scrapbook. Extremely fragile; handle carefully

Folder D: Press Clippings (57)

1939-1947, 1954 - Concerts, announcements, reviews
1955 - Wooster Square Commission
1955-1956 - Personal articles about former students
1956-1963 - Scholarship Committee, groups to be written to for donations
1965 - Musical families associated with school
N.d. - Miss Beecher, articles, obituary
N.d. - Music School fund drive

Folder E: Miscellaneous Historical Sketches and Mementos (20)

Play written for scouts, 192?
Susan Dyer:
Program notes for "Outlandish Suite," by Susan Dyer
Copy of obituary from Musical America, October 22, 1922
Copy of announcement of Greenwich House Music School written by Susan Dyer, 1922

Marguerite LeJeune:
Annual Report of the New Haven Neighborhood House for Year Ending May, 1927 by Miss LeJeune
Play, "The Spirit of Neighborhood House," by Miss LeJeune
Insignia for House designed by Miss LeJeune

Jessie Clarke Beecher:
Reports (untitled), 1930(?), 1933, 1936, 1938, 1940(2), 1941, 1945(2)
Handwritten notes
Memorandum to Advisory Board, November 19, 1945
"Jessie Clarke Beecher, A Tribute," by Clarence A. Grimes, from New Haven Register, February, 1956, two copies
Box III: Folder F: Historical Sketch, 1929 (1)

Two typewritten pages, ten photographs, several captioned. Seven short biographies of students.

Folder G: Study of Neighborhood Music School by Emily Adler, 1947 (2)

A report submitted by the Committee appointed by the Group Work and Recreation Division of the Council of Social Agencies to review the program of the Neighborhood Music School and recommend whether it should be continued and if so how it should be operated, administered and supported.

Folder H: "The Early History of Lowell House: First New Haven Social Settlement," by Anson Phelps Stokes (1)

Published by Farnam-Neighborhood House, 1946

Folder I: Manuscript for "They Who Speak in Music: The History of the Neighborhood Music School," by Clarence Grimes (1)

Published by The Neighborhood Music School, 1957
Carbon copy, pages I-VIII, 1-88 (Chapters 1-8)

Folder J: Manuscript for "They Who Speak in Music," Continued

Carbon copy, pages 89-156A (Chapters 9-18)

Folder K: Manuscript for "They Who Speak in Music," Continued

Carbon copy, pages 157-238 (Chapters 19-23, footnotes and bibliography)

Folder L: Manuscript for "They Who Speak in Music," Continued (1)

Carbon copy, 102 pages (Preface, Prologue through Chapter 14, bibliographic notes)
Three handwritten notes

Folder M: Lee Howard - Memorabilia (48)

Programs for concerts, recitals, plays, 1947-1960

Box IV: Photographs and Scrapbooks

Folder A: Photographs (45)

1919-1924 - Students and leaders in various Neighborhood House activities, at Neighborhood House and New Haven Green. Most are annotated.
1926 - Delegates to the Second International Conference of Settlements, June 30-July 5, Paris, attended by Miss Beecher
Box IV: Folder A: Photographs, continued.

1938 - Lowell House (page of brochure)
N.d. - Miss Denny

Folder B: Photograph Album. (1)
Program notes for major works, n.d.

Folder C: Scrapbook, 1922-1928. (1)
Newspaper clippings, programs. Fragile; handle carefully.

Folder D: Scrapbook, 1929-1938. (1)
Newspaper clippings, programs. Fragile; handle carefully.

Folder E: Plaque: United Fund Award, n.d. (1)

Folder F: United Fund 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 Awards, n.d. (6)

Box V:

Folder A and Folder B: Scrapbook, 1945-1952. (1)
Newspaper clippings, programs, flyers. Fragile; handle carefully.

Folder C: Newspaper Clippings. (70)

Folder D: Photographs: Neighborhood House, ca. 1910-1935. (20)
Performing groups, individuals, other group activities.
Most are unidentified.

Folder E: Photographs: Miscellaneous. (6)
One Ambrotype, child, unidentified, n.d.
Four photos of Miss Beecher, n.d.
Damaged photo of performing group, unidentified, n.d.
Box V: Folder F: Photographs, ca. 1919-1940. (14)

Originally belonged to Rudolph Steinert; most are signed. Includes Jascha Heifetz, Rosa Ponselle, Feodor Chaliapin. Also Marian Jalley et al. in front of 469 Whitney Avenue, 1926.

Folder F(1): Sergei Rachmaninoff photograph (attached to glass). (1)


Several identified.

Folder H: Leonard W. Bacon, New Haven physician, 1865-1939. (7)

Music manuscripts:
"Sonata for Violin," 1926, two photographic copies.
"Revery of Long Ago," piano and violin, n.d., original.

Correspondence:
L.W.B. to Miss Etelka Evans, Nov. 24, 1928, TLS.

Photograph:
Joseph Joachim, 1831-1907, Hungarian composer. Note on reverse.

Folder I: Certificate. (1)

Resolution: St. Ambrose Music Club, memorial to Kate Lee Lewis, March 22, 1930.

Oversize Item 1: Scrapbook, 1939-1944. (1)


Oversize Item 3: Scrapbook, 1953-1962. (1)

Oversize Item 4: Scrapbook, 1959-1962. (1)

Scrapbooks in Items 1-4 are very fragile; please handle carefully.

Oversize Item 5: Scrapbook, 1962-1967. (1)

Also contains two old photographs, unidentified, n.d.
Box V Fol. J 1969-70 booklet
Folder J Minutes Annual Corporation meeting and supporting documents June 1979

Folder K Minutes Annual Corporation meeting and supporting documents June 11, 1980
Meeting Board and Council and supporting documents June 11, 1980 (15)
Box VI

Folder A Minutes Board and Council Dec. 9, 1981
Jan. 13, 1982
Sept. 15, 1982
Oct. 13, 1982
Meeting notice Nov. 30, 1982
Folder B Minutes Board and Council Jan. 13, 1983
Apr. 13, 1983
Meeting notices, Feb. 1, 1983
May 4, 1983
Report Long Range Planning Committee March 16, 1983