

More Kensington Stores

From Half a Century of Club Life: 1899-1949 by Anna H. Farrell

Woman's Club of Kensington

Fall 2001

(A special thank you to the Woman's Club of Kensington for sharing this glimpse into Kensington's early years.)

They gathered at the home of Mrs. J. Harry Cunningham at the corner of Howard and Fawcett Avenues....and there this Woman's Club of Kensington was born....

...on the 20th of June, 1902, by a vote of the Club these ladies ceased to be ladies and became women forever more....

...They asked the town council to order all straying chickens to their own yards; they helped pay the salary of the school janitor; they canvassed the town for the support of the Library and in fact, the support of the Library has been of paramount interest to the club throughout its history. Money has been raised in various ways for its decoration and repair and for books on many occasions.

They gathered at the home of Mrs. J. Harry Cunningham [for their first meeting on October 20, 1899] at the corner of Howard and Fawcett Avenues (known to us as the old Fawcett house) and there this Woman's Club of Kensington was born....Mrs. Cunningham remembers that for that first meeting her mother made fresh ginger-bread for their refreshment-and they also had some grapes....

A Constitution and Bylaws were adopted and officers elected. President-Mrs. Hartshorn, of course. She was their leader then and as long as she lived was the guiding spirit of the club.... Mrs. Hartshorn-a club woman from the West who had actually voted! She knew so much! Her austere dignity was awe inspiring, but how they followed her and how soon they grew to love her!...And now today, fifty years later, we have a dear daughter-in-law leading her beloved club.

...At the 3rd meeting in 1899 the assignment to one member for the next meeting was "Current Events" and she was to cover what had transpired in the intervening two weeks in "all quarters of the Globe"-and that was to be just a little addition to the regular program.

From the 5th Meeting's Program:

Parliamentary Drill by Miss Thomas

Paper on Discoveries of Columbus and Others by Miss Perry

Paper on Spanish Conquests by Mill Milliken

Paper on Settlements of New England and Virginia by Miss Langille

The last paper was a Criticism of the previous meeting by Mrs. Thompson.