

McLean County Museum of History

Young Men's Club Collection

Processed by
YMC member Wayne H. Ericson
2024
Formatted by Julia Perez, Summer 2025
Additions by Katie Sutrina-Haney, Spring 2026

Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	6 Boxes
COLLECTION DATES:	1918-2025
RESTRICTIONS:	None
PROVENANCE:	
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION: Archives	Archives Annex
NOTES:	Past Perfect #2026.0066

Brief History

The Young Men's Club (YMC) is a unique organization in the Bloomington-Normal community. As reported in the YMC 100th year anniversary book, the club began when, "a guy at The Daily Bulletin . . . asked his boss if he could join Rotary." The guy's boss said there were too many old men in Rotary and he would be better off if he started his own club. He did just that! W.H. "Bill" Gronemeier talked with his friends who supported the idea, which led to the first meeting on October 24, 1916, at the Hills Hotel in downtown Bloomington.

They originally decided that one man per business could join and must be no older than 40 years of age. The maximum membership would be 75 and the Club would meet every Tuesday at 12 noon. On December 31, 1918, the Club adopted a constitution and by-laws, as well as a club motto: "Boost for each other and boost for Bloomington [later changed to community]." The founders promoted a relaxed, informal atmosphere that resulted in a "fun loving group" where members could relax, laugh, have fun, and develop lasting friendships. This tradition continues today as shown in friendly heckling of officers and members. The YMC was a success as the 75-member limit was lifted and within the first year it was reported the club turned down requests to join with Lions, Rotary, Optimists, and Kiwanis. To this day the club remains completely local and is not affiliated with a state or national organization. Membership consists of local businessmen and professionals, including many retirees, some who have belonged for 50 years or more.

While there is little recorded history in this collection from the 1920s thru the 1970s, there is no doubt the YMC continued to thrive as shown in the social events and anniversary celebrations, e.g., 25th (1941), 40th (1956), 50th (1966), and 60th (1976). During this time period, The Pantagraph newspaper contained numerous references to YMC member participation in community events, e.g., banquet to honor G. J. Mecherle (founder of State Farm Insurance), supporting youth at Victory Hall (a home for boys in Normal), and hosting an event for Vietnam veterans.

Club traditions over the years include golf outings, ladies' nights out, holiday parties at the Bloomington Country Club, Changing of the Guard, hoaxes, etc. Some of the better-known hoaxes include the Bus Trip to Nowhere, the Russian Count, and most recently a Social Security official who spoke on reduced benefits. Club members have developed and presented several "follies" programs (community fundraising events). Lastly, the organization continues its long tradition of supporting young people through Youth Opportunity Foundation grants to individuals and organizations which presently includes the Challenger Learning Center, Boys and Girls Club of Bloomington, and the McLean County Museum of History's Futures in History Camp.

The YMC continues to meet every Tuesday noon. The president presides at these meetings, makes announcements, always has a humorous story, and introduces the program speaker. The wide variety of weekly programs provides an opportunity to learn more about the Bloomington-Normal community. The newsletters usually contain a summary of these programs and photographs are posted weekly on the YMC Facebook pages.

Through its history, the spirit of relaxed fellowship has made the Young Men's Club a unique organization in the Bloomington-Normal community while continuing to adhere to its original motto: Being a boost for each other and for the Community.

History by YMC member Wayne H. Ericson, March 2024

Scope

Materials in the collection include club introductory information, several versions of the constitution and by-laws, membership lists/directories, leadership lists, board meeting minutes, annual reports, working

papers/correspondence, numerous financial reports, several versions of YMC history, early club records, the YMC song, poems by Poet Laureate Ed Lebkuecher, anniversary celebrations, newspaper clippings, lists of weekly programs, monthly and weekly newsletters, Youth Opportunity Foundation grants, and various media (DVDs, CDs, 35mm slides, cassette audio tapes, photographs, two external hard drives, and one 16 mm movie reel).

The materials in the collection were donated by the Young Men's Club, Youth Opportunity Foundation, and several individual members.

Box and Folder Inventory

Box 1

Folder 1: General Information

- 1.1.1. Welcome to Young Men's Club (YMC)
- 1.1.2. Meeting Locations – Pictures of the six meeting locations; years at each venue.
- 1.1.3. YMC Logo
- 1.1.4. Young Men's Club Pledge
- 1.1.5. Application forms
- 1.1.6. Cow Bell photo with past presidents engraved
- 1.1.7. Card promoting YMC
- 1.1.8. Traditions of Young Men's Club
- 1.1.9. YMC Outline

Folder 2: Constitution and By Laws

- 1.2.1. Constitution - Undated
- 1.2.2. Constitution – Updated 1986
- 1.2.3. YMC Articles of Incorporation, State of Illinois, January 15, 1987
- 1.2.4. Letter from Roland Thoma, YMC President, to Ill. Atty Gen., Charitable Trust Division providing brief description of YMC and copy of 1986 Constitution. – July 16, 1987.
- 1.2.5. Constitution - updated Jan. 2023

Folder 3: Membership Lists 1918 - 2010

1918, 1938, 1947, 1963, 1980, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 2010

Folder 4: Membership Directories 1919 - 2020

1919, 1920, 1983, 1986, 1988, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1996, 2001, 2003-04, 2007-08, 2009-10, 2011-12, 2013-14, 2015-16, 2017-18, 2019-20

Note: No directory was printed for 1920-1921 due to the pandemic.

Folder 5: Membership Directories 2022 to present

2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-2025, 2025-2026, 2026-2027

Folder 6: Old Membership Applications

Folder 7: Membership Data, Analysis, and Membership Drives

- 1.7.1. Chart depicting changing Demographics of YMC membership - April 8, 2013
- 1.7.2. YMC Membership Drive 1982
- 1.7.3. YMC Membership Drive 2016

Folder 8: Past Presidents, Officers, Boards of Directors

- 1.8.1. List of past presidents
- 1.8.2. Lists of Officers – 1956, 1973, 1976, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 2016
- 1.8.3. Pantagraph article on YMC president election March 1, 1989
- 1.8.4. Oath of office by Fred Noyes
- 1.8.5. Examples of election ballots
- 1.8.6. Duties of Club Treasurer
- 1.8.7. Assorted Photos of Past-Presidents

Note: Except for extensive coverage of Golf Outings in Folder 13, the documents in the remaining Folders consist mainly of correspondence regarding program planning, special events, organizational management, and notes used to conduct Club meetings.

Note: For a complete record of Past Presidents and year served please see Membership Directories in Folders 4 and 5 above.

Folder 9: Past Presidents' Papers 1993 Martin Oman

Folder 10: Past Presidents' Papers 2008 James Keeran

Folder 11: Past Presidents' Papers 2009 thru 2011 Lawrence, Yoder, and Stein

Folder 12: Past Presidents' Papers 2013 Harry Lovell

Folder 13: Past Presidents' Papers 2014 Sean Craig

Folder 14: Past Presidents' Papers 2015 Don Leventhal

Folders 15 to 20

Reserved for President's papers to be added in the future

Folder 21: Board Meeting Minutes and Organization

1986, 1988, 1989, 2013, 2020, 2022, 2024

Folder 22: Annual Presidents' Reports 1918 - 2022

- 1.22.1 1918 Ned Dolan
- 1.22.2 2013 Harry Lovell

- 1.22.3 2014 Sean Craig
- 1.22.4 2015 Don Leventhal
- 1.22.5 2016 Herb Knudsen
- 1.22.6 2017 Frank Hoffman
- 1.22.7 2018 Jim Stahly
- 1.22.8 2019 Bob Kohlhasse
- 1.22.9 2020 Wayne H. Ericson
- 1.22.10 2021 David Gaffron
- 1.22.11 2022 Wayne Kissler

Folder 23: Annual Presidents' Reports 2023 - Present

- 1.23.1. 2023 Gary Blakney
- 1.23.2. 2024 Frank Hoffman
- 1.23.3. 2025 Herb Eaton

Folder 24: Changing of the Guard - Assorted Photographs from 1957 - 2019

- 1.24.1. Citation to Outgoing president (undated) and letter to Nominating committee Chair recommending all current officers be replaced (1987?).
- 1.24.2. Photographs of ceremonies when changing from one Club President to the next.

Note: See Folders 5.1 and 5.9.2 for programs that have been recorded and stored on DVD's and External Hard Drive 1.

Folder 25: Annual Financial Reports

1958, 1963, 1987-88, 1990-2013, 2019, 2020, 2024, 2025

Folder 26: Tax Filings State 1991, 2001; Federal 1993, 1998, 2001-2012, 2014

Folder 27: Cash Receipts Journal 1948-1956

Three-ring binder of ledgers

Folder 28: Monthly Income/Expenditure Records 1989, 1997, 2000, 2015, 2019-2020

Note: Records for some months are missing.

Folder 29: Liability Insurance

Policies purchased July 1992 and July 2019 thru July 2020

Folder 30: Covid-19 pandemic

Timeline, Organizational response, Award presentation to Cow Bell Editors

Folder 31: Member Surveys

2021, 2024

Box 2

Folder 1: YMC History, several versions

- 2.1.1. 1920
- 2.1.2. 1956
- 2.1.3. 1966 – 50 years
- 2.1.4. 1986 – 70 years
- 2.1.5. 2007 – 91 years
- 2.1.6. 2016 – 100 years

Folder 2: Early Club Records

- 2.2.1. Minutes of 2nd meeting Oct. 31, 1916 – in notebook
- 2.2.2. Charter Member Certificates to William Gronemeier (Father of Club) and Fred Wollrab
October 1966
- 2.2.3. 2003 List of Golden Oldies (members for more than 50 years)
- 2.2.4. Minutes of meetings 1916 to 1920 – In bound volume.

Folder 3: YMC Poet Laureate Ed Lebkuecher 1930–1980

- 2.3.1. Thirty-five pages of poems by Ed Lebkuecher are contained in a brown folder.
- 2.3.2. Eulogy to Loring Merwin by Ed Lebkuecher.
- 2.3.3. Pantagraph clipping honoring Ed Lebkuecher as oldest living scoutmaster in Corn Belt
district, Boy Scouts of America.
- 2.3.4. Poem written by Don Freeze to honor Ed Lebkuecher, April 23, 1985
- 2.3.5. Philosophy of Life after 90 years.
- 2.3.6. As per the request of Ed Lebkuecher, Maxine Drexler (Lebkuecher's daughter) sent a letter
to YMC which contains a limerick about YMC.
- 2.3.7. "Lebkuecher still Writing Poetry at 90" Pantagraph September 11, 1983
- 2.3.8. Ed Lebkuecher 90th Birthday
- 2.3.9. Eulogy of Ed Lebkuecher at 93, May 15, 1987
- 2.3.10. Photos of Ed Lebkuecher

Note: Unpublished collection of Lebkuecher poems, Poetry of Edar M. Lebkuecher: Young Men's Club Poet Laureate, 1930-1980 (Bloomington, undated), cataloged and placed in the Museum Library.

Folder 4: YMC song

- 2.4.1. Original 1930 lyrics plus two revisions in 1982 and 1991.
- 2.4.2. Musical score and lyrics updated for 100th Anniversary
- 2.4.3. Mailer to John Kibler dated December 15, 1986, which includes YMC song lyrics plus
choreography.

Note: Folders 2.5 through 2.14 provide information on anniversary celebrations such as programs, photos, and planning documents. Additional anniversary celebration materials can be found in media folders 5.3, 5.6, and 5.9.4.

Folder 5: 25th Anniversary Celebration 1941

Club Marks 25th Year – Pantagraph photograph February 1, 1942

Folder 6: 40th Anniversary Celebration 1956

- 2.6.1. Anniversary Program Booklet
- 2.6.2. Pantagraph News Article
- 2.6.3. Photographs of Banquet

Folder 7: 50th Anniversary Celebration 1966

- 2.7.1. Anniversary Program Booklet – one hard cover copy and two paper back copies
- 2.7.2. Program for 50th Anniversary Banquet
- 2.7.3. Pictures and articles regarding 50th Anniversary in several 1966 Pantagraph issues–
February 2, October 19, October 23, and October 24
- 2.7.4. Logo for 50th Anniversary
- 2.7.5. Photographs of 50th Anniversary
- 2.7.6. 50th Anniversary coin

Folder 8: 60th Anniversary Celebration 1976

- 2.8.1. Anniversary Program Booklet and Club Officers
- 2.8.2. List of attendees at Anniversary Banquet
- 2.8.3. Pantagraph Articles – October 20, 1976 and October 25, 1976
- 2.8.4. Photographs of 60th Anniversary

Folder 9: 70th Anniversary Celebration 1986

- 2.9.1. Invitation
- 2.9.2. Anniversary Banquet Program
- 2.9.3. Invitations by Dan Holder to local business to attend a Tuesday meeting
- 2.9.4. Agenda for YMC Board and 70th Anniversary Planning committee meeting, financing,
70th Anniversary Banquet planning, correspondence re Madigan plus reminder letters to
members and wives, advertising (Pantagraph October 7, 1986), banquet sequence of events.
Note: Additional Anniversary planning activities documented in 1986 Board meeting
minutes–see Folder 1.21
- 2.9.5. Feature article titled, Young Men’s Club growing older (Pantagraph October 5, 1986), plus
two references to Young Men’s Club in Pantagraph “How Time Flies” column
- 2.9.6. Certificate of appreciation (blank copy)
- 2.9.7. Photographs of 70th Anniversary

Folder 10: 75th Anniversary Celebration 1991

- 2.10.1. Invitation
- 2.10.2. Anniversary Program Booklet (4)
- 2.10.3. Anniversary Banquet Committee Meeting (March 6, 1991) Master Planning Guide and
letters confirming entertainment
- 2.10.4. 75th Anniversary Banquet Program including president’s script

- 2.10.5. Manuscript of slide sound presentation with Don Munson as narrator (recorded on DVD)
see folders 5.3.1, 5.9.4, and 6.1.
- 2.10.6. Congratulatory letters from elected officials - Edward Madigan, Tom Ewing, Jim Edgar,
Jesse Smart
- 2.10.7. Pantagraph ad October 7, 1991, and feature article titled, Club celebrating tradition of
tomfoolery, youth services - October 6, 1991
- 2.10.8. Red Binder containing invitation, lists of attendees, names of 50yr members, program,
etc.

Folder 11: 80th and 85th Anniversary Celebrations 1996 & 2001 respectively

- 2.12.1. List of attendees at 80th
- 2.12.2. Two photographs at 85th

Folder 12: 90th Anniversary Celebration plus photos 2006

Anniversary Program Booklet (2)

List of attendees

Pantagraph feature article – October 25, 2006

Photographs of 90th Anniversary

Folder 13: 100th Anniversary Celebration 2016

- 2.13.1. Planning and Organization Documents
- 2.13.2. Programs, remarks, and recognitions
- 2.13.3. Group picture of attendees including list of names
- 2.13.4. 100th Anniversary Book (2)

Note: Photographs are on a DVD located in media folder 5.3.4, on CD's in folders 5.6.8, and 5.6.9, and
on External Hard Drive 1 folder 5.9.4.

Folder 14: 110th Anniversary Celebration 2026

Folder 15: YMC Philanthropy before 1986

- 2.15.1. Fun Night for Young Men at Victory Hall – Pantagraph - September 24, 1941
- 2.15.2. Six Flags - Cards & Cubs Baseball Trip Saturday/Sunday June 23-24, 1973
- 2.15.3. Excerpt from 50th Anniversary book
- 2.15.4. Photographs - Booker T. Washington Home Christmas Party

Folder 16: Youth Opportunity Foundation (YOF) History and Funding Overview

- 2.16.1. Brief History of Youth Opportunity Foundation (undated)
- 2.16.2. Flyer – What is the Young Men's Club Youth Opportunity Foundation?
- 2.16.3. History of YMC Youth Opportunity Foundation and Financial Awards by Year
- 2.16.4. Photograph

Folder 17: YOF Introduction, Meeting Minutes, Financial Reports

- 2.17.1. Origins and establishment of YOF initiated by Dan Holder - February 1986

- 2.17.2. Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws
- 2.17.3. General Guidelines and Application form
- 2.17.4. Draft letter to junior high principals written by John Wm Yoder and sent to Preston Ensign for review, July 14, 1986
- 2.17.5. First YOF Board Meeting September 1, 1987
- 2.17.6. Meeting minutes March 15, 1988
- 2.17.7. Club Offers Precollege Aid for Seventh - Graders – Pantagraph Jan. 27, 1995
- 2.17.8. Financial Reports 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998
- 2.17.9. August 2, 2016, YOF Board meeting minutes followed by two additional meetings on October 18 and 24, 2016; amendments to By-Laws; and 2016 Resolution of the membership of YMC regarding the YMC YOF.
- 2.17.10. Minutes of YOF Board meetings on November 28, 2017; Mar 25, 2018; December 19, 2018; agenda for November 30, 2022 meeting, minutes for June 21, 2023; January-December Profit & Loss statement; and assorted correspondence.

Folder 18: YOF Correspondence 1986-2019

This folder contains copies of correspondence and transmittal of grant awards primarily from YOF treasurer John Wm. Yoder and acknowledgements/thank-yous from recipient individuals/organizations from 1986-2019. The materials in this folder provide an ongoing narrative of the YOF and its contributions to young people and organizations in the community.

Folder 19: YOF Correspondence 2020-Present

Beginning 2020 to present this folder is a continuation of the materials in Folder 18 above.

Folder 20: YOF Charter and State of Illinois Filings

The legal documents/filings required by the State of Illinois beginning with the Articles of Incorporation in 1987.

Folder 21: YOF IRS Filings

YOF documents required by the Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service

Folder 22: Other Charitable Giving by YMC Members

Jerry Gilbert's Birthday Matching Challenge to YMC to raise additional funds for the Boy's and Girl's Club of Bloomington-Normal

Box 3

Folder 1: Weekly Programs by Year

Undated list + meals + cost, 1986, 1998-2020

Folder 2: Weekly Programs by Year

2021 to 2024

Note: Folders 3 through 9 contain listings of Social Events including Ladies' Night Out, Golf Outings, Steak & Lobster Dinners, Dinner Theater, Holiday Parties, Baseball Games, etc.

Folder 3: Social Events 1920s-1960s

1924, 1929, 1932, 1936, 1940, 1945, 1951, 1958, 1967, 1968, and 3 undated

Folder 4: Social Events 1966-67; 1971-72**Folder 5: Social Events 1991-1996****Folder 6: Social Events 1997-2000****Folder 7: Social Events 2002-04 and an undated program advertisement****Folder 8: Social Events 2005-11****Folder 9: Social Events 2012-Present**

Notes: Social events also listed in weekly programs - See Folders 3.1 and 3.2. The number of social events reported decreased circa 2012 mainly due to the increased use of email which eliminated paper copies. However, the actual number of these events did not decrease. Also, photos of various social events are contained in Folder 5.8

Folder 10: Hoaxes

- 3.10.1. Excerpts from four Cow Bell newsletters which describe 10 hoaxes that tricked Club members (Cow Bell issues December 12, 2022; January 8, 2023; January 22, 2023; and an annual report issue dated January 30, 2023)
- 3.10.2. Mitsubishi hoax reported in Pantagraph March 21, 1985
- 3.10.3. Bus Trip to Nowhere reported in Bill Flick column - Pantagraph January 20, 1990
- 3.10.4. Dan Holder reminiscences about YMC fun and frolics in his description of hoaxes and turnover ceremonies.
- 3.10.5. Pantagraph article "Japanese 'executive' has club seeing red" Dec 5, 2015

Folder 11: Jollies – 1920, 1922

- 3.11.1. Program flyer advertising Jollies program November 11, 1919
- 3.11.2. Pantagraph photograph of 1922 Jollies cast

Folder 12: Follies – Comedies Tonight - 1987

- 3.12.1. Program Handout
- 3.12.2. Ticket to After Glow Party
- 3.12.3. January 1987, production, ". . . meant to be a climax to the Club's 70th Anniversary Year." In Pantagraph article titled "Follies foil group's attempts to grow old" January 18, 1987.
- 3.12.4. Photographs including picture of two cast members John Esch and Bob Kennett in costume

Folder 13: Follies – Not Ready for Prime Time – 1993

- 3.13.1. Program Handout (3)
- 3.13.2. Planning – Kick-Off meeting, proposal, finances
- 3.13.3. “Not Ready for Prime Time” - Complete Script written by James Keeran
- 3.13.4. Supporting production documents - stage crew, lighting, order of appearance
- 3.13.5. Ticketing information/sales information
- 3.13.6. Financial sponsorship letter from State Farm
- 3.13.7. Advertising poster

Folder 14: Follies – Hee Haul – 1995

- 3.14.1. Program Handout
- 3.14.2. Planning
- 3.14.3. “Hee Haul” partial script
- 3.14.4. Ticketing information
- 3.14.5. Financial sponsorship letter from State Farm

Note: DVD recordings of the Follies are in Folder 5.2.

Folder 15: Club Sponsored/Arranged Programs

- 3.15.1. French Army Band – November 29, 1918
- 3.15.2. United States Marine Band, Charity Event - November 15, 1925.
- 3.15.3. Award Banquet to honor G.J. Mecherle – [Founder of State Farm Insurance] Program pamphlet. October 2, 1940.
- 3.15.4. Freedom and Government. An address by John Cassidy, former Attorney General of Illinois – November 16, 1943.
- 3.15.5. George Gobel Program, YMC Party at Lutheran School. Program pamphlet and correspondence re scheduling. April 21, 1947.

Folder 16: Newspaper Clippings & Miscellaneous Items

- 3.16.1. Initiation Day at Young Men’s Club. Pantagraph July 23, 1919
- 3.16.2. Daily Pantagraph EXTRA: Headline “Wichmann Wins by Landslide” for office of YMC President – Pantagraph January 11, 1938
- 3.16.3. Two pictures of YMC minstrel show performers both in and out of costume. Pantagraph September 11, 1938
- 3.16.4. Young Men’s Club plays role of Santa Claus at Victory Hall. Pantagraph December 24, 1941
- 3.16.5. Young Men’s Club Make Life Horrid for Thirteen Members [initiation]. Pantagraph 1945
- 3.16.6. YMC members entertained wives at Pere Marquette State Park – Pantagraph October 2, 1949
- 3.16.7. YMC Stages Annual “Wailing Wall” [now known as Crying Towel]. Pantagraph October 4, 1949
- 3.16.8. Five short Pantagraph articles – Tucci (1960) and Kibler (1968) elected as YMC president, Leon Vanderwater honored for 50 years of service, notice of dance revue program, and Preston Ensign mock trial for misuse of YMC funds
- 3.16.9. Latvians Seek Business Savvy. Pantagraph January 25. 1966

- 3.16.10. Ensign to Head Young Men's Club in "Golden Year." Pantagraph January 26, 1966
- 3.16.11. Ten Photo Clues in Treasure Hunt Sponsored by YMC. Subtitle – Gene Paxton and his camera. - Pantagraph March 13, 1967
- 3.16.12. "We Care" fund Tops Goal – YMC Hosts dinner for Vietnam Veterans at Illinois House. Pantagraph February 22, 1968
- 3.16.13. Speaker Scolds News Media – Joint meeting of Young Men's Club, Kiwanis, and Optimist Clubs. Pantagraph June 2, 1970
- 3.16.14. Titan Recognition. Titans honored at luncheon given by Young Men's Club. Pantagraph March 14, 1984
- 3.16.15. "Tie one on – if you dare" story featuring Fred Groves and his notable neckties Pantagraph, August 5, 1984
- 3.16.16. Big names linked to four-digit bill at House Eatery - Campaign to raise \$.41 for Ed Madigan. Pantagraph December 10, 1991. Also included is a press release to sponsor fundraising campaign and letter from William Lawrence to Ed Madigan.
- 3.16.17. The Crème of the Young Men's Crop. Memo by Jack Bowles re food at Elks Club, September 21, 1993
- 3.16.18. NPR Host: Income Gap Warps Democracy. Pantagraph July 1, 2015
- 3.16.19. Local civic groups remain healthy. Pantagraph January 27, 1997
- 3.16.20. Thank you letter to YMC for volunteering as ushers at NCAA Division III Women's Basketball Final Four
- 3.16.21. Certificate of Appreciation by City of Bloomington Police Department. Presented by Jamal Simington, Chief of Police. October 26, 2021
- 3.16.22. Happy Holidays Ornament picture and descriptive pamphlet. Ornament designed and crafted by Fred Mills. Picture by Robert Hanley. YMC Fundraiser. Undated. [Ornament located in MCMH objects collection]
- 3.16.23. Remembrance of Fred Groves a YMC Perspective. Presented at Fred Groves Celebration of Life by Herb Knudsen, April 16, 2024
- 3.16.24. "Young Men's Club celebrates over a century of community, cajoling" The Pantagraph, October 25, 2022

Monthly Newsletters

Folder 17: 1916-1978

Folder 18: 1979-1986

Folder 19: 1989

Folder 20: 1990-1992

Folder 21: 1993-1995

Folder 22: 1996-1998

Folder 23: 1999-2000

Folder 24: 2001-2002

Folder 25: 2003-2005

Folder 26: 2006-2008

Folder 27: 2009-2019

Folder 28: 2020 Jan thru April

Note: In response to suspending weekly club meetings on March 10, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Newsletter was renamed “YMC Cow Bell,” and published weekly beginning April 13, 2020, and expanded to provide greater communication and connections among members.

Folder 29: April - May 2020

Folder 30: June - July 2020

Folder 31: August - September 2020

Folder 32: October - November 2020

Folder 33: December 2020

Folder 34: January - February 2021

Folder 35: March - April 2021

Folder 36: May - June 2021

Box 4

Cow Bell (Newsletters) Continued

Folder 1: July - August 2021

Folder 2: September - October 2021

Folder 3: November - December 2021

Note: With the pandemic receding and resumption of regular weekly meetings, beginning February 2022, “The Cow Bell” was shifted from a weekly publication to the second and fourth Mondays monthly.

Folder 4: January - February 2022

Folder 5: March - April 2022

Folder 6: May - June 2022

Folder 7: July - August 2022

Folder 8: September - October 2022

Folder 9: November - December 2022

Folder 10: January - February 2023

Folder 11: March - April 2023

Folder 12: May - June 2023

Folder 13: July - August 2023

Folder 14: September - October 2023

Folder 15: November - December 2023

Folder 16: January – March 2024

Folder 17: March- June 2024

Folder 18: July- September 2024

Folder 19: October -December 2024

Folder 20: January- March 2025

Folder 21: April-May 2025

Folder 22: June-August 2025

Folder 23: September-December 2025

Box 5

Note: The items in Folders 1 through 5 are recorded in DVD format. In addition, many of the recordings on the following DVDs and CDs are also available on the two external hard drives. See Folders 5.9 and 5.10.

Folder 1: Changing of the Guard (COG) – multiple years on one disk

Note: These DVDs contain a record of those meetings in which the outgoing president is roasted and the incoming president is recognized. These events are stored electronically in Folder 5.9.2.

- 5.1.1. 1990, 1991, 1992
- 5.1.2. 1993, 1994, 1995
- 5.1.3. 1996, 1997, 1998
- 5.1.4. 1999, 2000, 2001
- 5.1.5. 2002
- 5.1.6. 2012
- 5.1.7. 2014 - one small disk – one small disk missing
- 5.1.8. 2015 - two small disks
- 5.1.9. 2016 - two small disks

Folder 2: Follies

Note: The DVDs contain a video and audio record of these fund-raising events. These events are also stored electronically in Folder 5.9.3. More information in Folders 3.12 to 3.14. 5.2.1 1987 - 4 disks

- 5.2.1. 1988
- 5.2.2. 1989 - 3 disks
- 5.2.3. 1993 - 2 disks
- 5.2.4. 1995 - Hee Haul Follies

Folder 3: Anniversaries

Note: These recordings depict events conducted mostly during the anniversary celebrations. More information in Folders 2.5 thru 2.14.

- 5.3.1. 75th - Anniversary/Women's Documentary 1991/Man of the Year 1993
- 5.3.2. 80th - Humorous program produced by YMC members – 1996 14
- 5.3.3. 100th - Anniversary Program 2016 - two disks
- 5.3.4. 100th - Anniversary Banquet Photographs 2016 (.jpg)

Folder 4: Other Club Activities

- 5.4.1. YMC Meeting Don Freese and David Horine - February 24, 2012
- 5.4.2. Don Freeze 90th Birthday Party - March 15, 2011 - one large and one small disk
- 5.4.3. Photos of YMC meetings late 2015 thru early 2017 - 2 disk Set
- 5.4.4. Compilation DVD: Fred Groves Party 2003, James Keeran as Lincoln, Follies 1995 'Hee Haul'

5.4.5. Membership Awards September 9, 2014 - two small disk set

5.4.6. YMC 13 Video recordings - on one DVD

Big American Milk Off - 7 23, 91

Ray Baxter faux funeral - 3 9, 89

Easter Bunny Eggs - 3 29, 94

Benoni Green WWII Vet - 11 11, 94

Egg Breaking - 3 22, 1994

Royce Elliott Comedian - 2 27, 1990

Holiday Party - 1993

The Mayor - 4 22, 1997

Liars Club - 11 3, 1992

Trial (mock) - 3 10, 94

Man of the Year - 1993

YOF Awards + Police Dogs - 3 15, 89

Mtg. re Martin Oman - 4 9, 1994

Folder 5: Summer Meeting - Lawn Games, circa 1930

5.5.1. Original 16 mm movie reel and DVD. This event is stored electronically in Folder 5.9.5.

Note: The items in Folder 6 are recorded in CD format.

Folder 6: Photographs recorded in CD format (In Blue Cloth Zippered Holder)

5.6.1. YMC Photos Addition variety— no date listed

5.6.2. 2000 Member photos

5.6.3. 2003 Directory photos

5.6.4. 2007 Directory Cover

5.6.5. 2007 Directory Photos – September

5.6.6. 2007 Holiday Party Photos at BCC - December 4, 2007

5.6.7. 2009 Directory Photos

5.6.8. 100 Anniversary Book YMC Scans - September 6, 2016

5.6.9. 100 Anniversary photos for Program

5.6.10. Golf and Baseball photographs – variety

5.6.11. Herb's Scans 1- 45 + singles

5.6.12. Monday Scans 46 - 48 + logos – 2

5.6.13. Tuesday Herb's scans 49 - 54 + 1

5.6.14. YMC Scans - September 6, 2016

5.6.15. YMC Meeting - Don Freese and & David Horine Program - April 24, 2012

5.6.16. Don Freese Rehearsal September 11, 2007

5.6.17. Live at the Elk - Don Freese and & David Horine - in separate CD holder

Folder 7: 114 Unmarked 35mm Slides

Folder 8: General Photographs - General and Social Events

5.8.1. Included are photographs of annual holiday parties, golf outing, special events, etc.

Note: To view files on the following two external hard drives please contact Museum staff who will provide access to a computer and a connection to the selected external hard drive. Museum visitors are not allowed to copy electronic files. Persons wanting copies of hard drive images/files must supply a formatted thumb drive and request Museum staff to make a copy(s). NOTE: File 1 contains photographs (.jpg) and files 2-5 contain video recordings (.mp4) except for 100th Anniversary photographs in 5.9.4.

Folder 9: External hard drive #1

5.9.1. Photographs from Meng Horng

Note: Photographs in file folders 2000-2016 are sorted by year and YMC Club president.

YMC Calendar Picture - 2003

2011 Randy Stein

Ozark House 4 images - Sept, 2001

2012 Fred Noyes

Logo - December 11, 2020

2013 Meng - 97 Yr YMC Program

1995 Follies

2013 Harry Lovell

2000 Jim Keeran

2014 Sean Craig

2001 Erik Prenzler

2015 Don Leventhal

Note: The names of the incoming presidents are listed below.

5.9.2. Changing of the Guard

1990 Phil Rasmus Oath of Office

1991 Bryce Sides

1992 Fred Mills

1993 Marty Oman

1994 Marth Oman

1995 Fred Groves

1996 Scott Hume

2002 Gary Blakney

2016 Herb Knudsen

2003 Greg Kennet

2016 Meng - 100 Anniversary

2004 Gordon Ropp Club Documents

2005 Jim Allen Directory

2006 Bil Caisley Logos

2007 Joe Teague Members

2008 Jim Keeran Program Schedule

2009 Paul Lawrence YMC Archive search

2010 Bill Yoder

1997 Dennis Krug + Follies

1998 Richard Hackl
1999 Jesse Smart
2000 Jim Keeran
2001 Erik Prenzler
2002 Gary Blakney
2012 Fred Noyes
2014 Sean Craig - one disk missing
2015 # 1 Don Leventhal & Gordon Ropp Auction 2015 # 2 Don Leventhal
2016 # 1 Herb Knudsen - Audio is Erratic
2016 # 2 Herb Knudsen

5.9.3. Follies

1986 Follies - 'Puttin on the Ritz'
1987 Follies - Two files
1988 Follies Act 1
1998 Follies Act 2
1989 Follies - Two Files
1993 Follies - 'Not Ready for Prime Time'
1995 Follies - 'Hee Haul'

5.9.4. Anniversaries

75th Anniversary 1991 - Don Munson excerpt
75th Anniversary 1991 - Full Program
100th Anniversary Program 2016
100th Anniversary Banquet Photographs 2016 (.jpg)

5.9.5. Club Meetings/Other Activities

Summer Meeting Lawn Games
Benoni Green WWII Vet plus roll throwing - October 11, 1994
Big American Milk Off - July 23, 1991
Easter Bunny Distributing Eggs - March 29, 1994
Egg Breaking - March 22, 1994
Holiday Party - 1993
Liars Club - November 3, 1992
Man of the Year - 1993
Meeting - An 8 - minute segment on President Martin Oman - April 9, 1994 Ray Baxter faux funeral - May 9, 1989
Royce Elliott Comedian - February 27, 1990
The Mayor - April 22, 1997
Trial (mock) - May 10, 1994
YOF Awards and Police Dog Demonstration - May 15, 1989

Folder 10: External Hard Drive #2

Note: A general description outlining the contents of this drive is presented as the number of files are too numerous to list individually. This external drive contains documents/pictures in the following categories:

- 5.10.1. Directory - Digital member list & photographs 2009-2017
- 5.10.2. YMC Miscellany - Digital photos of historical nature (Dollar Bill Folding, Fred Groves, 1995 Follies, misc.)
- 5.10.3. YMC Archive Search - Digital photographs of archival activities at ISU, IWU, Museum, List of 2012 Box Contents, 2016 history doc
- 5.10.4. YMC 100-Year Book - PDF file
- 5.10.5. YMC 75th Video Pix Montage - 16:27minute video montage for 75th anniversary compiled by John Boaz, Preston Ensign, Dann Holder, Pantagraph Library, narrated by Don Munson
- 5.10.6. Ozark House - Digital photographs
- 5.10.7. Logos - Digital photographs
- 5.10.8. Elks Club. Digital photographs
- 5.10.9. Directory 2009 thru 17 - Member list & photographs 2009-2017
- 5.10.10. Club Docs 2007 thru 9 - Text & photographs for website, flyer
- 5.10.11. Club programs 2000 thru 2025 - Digital files for each president with weekly presenter photographs and meeting description from Facebook page managed by Photographer Member Robert E. Handley.

Box 6

Loose Items

MM slides - 75th Anniversary with two carousel trays plus two cassette tapes

10 cassette audio tapes

- 1970 Jefferson
- 1970 Hal Adelman
- 1986 Gov. James Thompson Teleconference
- 1993 Paul Harvey and Leon Vanderwater
- Bill's Final
- Washburn
- 1986 Interview of Edward Madigan and Gov. Jim Thompson
- 1985 Interview of B. Paul Jefferson
- 1985 Interviews with Preston Ensign, Dean Hillfinger, Andy Washburn
- 1985 Interviews with Preston Ensign and B. Paul Jefferson

Acknowledgements

This collection resulted from the contributions of Club members over many years. While it is impossible to name everyone who contributed, we are grateful for their foresight to save these materials which tell the story of the Young Men's Club (YMC) and its contributions to the community. However, we do know that all or almost all of the audiovisual (AV) recordings were filmed by Rogers Freedlund. Without Rogers' work there would be few AV materials. These recordings provide a unique insight into the past culture of the YMC. We are eternally grateful to Rogers.

This project began in July 2022 when YMC President Wayne Kissler formally transferred ownership of the YMC documents to the McLean County Museum of History (MCMH) and established a History Committee consisting of Wayne H. Ericson (chair), Robert Fisher, and Jim Stahly. Dan Holder, Chair of the Youth Opportunity Foundation (YOF) Board, transferred the YOF documents in late 2023. Work began on the development of the collection and Finding Aid in March 2023. At the outset we knew little about archiving, organizing and cataloguing a collection, and creating a Finding Aid. We are grateful for the guidance provided by MCMH Librarian Bill Kemp and Archivist George Perkins. Their patience and thoughtful comments throughout this process were much appreciated.

The YMC leadership (Presidents Wayne Kissler, Gary Blakney, Frank Hoffman, and Boards) were very supportive e.g., reviewing proposed finding aid categories, discussing materials to include/exclude, obtaining paper copies of "The Cow Bell," updating AV files, and replacing an external hard drive. Herb Knudsen, Jim Stahly, and Greg Koos participated in these discussions. Wayne Kissler organized several years of YMC Cow Bell newsletters.

One of the most daunting tasks was what to do with the one-half box of old photographs, many of which had no identifying information. Luckily there were five men who have been members for 50 years or more! These "Golden Oldies" are Gary Blakney, William Caisley, Fred Groves, Dan Holder, and Stan Jarecki. They met several times and identified many photographs that are now in the collection. Fred Noyes and Jerry Kownacki joined the group for the last two sessions.

As the collection was being organized the opportunity arose to "fill in" gaps in the materials, e.g., lists of weekly meetings, annual reports, Ladies Night Out, etc. Herb Knudsen supplied many of the needed records. Fred Noyes provided documents used in planning the 100th Anniversary celebration. Wayne Kissler supplied lists of weekly programs.

Much time was spent updating AV files. When external hard drive #1 failed, lost data was retrieved when Dan Holder provided a back-up drive and approval was given to purchase a replacement. Gary Blakney sought out and acquired the services of a company to convert VHS tapes to DVD's and e-files. Club Photographer Robert E. Handley helped identify and implemented procedures to convert "Cow Bell" e-files to a format that permitted the records to be reproduced on paper for storage in the collection. He spent many hours converting DVDs and e-files to a common format so they could be viewed on different computers. Jim Stahly organized and updated external hard drive #2 which, among other items, contains a listing of weekly meeting descriptions/photographs (2000 thru 2024) from Facebook pages managed by Robert E. Handley.

Lastly, I am grateful to Robert Fisher who spent numerous Monday afternoons in the Museum, as well as time at home processing the collection. He made significant contributions to the organization, quality, and completion of the collection and Finding Aid.

Many thanks to everyone who contributed and were dedicated to this project. It will remain in the archives of the McLean County Museum of History for many years to come.

Wayne H. Ericson

August 7, 2024