

Rockingham Co. Extension Homemakers Clubs

Repository:	Rockingham Co. Historical Collections Gerald B. James Library Rockingham Community College P. O. Box 38 Wentworth, NC 27375
Title:	Rockingham Co. Extension Homemakers Clubs
Accession No.:	10-012
Extent:	2 boxes
Inclusive Dates:	1917-1949
Subject Headings:	Clubs – Rockingham County (N. C.) Rockingham County Extension Homemakers Clubs Kirkpatrick, Mazie
Related Collections:	Williamsburg Club Collection, 02-071
Preferred Citation:	<i>Rockingham Co. Extension Homemakers Clubs. 10-112. Rockingham Co. Historical Collections, Gerald B. James Library, Rockingham Community College.</i>
Descriptive Note:	Council minutes and records of the Rockingham Co. Extension Homemakers Clubs
History:	<p>In 1917, a far seeing board of County Commissioners appropriated funds for a Home Demonstration Agent for Rockingham County. The county had hired a Farm Agent 4 years earlier. Mazie Kirkpatrick was sent from the State Extension Department as the first Home Demonstration Agent.</p> <p>Through the cooperation of the county commissioners, she was given a Model-T touring car of the type that “aired you out as you go.” The open type was the kind that she needed, for those were the days of hot water canners carried with the stove pipes to be used with them.</p> <p>Her first work here was with the girls in various schools. This work consisted of demonstrations in canning tomatoes, biscuit</p>

making contests, and rat killing contests. She had 15 schools participating.

By 1919, she had organized 6 girl's tomato clubs and 4 Home Demonstration Clubs. The first clubs organized were the Apple and Clark Clubs. These were later combined into the Apple Clark Club with Mrs. J. S. Turner as president. Mrs. Turner served as State President in 1929.

Also in 1919, the Home and Farm Agents organized community fairs. That same year, fairs were held at 3 locations. In 1920, 4 more were held at the following rural schools: Dan Valley, Matrimony, Apples and Bethany.

Miss Kirkpatrick's work in Rockingham County was one of struggle against bad roads and many hardships. This being a new educational movement, she had many opposing factions, but with her sense of humor and her ability to make friends by gaining confidence in people she was gradually able to put this work across.

In 1921, Miss Ethel Wells (later Mrs. Floyd Moore) came to the county to replace Miss Kirkpatrick. Many other agents have since carried on the work begun by these pioneers.

In 1929, it was doubtful whether there would be any more home demonstration agents to work with farm women because commissioners discontinued appropriations for the work. Interested farmers and farm women, with the help of other friends, among them Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson Penn, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Penn, and Mrs. B. Frank Mebane made private contributions to continue the work. The women pleaded with the commissioners. They also went to the State Legislature and had a law passed that Rockingham County would always employ a Home Agent.

In 1937, the first black Home Demonstration Agent, Mrs. Mamie Willett Townes, was hired to begin working with black women in the county. The State Council of Negro Home Demonstration Clubs of North Carolina and the North Carolina Organization of Home Demonstration Clubs were merged in 1967 to form the North Carolina Extension Homemakers Association, Inc.

Projects during the early years of Home Demonstration work

were gardening, canning, food preparation, nutrition, sewing, home improvement, home management, and mattress making. To these early projects have been added family and community centered programs which are offered to non-farm as well as farm women. Volunteerism and leadership development are stressed in today's clubs.

Raising money for community buildings was one of the biggest projects in which Extension Homemakers participated in the early years. Approximately \$45,000 was raised during one 10 year period. Members also contributed \$1,185.50 to the State Home Demonstration Building Fund in the 1960s. This contribution, along with funds from other members across the state, planted the seed for the Jane S. McKimmon Extension Education Center in Raleigh.

The Home Demonstration Clubs of the county printed a cookbook in 1951. Only 1500 copies were printed. In 1964, the clubs decided to print an entirely new cookbook. It was advertised nationally in 1974 and copies were sold all over the U. S. and some foreign countries. Another new cookbook was printed in 1976. Profits from the cookbook fund have been used in contributions to Girl's Haven, to the 4-H Development Fund, 4-H Camp Scholarships, county scholarships, and local Extension Homemaker projects.

The county has had two recent state A. & P. Leadership winners, Mrs. Rufus Southard and Mrs. Charles Turner. Mrs. Turner served as N. C. State Extension Homemaker president in 1982. There are presently 34 clubs in the county with 540 members. Mrs. Gertrude East of the Mount Carmel Club is serving as president during 1985-1986. Home Economics Extension Agents are Joyce Spear, Jean Baldwin and Jane Stuart.

Written by Mrs. Grace Bannock c.1985

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1 copy ***Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Service to Family, Community, and North Carolina.*** Written and compiled by Wilma Hammett, Jan Christensen, Joan Gosper, 2011.

Rockingham County Extension Homemakers Clubs

Apple-Clark
 Bason
 Bethany
 Bethlehem
 Happy Home
 Lawsonville Rd.
 Matrimony
 Mt. Carmel
 Sylvania
 Wentworth Rd.
 Monroeton
 Out-Our-Road
 Stoneville
 Whitsett
 Ayersville
 Fairview
 Green Rock
 Haw River/Elm Grove
 Mayo-Mount
 Piney Fork
 Twilight
 Westwood
 Williamsburg
 Double Springs
 Berry

RdnGantt
 November 10, 2010