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***Zonta International:
Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership***

By:

Jessica E. Nantka

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

State University of New York College at Buffalo State

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this master's thesis project is to examine the formidable globalized service organization, Zonta International (ZI), which has impacted women around the world for 100 years. I utilized essential practices in the Museum Studies Master of Arts program at SUNY Buffalo State to create this project in association with an exhibit, *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership*, presented at the Karpeles Manuscript Museum from November 5 – November 23, 2019. The use of digitized images, documents, and artifacts within the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection owned by The Buffalo History Museum, have been systematically chosen and researched for this project. The road to empowering women has been a long one, though efforts have not been in vain. Countless women (and men) have advocated for the equality of all persons, no matter their race or gender. There have been numerous non-profit organizations that have stood the test of time in fighting for the justice of women's rights and status in their professions, among them is Zonta International.

State University of New York
BUFFALO STATE COLLEGE

Department of History and Social Studies Education

*Zonta International:
Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership*

A Thesis Project in Museum Studies

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INTRODUCTION

As a woman growing up in 20th century America and now living in the 21st century, can you imagine not finishing high school, having minimal options for a college career, where the only jobs open to you are as a secretary, homemaker, maid or a telephone operator? How about being treated as less of a person in rights, societal standing, and having the odds stacked against you simply because you're a woman? For most women in America today, we are used to being offered the same freedoms, rights, privileges, and acknowledgments as our male counterparts — or at least close to it. History tells us this was not always the case for American women.

If you think about it, it wasn't until about 100 years ago that women gained the 'simple' right to vote in America. The year 1920 provided women the steppingstone they needed to continue their battle of equal or upward mobility in a first-world country. Sadly, this is not the case for many women around the world today.

Though first-world countries have adopted the reality that women are as capable and equal to men, there are still struggles and inadequacies women face in these first-world countries. Set back further are second- and third-world nations. Organizations like Zonta International (ZI) are pushing to stop this old way of thinking and bring women to the forefront. Some organizations like ZI have been pushing the pendulum for centuries.

The Confederation of Zonta (now Zonta International) is an intricate woman's organization founded in Buffalo, NY. The club came to fruition during the height of protests for women's equality in America. Zonta International is now a global network made up of districts, all with the same goal — to empower women around the world.

Zonta International was founded on Saturday, November 8, 1919. With 100 years of aiding women around the world, the club sticks to its original ideals and services which aim at developing the status, rights, and professions for the women of the world. The women's service organization is a global network that has advocated for women and children for decades. More recently, their advocacy has been focused on refugees, sex trafficking, and abused women. The club is a non-profit organization. ZI grew at a time when women's service organizations were scarce. It was a creation that helped lead women to the forefront in many ways and still advocates for this. Today, ZI has over 29,000 members in about 63 countries around the world.

The road to empowering women has been a long one, though efforts have not been in vain. Countless women and men have advocated for the equality of all persons, no matter their race or gender. There have been non-profit organizations that have stood the test of time in fighting for the justice of women in rights, standing, and professions. Among those is Zonta International. *Zontafax* Vol. 56 No. 6 from October 1975 (seen in **Image 1**) depicts some of the founding members in 1919.



Image 1: Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

Part One: Researching for an Exhibit

Countless documents are on loan to SUNY College at Buffalo from The Buffalo History Museum. These documents consist of club newsletters, yearly agendas, contact lists, and event brochures. Among the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection, owned by The Buffalo History Museum, are nearly 100 glass plates and film negatives of early Zonta members known as Zontians. Of these, 11 became the foundation for research into this pivotal, Buffalo-born, women's organization. Through the creation of the exhibit, *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership*, this thesis, the collection of Zonta documents, memorabilia, and images, the Museum Studies program can continue work on ZI and bring light to the club for all to see, study, and learn.

The Motivation for the Research

At the start of my Museum Studies graduate program in 2017, I was stunned to learn of the group known as Zonta International. In my undergraduate methods courses, professors taught future teachers the importance of communicating relevance to our students. It is essential and helpful to relate educational material and history to students, especially if it relates to their hometowns. As someone with a BA in Social Studies Education, having been born and raised in the suburbs of Buffalo, NY, and being an avid lover of history, I had never heard of Zonta International before. This one moment on the first day of my Museum Studies program sparked an interest that has led to much research and study on the topic. I was motivated to learn more about this organization that started in Buffalo.

Development of Research

Initiating research into the organization was rewarding, yet it generated numerous questions. The Zonta documents collected over the years by the daughter of Howard D. Beach, Margaret C. Beach, was where research started. The Zonta collection contains a wide variety of documents and event brochures ranging from the 1930s to the 1970s, which spans Margaret's involvement in ZI. While these documents laid a good deal of groundwork for research, delving into other avenues was necessary to understand some of the material presented.

By searching through various *Zontafax* newsletters and negative cards, a list was developed of Zontians to start researching. Online databases, such as Find A Grave, Fulton History, and Family Search, were the sources used to collect more information on who these Buffalonians were, what they did professionally, and what they contributed to the club and fellow women. Google Books has some material involving Zonta and various members within their professions.

Connections developed through continued research. Among the books listed on Google Books was *Hooded Knights on the Niagara: The Ku Klux Klan in Buffalo, New York*, by Shawn Lay. A mere two sentences about the Zonta Club (ZC) of Buffalo were in the book. To gather more information on what was written in the book, searching through newspapers from 1922 about the Ku Klux Klan was undertaken through Fulton History.

Google searches led the way for further research on the organization instead of merely the women involved. Many Zonta International Club websites and Facebook pages were found and combed through. Sites gave way for me to delve into what each club and the organization as a whole, were currently involved in doing. Some even displayed information on the organization's founding and the founding of their particular district.



Image 2: Courtesy of Jessica Nantka

Aside from the internet, there was one physical source that opened up many doors to this research. Driving home slowly from class on a snowy Buffalo night, I noticed a road sign on Broadway that I have never paid attention to before (as seen in **Image 2**). The road sign stated, 'Cheek & Lanc Zonta Club.' As soon as I got home, I went online and started researching this 'Adopt-a-Highway' sign. Researching the sign led me to discover that my town had a Zonta Club. Questions began to formulate, and with the use of my senior yearbook, answers

came to the surface. The Z Club of Lancaster High School was a part of Zonta International. I began to recall how my high school club, the Leo Club, had partnered with Z Club a few times over the years, but I had never known the term Zonta from this.

Zonta International has junior clubs around the world. Golden Z Clubs are at the college level. Meanwhile, Z Clubs are at the high school level. After finding this connection, Mrs. Lynn Fisher, the Z Club advisor at Lancaster High School, was emailed. Through a face-to-face interview with her about Z Club, she connected me to the Zonta Club of Cheektowaga and with Lancaster Z Club liaison, Mrs. Diane Kaczmarek. From this face-to-face interview, I merited an invite to the club's business dinner meeting. I got to meet other members, learn more information, hear some history, and collect my documents and memorabilia.

In June of 2019, the ZC of Buffalo and Grand Island were putting on a fundraiser, which was a dramatic reading of the play *Little Women*. Zonta founder, Marian de Forest, turned the beloved Louisa May Alcott novel from the 1800s into a play in the early 1900s. Attending this reading opened up a multitude of doors for my research on the club and its members. The

dramatic reading of *Little Women* event flyer detailing the show's location, date, and connection to Marian de Forest, can be seen in **Image 3**.

At intermission, a familiar face appeared. My great aunt was revealed to be a Zontian, something I never knew. Finding her and hearing about her longtime membership in Zonta created a path for more interviews and research. Through my Aunt Antoinette, I attended many ZC of Buffalo dinners, meetings, and events. Dr. Vivian Cody also interviewed my Aunt Antoinette. Casual conversations with many other Zontians occurred. At the fall 2019 District 4 Centennial Conference in Buffalo, I met other Zontians and exchanged information, including Zonta International Liaison, Judy Gorton, from Australia.

Initial research started in the fall of 2017. Research on the organization continued to grow. The more I delved further into material and history, the more I wanted to know. The more I learned, the more I wanted to share. Face-to-face interviews with some long-standing members helped to answer questions about the Zonta Club of Buffalo's history, Zonta International, Marian de Forest, services, and other members, though, not all questions could be answered.

Zonta International eventually became the subject of several course projects focusing on my research and the unveiling of the club's vital importance to women's development. Studies had been presented to Buffalo State's College Council and recently published in the fall 2019 issue of the *Western New York Heritage* magazine. Small observations led to significant connections causing many doors for research to open. The bulk of this research came from Zonta



Image 3: Courtesy of Jessica Nantka

events that I attended, face-to-face interviews with current Zonta members, and scanning through the artifacts in the Zonta collection at SUNY Buffalo State.

Part Two: Thanks to Beach

Howard D. Beach

It can be said that no man captured the portraits of Buffalo, New York like that of photographer Howard D. Beach (1867-1954), a well-known photographer of his time. Beach captured many images of Buffalonians in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Many of these individuals photographed are interwoven into Buffalo's history, including Dr. Roswell Park, actress Katharine Cornell, Professor and Zontian Myrtle Caudell from SUNY Buffalo State, and the Kellogg family. Howard D. Beach photographed many school sports teams and clubs, the board for St. Paul's Church, as well as numerous bank workers.

Howard D. Beach started his photography business shooting portraits using dry plate glass negatives. The Buffalo History Museum owns these glass plate and film negatives. This collection is known as the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection. The compiled materials consist of roughly 60,000 images. **Image 4** shows some of the many boxes within the Beach collection.



Image 4: Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

Within this vast collection, there are roughly 100 film negatives of early Zontians. There are a dozen glass plate negatives of Zontians within the collection, as well. Also included in the collection are images of Howard D. Beach's daughter and Zontian, Mrs. Margaret C. Beach. The stories of

these Zontians, the club itself, and their impact on the world can be unearthed and shared.

Thanks to the records that were collected and compiled by Margaret and her father's photography collection, this exhibit was able to be arranged.

Margaret C. Beach

(1899 – 1993)

Thanks to one of ZI's past long-serving members, Mrs. Margaret C. Beach, documents of the club's structure and organization can be studied. Mrs. Beach (as pictured in **Image 5**,) had been a member of the club for over 50 years, both holding office while involved in the club and as part of countless committees. Over the course of her involvement with Zonta International, she had compiled and saved hundreds of primary source documents about the club's services, members, and structure.



Image 5: Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

Countless documents are on loan to SUNY Buffalo State from The Buffalo History Museum. These documents consist of club newsletters, yearly agendas, contact lists, and event brochures. Margaret C. Beach added the essential papers and artifacts on ZI to the collection, thus allowing the SUNY Buffalo State Museum Studies students to study these documents and cross-reference them to the photographic negatives taken by Howard D. Beach. These documents brought light to the stories, individuals, and organizations that have made not only a significant impact on Buffalo, NY, but the world today.

Before she was a member of Zonta, Mrs. Margaret C. Beach was a musician. Her specialty was playing the piano. In 1914 Margaret Beach was honored for her musical talent. She would later perform at several Zonta events. Margaret also danced. The family-owned

photography business was conducted in her home on Virginia Street in Buffalo, NY. Margaret kept the Beach Lens Corporation running after her father passed. The company was dissolved a year before her death in 1993. She was buried at Forest Lawn Cemetery, like many Buffalonians who impacted the city.

Over the course of her time in ZI, she had a considerable impact on the club and those it served. *The Buffalo News* reported on a special event hosted by the Zonta Club of Buffalo. An annual dinner for members was held on Tuesday, May 24, 1977. Recognized at the dinner, held at the 20th Century Club, were outstanding members for their 50 years of membership. A news article on the event mentions two honorary women. Unfortunately, there is a misprint in this article. A brochure for this event is held at The Buffalo History Museum and lists not two but three members honored. Mrs. Margaret C. Beach, Miss. Ada L. Fontana and Ms. Mildred J. Cristall were three Zontians who had 50 years of membership in the club.

Margaret was, at one point, on the Radio Committee. Broadcasting on the radio was a great way to promote publicity for the club. On April 6, 1933, the Zonta Radio Committee took over WGR to talk about camps. Margaret C. Beach was the President of the Buffalo Zonta Club from 1934 to 1935. She also served as Club Secretary.

On October 7, 1951, the ZC of Buffalo performed a play entitled “When Women Rule the World” at the Erlanger Theater. Mrs. Beach was cast as one of the WOMEN. During a fundraising event in 1958, she was a part of the Program Committee. For the club’s Ruby Anniversary (40 years) in 1959, Mrs. Beach was the General Chairman. She helped to create the “Ruby Anniversary Song” for this event.

Margaret C. Beach was an impressive, hard-working, organized, and committed member of the ZC of Buffalo. Due to her commitment, much research for this paper and the *Zonta*

International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership exhibit came from the documents and artifacts collected and compiled from her time in Zonta International.

Due to the artistic skills of Mr. Howard D. Beach and the salvaging of his work by the Museum Studies graduate students at SUNY Buffalo State, images of these empowering women from Buffalo's history can come to light. The Buffalo History Museum stumbled upon a vast collection of not only Zonta history but Buffalo and women's history as well. The creation of the *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership* exhibit and this thesis paper may not have occurred if it were not for the donation of the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection and Margaret's Zonta collection from the Giallombardo Family.

Part Three: The Start-Up of a Women's Service Club

In the Beginning

Service clubs were not common for women in the early 1900s. After attending a Kiwanis (a strictly men's club at the time) holiday party, Marian de Forest felt the need for women to create such a club for other women. A few months after this event, women of Western New York came together and created the Quota Club. Marian de Forest stood up to retract her membership in this club a few months later. Eight other branches of the Quota Club followed suit. Others like Clara Witt followed her and together they would later re-envision a better women's club — Zonta — in November of 1919.

ZI is now a global network made up of districts, all with the same goal — to empower women around the world. Nine clubs with a combined membership of a couple of hundred women, came together to create ZI. Miss Marian de Forest was one of these women who advocated for the right for women at the turn of the century. When gathered at the Hotel Statler in Buffalo, NY, these women founded Zonta.

Miss Marian de Forest

(1864-1935)

Marian de Forest (pictured in **Image 6**, Negative #58049.3) was an acclaimed playwright and journalist. Marian turned the famous book *Little Women* from the 1800s into a play. Marian de Forest presented the play in England in 1919. I was shown at the Kavinoky Theater in 2019. She was one of the first female



Photograph Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

Image 6: Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

reporters in WNY. Marian worked for *The Buffalo Evening News* and *The Buffalo Express*. She had been a part of Buffalo's growth in so many ways.

The WNY Women's Hall of Fame inducted Marian de Forest in 1998. Then in 2001, she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame. Her medal is on display at ZI headquarters in Chicago. Marian de Forest also contributed to the creation of the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, NY.

Marian de Forest was a principal founder of Zonta International and was the first president of the Zonta Club of Buffalo from 1919-1921. Marian de Forest was a woman of great acclaim during her time. In 1924, she became the President of the entire organization. Marian held many other positions while involved with ZI. She paved the way for women to come in many ways. After her death, The Marian de Forest Award was created. This award is given to likeminded women who help serve others and strive in the same professions as Marian de Forest, whether they are a Zontian or not.

An artist's rendition of Marian de Forest resides along Route 198 in Buffalo before the Delaware Avenue South exit. The statue is entitled 'The Spirit of Womanhood.' It was created in 1961 by Larry Griffis, Jr. and sponsored by Zonta International District 4. The plaque at the base of the statue provides information about her life and accomplishments. Part of the plaque reads that she had improved the quality of life in this city in an excellent way.¹ Within 100 years, ZI has done just that and will continue to do so over its next 100 years, as well.

¹ Griffiths, Larry Jr. *The Spirit of Womanhood*. 1962. Sculpture. Delaware Park, Buffalo, NY.

Marian de Forest held high hopes and dreams for her organization. Marian de Forest would be proud of her club's fruition. She would be thrilled to know that her work continues through the members of today. ZI helps women around the world build status and achievements.

Part Four: Structures of the Club

By studying the documents compiled by Margaret Beach, we know that membership into Zonta International was a process, had strict membership regulations, and was considered a privilege. To become a member of Zonta International, one must have been a woman of high standing in her career field. A few men have even been ZI members over the years.

The Membership Process

Membership regulations and induction today are quite different than initially intended. Club laws are a bit looser in today's ZI, in an attempt to combat declining membership caused by the hustle and bustle of life in today's world. Miss Marian de Forest and other founding members originally and solely wanted women to be a part of their organization because, in their time, there were barely any service clubs for women. At the turn of the century, clubs like Kiwanis were for men only. Also, Zonta's founding members wanted women of status, with professional careers and networking skills, to help raise standards for the rest of the women of the world to follow.

To be considered for membership, a few things had to happen first. The candidate had to be a woman of high standing in her field. Zonta International looked for women who were executives of the highest rank in a particular area. The club only wished to have one member belonging to one specific field within each charter.



Image 7: Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

For the charter in which they wanted to join, there must be an opening. For example, in the Zonta Club of Buffalo, only one member in a particular charter could have been a professional in the field of archeology at a time. Two or three women in the same area can become members in the same charter, though the club still wishes to retain diversity among professional fields. As seen in **Image 7**, a special ribbon sporting the club colors was to be worn by members at events. Today some members wear pins.

Once a potential member's documentation was checked and their credentials verified, then the membership committee would decide if they were worth having as a member. Information was passed on to the Board of Directors once the committee decided in favor of a candidate. If approved, a *Zontafax*, distributed to all members, contained the potential member's name and brief information about them. The final vote on the person's membership standing was in the hands of the entire charter. They had ten days to vote on the potential membership. When votes were in favor of the person, official membership was extended by the charter President.

When new members were accepted, they were featured in the monthly *Zontafax*. A *Zontafax* from May of 1978 introduced Natalie H. Evens to the Zonta Club of Buffalo as its newest member. At that time, she was the Director of Human Services at ECMC Hospital. Her career started in 1947, working at Meyer Memorial Hospital (now ECMC). Aside from welcoming local charter members, charters and members from other locations were introduced to the Buffalo charter. In 1967 the ZC of Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada, was created. In May of the following year, the charter and its members were cordially introduced to other Zontians at the

Sheraton-Broken Hotel for a Charter Presentation Dinner. The night's program appears in Mrs. Beach's collection of artifacts and memorabilia.

Codes of ZI

New members were given a handful of items upon joining ZI. Among these items were club bylaws, a questionnaire, club codes of conduct, the Zonta song, and the International Hymn. All of these items were found within the Beach collection. Each new member received a list of the various committees they could join. The record states what each committee was responsible for doing. New members were to circle the ones of interest. Typically, they were assigned to a committee based on their skills. Later, members could be involved in more than one if they wished. Committees of the club today have been condensed and combined to accommodate its lower membership list than back in the club's heyday of its 150 or so members belonging to the ZC of Buffalo. The codes and objectives of Zonta are as follows:

To encourage high ethical standards in business and the professions.
 Improve the legal, political, economic, and professional status of women.
 To work for the advancement of understanding, goodwill, and peace through
 a world fellowship of executive women in business and
 professions, united in the Zonta ideal of service.²

The Zontafax

The *Zontafax* was a packet that was mailed to its members every month. Each parcel varied from a few to several pages in length; the packages were newsletters. They contained information on the next month's events and topics. The Buffalo charter still uses this today. Initially, the Buffalo club met every Tuesday. Today they meet one Tuesday a month. The

² Zonta Club of Buffalo. (N/A). *Zonta Bylaws*. Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo History Museum. Print.

Zontafax committee oversaw the newsletter's publication. This committee also prepared the budget for the year and had that information presented in the *Zontafax* as well.

The *Zontafax* helped to keep the Buffalo club together and on point. Everything was listed on there, from weekly meeting dates and topics, to address changes and vacation announcements. In a *Zontafax* from July-August of 1942, a change in career classification was made. Keeping track of this was crucial since only one member in a charter can be in a given classification at the same time. Elise Lord Bradford shut down her own decorating business and started working for the Hengerer Firm. That same year Myrtle Caudell was listed under the 'Scattered Zontians' as being in Long Island looking after the very personal interests of Marcia Ann Traber.³ Frances Drake was in Lake Placid with her sister, while Zorah Berry was in Chautauqua.

A *Zontafax*, from March 1933, shares what current members, at the time, were doing for the club. Marian de Forest had collaborated with fellow playwright, Zona Gale of Wisconsin, in the creation of radio skits. These skits aired Fridays at 10:30 pm; the program was entitled "Neighbors." WBEN-WEAF were the two radio stations that broadcasted the skits. The September issue of that year let members know to look out for their fellow Zontian, Ann Griffiths, who was airing on WGR to talk about flooring the next month.

Through the newsletters, the club stayed in touch with the professional, personal, and club lives of their fellow Zontians. Some information in the *Zontafax*, however, was brief. More information on the topics, involvements, and information was available if desired. Some of the data can be found in other documents within the Beach Collection, while others require a bit more digging through other avenues. The cover page from *Zontafax* (Vol. 58 No. 2) from June

³ Zonta Club of Buffalo. (1942). *Zontafax July-August*. Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo History Museum. Print.

1977, pictured in **Image 8**, details the month's meeting dates and topics, as well as the new President Mary B. Sommer. The above mentioned is the general layout of the *Zontafax*.

The *Zontafax* also listed information regarding its members. Members had been written about if they were in the news, on the radio, or achieved an award. In a *Zontafax* from 1942, it was stated that Dr. Margaret Schley was at her summer home; a map provided directions on how to get there if any Zontians wanted to visit her. Also, Sophie Wittman became Mrs. Leon Frank with the same home address, 108 Lancaster Avenue.⁴ If any home addresses, businesses, jobs, or phone numbers changed, they were noted in the *Zontafax*.

The club wanted its members to stay connected and up to date.

Also included was Zonta publicity, Zontian illnesses, and shout out.

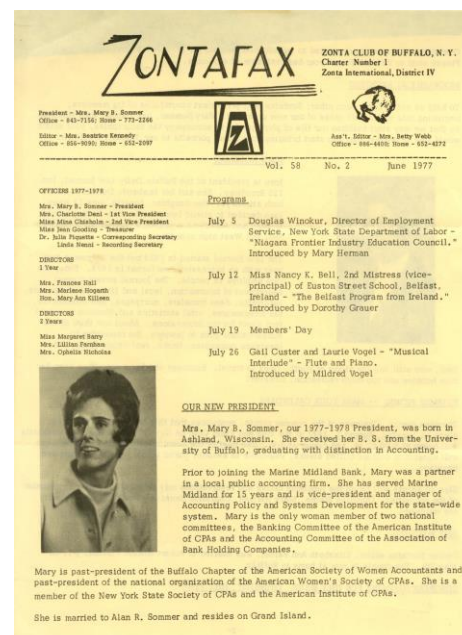


Image 8: Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

⁴ Zonta Club of Buffalo. (1942). *Zontafax July-August*. Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo History Museum. Print.

Part Five: Zonta International through the Decades

ZI in the 1920s

The 1920s was a fresh start for the women of America. They had now obtained the right to vote. New doors were opening up for them. When the new decade started, the Confederation of Zonta had just turned three months old. The club started at a pivotal time in American history for women. The women of Zonta would delve right into their newfound freedom and aim to keep pressing forward.

Women and Zonta made some great strides and created steppingstones for their service club to lead women through the decade and onward. The 1920s saw continued growth in membership. The club also continued to expand across the nation during this time. In 1927, the ZC of Toronto, Canada, was formed. It became the first country outside the U.S. to join Zonta.

The Ku Klux Klan

Many people may forget that the Ku Klux Klan and their ideals reached as far north as Buffalo, NY. A novel by Shawn Lay entitled *Hooded Knights on the Niagara: The Ku Klux Klan in Buffalo, New York*, highlights this historical information. Pages 49 and 50 in the book share some information on dealing with the KKK and Zonta. In a speech before the Zonta Club at the Statler Hotel, District Attorney Guy B. Moore acknowledged that “the time has come to crush the Ku Klux Klan,” pleading “to do all in my power to punish and to prosecute it swiftly and surely.”⁵

⁵ Lay, Shawn. *Hooded Knights on the Niagara: the Ku Klux Klan in Buffalo, New York*. New York University Press, 1995.

Two news articles from 1922 refer to this very event. *The Buffalo News* and *The Niagara Falls Gazette* referred to the attorney's speech given at the Zonta meeting. In the article from *The Buffalo News*, on November 29th, District Attorney Moore denounced the Klan. He and Sheriff William F. Waldow bashed the Klan calling them 'antichrists' and 'a lawless mob.' A federal appeal was sent out to the Sheriff to put a stop to the assembling of Klan members in Erie County, stating that it goes against the peaceful nature that the county and state wish to maintain. What the Zontians did with this information or after hearing the attorney speak is not known.

Ms. Mary E. Jenkins

(Circa 1880 - 1967)

Ms. Jenkins was born and raised in Syracuse, NY. Jenkins worked as a journalist and was a pioneering newswoman. She was also known as a civic leader. Ms. Jenkins owned *The Syracuse Herald* since 1903 when she inherited it from her father. During her time as President of the paper, Jenkins made the most significant contributions to the news in New York State history. Mary Jenkins received her doctorate. She helped to found the Syracuse Memorial Hospital and was President of the hospital for 15 years.

Along with Marian de Forest and Clara Witt, Mary E. Jenkins was also one of the founding members of ZI. In Zonta, she was the first national president of the organization. It was a close vote, being tied with Marian de Forest and then winning by one in a revote. Mary Jenkins was the third vice-president of ZI in July of 1923. She was also the President of the Syracuse Club. Donors for the club were always welcome. When one makes a gift donation to the club, they become a welcomed member of the Mary Jenkins 1919 Society.

Mrs. Amelia Earhart Putnam

(1897 – 1937)

After visiting her sister in Canada, Amelia Earhart Putnam (as seen in **Image 9**) developed a passion for helping soldiers. In 1918, she left college to become a nurse's aide in Toronto. Amelia attended Columbia University in NY, but by 1920, she went back to live with her family. By moving back home, she had her first plane ride. It was such a profound experience that she bought her first plane in 1921.



Image 9: Courtesy of Zonta-ak.org

By the mid-1920s, she moved to Massachusetts to be a social worker. In 1928, she became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean. She was the first person to hit a record of 18,415 feet in the air to fly an Autogiro Aircraft. She was the first person to fly solo from Hawaii to the United States mainland. She had accomplished things in aviation that no woman or man had done before her.

The famous aviator Amelia Earhart Putnam was a Zontian, initially a member of the Boston chapter in 1926. Earhart later transferred to the New York City Zonta chapter. Her sister, Muriel Morrissey, was also a Zontian. In recognition of her achievements, as not only a female aviator but an aviator in general, Amelia was offered the chance to become a Zonta member.

In 1932, Amelia Earhart Putnam was awarded a Zonta trophy for distinguished flying. “Amelia's solo flight to Ireland was a tremendous achievement for women, as well as for the cause of aviation,” [said] Ms. Nina Broderick Price, chairman of the Zonta public affairs

committee.⁶ In February of 1935, Amelia spoke in front of the Syracuse Zontians about her aviation achievements.

On Zonta's 19th anniversary, the organization made an announcement to honor the late Amelia Earhart Putnam. On Wednesday, November 9, 1938, the club announced that they had created a scholarship in honor of the famed Aviator for Aeronautical Engineering. This scholarship is still in existence today. A day in January is set aside each year and is known as Amelia Earhart Day.

When flying around the world, over the Pacific Ocean, Earhart was lost at sea. After two weeks, the search for her halted. She was deemed dead on July 19, 1937. Her disappearance is one of the greatest mysteries that has been left unsolved; neither her plane wreckage nor her body has been found.

ZI in the 1930s

While the 1920s was an excellent start for Zonta International, the 1930s brought more acclaim. Women had not forgotten the horrors of the Great War or the sting of the Great Depression. These events did not stop the women of Zonta from being committed, pressing forward, and taking action. Zontians pushed hard in the 1930s to let women's voices be heard. They didn't let political standing or traditional gender roles get in their way.

The 1930s brought about beautiful things to occur for activism by women. Zontians spoke out about war and wanted to declare peace. They didn't let political boundaries stop them from advocating on world issues for peace and disarmament. Women took over a male operated business in honor of Women's Day during this decade, proving that a woman can run a business.

⁶ *Buffalo Courier-Express*. "Zonta Presents Bronze Trophy to Amelia Earhart." July 7th, 1932. <http://fultonhistory.com/>.

Zonta International became the club's official title in 1930. That same year the first European country (Austria) joined the women's service organization.

A Romance Map

Several sources have been found that point to a Romance Map of the Niagara Frontier. Ms. Josephine Wilhem was the author of the service project. The artist was Ms. Mildred C. Green. The Zonta Club of Buffalo commissioned the Romance Map. Miss Wilhemine Hamelman was the Chairman of the committee at the time. These two women were photographed with the map by Howard Beach, as seen in **Image 10**. The detailed map was created in 1931. Seen in the bottom corner of the map is the Zonta seal. The proceeds from the project went to fund education for underprivileged girls.



Image 10: Courtesy of The New York Heritage: Digital Collection

The 1931 map included detailed imagery of the Niagara Frontier during French Colonial times. Around the outside perimeter of the map are boxes filled with historical information. A variety of places to visit appear out on the map. The Romance Map is for sale on the internet for roughly \$300. The original price is unknown.

In a photograph, taken by Mr. Beach, Dr. Edith R. Hath and Mrs. John G. Wickser (both Zontians) are depicted examining the map the club commissioned for their service project. Dr. Hath was the first to purchase the Romance Map of the Niagara Frontier. Roughly 30,000 copies of the map were created for the Zonta Club to sell. Within its first week, the club sold 29,000 maps. One-thousand maps had been set aside for Zontians to claim for themselves. *The Buffalo*

Courier-Express stated in April of 1931 that the sales from the maps equaled a \$4,055.16 profit for the club.

Miss Wilhemine Hamelman sent a map and a letter explaining it to Washington DC on February 16, 1931. She later received a letter from the Secretary to the President of The United States. The letter thanked the club for giving a map to President Hoover. The letter stated that it was much appreciated. The creation and selling of the Romance Maps were deemed a success. The Buffalo Historical Society held it on display for a few days in April of that year. By May, the map was on its way to Paris, France. The map was exhibited there in a museum as well. France was intrigued by the map's design and historical information on the once French-occupied territory.

World Peace and Disarmament

The Buffalo Times (in 1932) depicted a photograph of Zonta President M. Grace Schwinn. This news report is brief, though it states that Miss Schwinn had represented the city of Buffalo in January of 1932 at a mass meeting in Washington, DC. She was one among many women there to make a plea with the White House for peace and disarmament in the years after The Great War. *The Buffalo Courier-Express* highlighted information on the event. The news article, printed on January 3, 1932, was entitled *Women's International Disarmament: Peace Luncheon*.

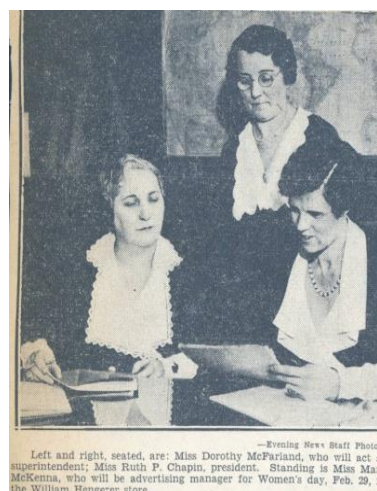
Zonta was just one of many women's organizations around the nation to attend this meeting held in Buffalo, NY. Philip Nash (National League of Nations Assemblyman) was the keynote speaker at this luncheon hosted by Mrs. Hamlin of the Erie County League of Women Voters. The meeting occurred on January 26th in The Statler ballroom. Women signed millions

of petitions for peace at this event. Miss Schwinn and other women took these petitions to the capital. In February, World leaders met in Geneva to discuss attempts at disarmament and peace.

Women's Day

In February of 1909, America celebrated the first National Woman's Day. The March observance of Women's Day is celebrated globally. The March 1933 issue of the *Zontafax* has a brief write up about what occurred in February to commemorate this event. On February 26th an entire business was turned over. William Hengerer of the William Hengerer Company turned over his entire store to the female employees of the company.

This event lasted one day. Miss Dorothy McFarland acted as the Superintendent. Miss Ruth P. Chapin served as President of the store during this special event. Miss Mary McKenna served as the Advertising Manager for the William Hengerer Company. *The Buffalo Evening News* reported on this with an image of the ladies hard at work. The women can be seen in **Image 11**.



—Evening News Staff Photo.
Left and right seated, are: Miss Dorothy McFarland, who will act as superintendent; Miss Ruth P. Chapin, president. Standing is Miss Mary McKenna, who will be advertising manager for Women's day, Feb. 29, in the William Hengerer store.

Image 11: Courtesy of The New York Heritage: Digital Collection

The Girl Scouts of America

Miss Merle Williamson of Lockport (Director of the Girl Scouts) spoke at a Zonta meeting in May of 1934. At the meeting, she addressed the importance and impact of the Scouts on young girls. The vision of the Girl Scouts was a notion that Zonta Club could agree with and appreciate. The two organizations had worked with each other during several events to achieve the goal of empowering young girls and women.

Miss Williamson announced at the 1934 meeting that their rummage sale had been successful. She stated to the club that the Scouts not only prepares girls for issues in womanhood

but also allows them to experience outdoor play and learn work by play. Their biggest inspiration of the organization is that girls learn excellent community service skills. Citizenship and community service are an essential part of the Zonta ideals as well.

The Zonta Club of Buffalo sponsored Girl Scout Troop 13 of Wyndham Lawn in 1934. Being their sponsor, the club held summer events for the troop leaders and girls. Each summer, the troop would be invited by the ZC of Buffalo to a picnic or another sort of outing. Mrs. Albert Castle opened her home to Troop 13 on July 28, 1934, for a picnic with games, swimming, and other entertainment.

Miss M. Grace Schwinn
(1888 - 1969)

During WWI, Miss Schwinn served as a canteen worker, as seen in her uniform in **Image 12**. She would later go on to work in the field of public accounting, where she held various executive positions. In 1930, she was the only female accountant



Image 12: Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

in Buffalo, NY. Schwinn stated in *The Courier Express* that “the work is not easy...but I see no reason why many women with an inclination for figures could not do it. I think it will be merely a matter of time before women take their place in this field as in every other field of modern business.”⁷

No women in the early part of the 1900s owned a car, let alone drove one. Since Miss Schwinn was an accountant, she carried much money around with her. Zontian Nellie Brown shared an exciting story about a female Zontian who was an accountant in the early 1900s. Nellie

⁷ Buffalo Courier-Express. “Women in the Public Eye.” August 3rd, 1930. <http://fultonhistory.com/>.

stated that since this woman carried company money around, it was safer for her to drive a car than take public transportation. Since no car dealer would sell a vehicle to a woman, this woman's boss went to buy her a car. When dealerships found out the car was for a woman, they refused to sell to the businessman. All dealerships had done this, except for one — Pierce-Arrow. A vehicle for the female Zontian accountant finally was bought. M. Grace Schwinn may be this very woman.

Miss Schwinn would later go on to start a private practice in accounting. Her company focused on income tax for private estates. She served as a chapter member for the 5th Church of Christ Scientist. An ad in 1920 lists her as a teacher of aesthetic dancing classes.

She would dance and perform at various Zonta meetings and events. In the 1951 play the club put on, she was a part of the program committee. Schwinn had joined the club in 1921. In 1930, she was a delegate of Zonta. A *Zontafax* write-up stated that she was both generous and had an active life. Miss Schwinn served as Club President from 1930-1932. It was her idea for the club to buy war bonds during WWII.

Miss Myrtle V. Caudell

(1878 - 1963)

Miss Caudell attended The State Normal School (now SUNY Buffalo State College), a privilege not too many women of her time could afford. At this particular college, the number of female students was greater than that of male students. Her coursework focused on economics. After finishing college, she acquired a job at her Alma Mater.

While at the college, she taught home economics and was the head of the department for roughly 20 years. Miss Myrtle was a definite asset to the campus and a renowned instructor.

During her time teaching at The State Teacher's College, the Economic Department grew. More courses were offered to students than ever before in this field. Eventually, she would hold office as the President of The Home Economic Association. In 1963, Caudell was honored by having one of the buildings named after her. Caudell Hall still exists at the college today. This building is home to the Hospitality and Tourism Department, as well as the Health and Nutrition Department, among others.

During her time in Zonta International, Miss Caudell was nominated to become one of the club's directors along with Miss Drake in 1930. By April of 1931, Miss Caudell won the two-year term as director. During her second term, she and Miss Drake were in charge of orchestrating the club's annual dinner program. The following year she was the correspondence person, as part of the program committee, for the upcoming second birthday of the Zonta Club of Tonawanda. Myrtle Caudell was the chairman of the classification and membership committee as well. At a club business meeting in 1932, Miss Caudell stressed to members the importance of having their correct classification listed on the roster. Only a certain number of club members from each job classification could be in one club at the same time. Limited and varied member classifications kept the club fresh and diverse.

ZI in the 1940s

By the time the 1940s came around, the world once again found itself engulfed in war. Members of the ZC of Buffalo would not let this stop their club from service work. If anything, it opened up doors for more services to be provided to women. Aiding those struck by war was not the only operation of the ZC of Buffalo during this time. The club once again would support young girls by partnering with the Girl Scouts. The year 1942 was a busy one in terms of

services provided and projects the club partook in. In 1948, in Burbank, CA, the first of many Z Clubs and Golden Z Clubs were created. Z Clubs and the Golden Z Clubs were junior clubs to ZI. Z Clubs exist at the High School level while Golden Z Clubs are at the college level.

Fundraising Events

In 1942 the club focused on a few different service projects. They helped with raising costs for individuals with vision impairments. From various fundraising events held in that year, a large portion of funds went to train seeing eyes for the blind. The club gave women who could not afford furnishings, aid for their homes. This aid focused on women who lived alone. Also, Zontians held a Christmas dinner for those who would otherwise have nothing.

During Times of War

The October 1942 *Zontafax* sheds light on another service project. Zontians worked to raise funds for the Service Men of The United Nations. To raise money, they sold concert tickets. They also sold tickets to hear various speakers who would talk about different war themes. In 1942, E. Ray Hodge of the Red Cross spoke to Zonta members.

In early September of 1942, a radio station repeated a broadcast announced by Zontians. The topic was housing conditions in our war production era.⁸ *Zontafax* newsletters shared ways in which the club helped during times of war and conflict. The cover of the October 1942 issue has a handwritten note of the world and civilization during World War II:

Even though Hatred is rampant and Black Death rides the wind,
Faith, Loyalty, Love, yet will reign in these hearts of ours –
The Triumvirate,
Faith, Loyalty, Love - - -

⁸ Zonta Club of Buffalo. (1942). *Zontafax September*. Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo History Museum. Print.

No hordes of Nippon can crush, No Nazi army will kill - -⁹

The Girl Scouts of America

The *Zontafax* from October 1942 mentions the club's connection with the Girl Scouts of America yet again. The club would often loan out their clubroom to the Girl Scouts. The Scouts often used the room for council meetings. At their Silver Jubilee that same year, the Zonta Club of Buffalo helped the Girl Scouts with their event. Miss Florence Fuchs was one of the Zontians who attended this event and helped the girls. The Girl Scout council sent a message of appreciation to the club for all their help and support.

Miss Bertha M. Fox

(Circa 1904 – N/A)

Various news articles mention Miss Bertha Fox (seen in **Image 13**, Negative #59147) singing and dancing at various church events. In 1930, she and other youths took part in a debate on prohibition at the Maple Street Baptist Church. She was in favor of prohibition and her team won the debate. Earlier in 1930, Bertha Fox led the Young People's Choir. They, along with other youths, took over the run of the church for a special youth week. A 1940 census record states that Bertha was employed as a Credit Manager. That same year Miss Fox became President of the Business and Professional Women's Club. She was unopposed.



Image 13: Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

⁹ Zonta Club of Buffalo. (1942). *Zontafax October*. Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo History Museum. Print.

Bertha Fox volunteered as a Zontian along with her sister Anna Fox. They were members of the Buffalo Club. Bertha held numerous offices during her time as a Zontian. In 1943, she was the Chairman of the inner-city committee. From 1945 to 1946, Bertha Fox served as club President. In 1949, she became the Vice-President of the Buffalo Club and the Vice-Governor of District 4. Miss Fox served as the Governor of District 4 from 1951 until 1953. She was cast as one of “the WOMEN” in the 1951 play *When Women Rule the World*. In the 1940s, she was the Chair of the finance committee.

In support of the soldiers during WWII, the Buffalo Club purchased defense bonds in the sum of \$1,000. The money used to buy these bonds came from the service fund. Fox was in charge of purchasing the bonds. “We feel that in buying the bonds, we are helping our country and, at the same time, making a good investment of our organizations reserve funds.”¹⁰ A career conference was held in 1950. Fox was in charge of setting up career panels for the event. As the Chair of the service committee, she was also in charge of compiling career consultants for this event for women and young girls.

Miss Elise L. Bradford

(1889 - 1963)

Miss Elise Bradford was best known for her decorating skills. One place of her employment helped to lead her upward in her profession. By 1924, she worked as a secretary for Robert G. Paul Inc. About ten years later, Elise Bradford became the Vice-President. Later, Elise Bradford held the title of Vice-President at Alice Hooker Inc. Bradford started her career with decorating by using china; she then had a long career in interior decorating.

¹⁰ *The Buffalo Courier-Express*. "Zonta Club to Purchase Two \$500, Defense Bonds." January 14, 1942. <http://fultonhistory.com/>.

Miss Bradford had been an active member of the ZC of Buffalo for many years. As a Zontian, she was chairman of the program committee in the 1930s and President from 1941 to 1942. As a member of the program committee, Miss Bradford was responsible for arranging all meetings for the club. There were also special occasions throughout the year for which Miss Bradford and her committee were in charge of organizing.

Miss Bradford was a part of many projects in 1929 to help women. The club advocated for an increase in teacher salary, jury service for women, and more women to be a part of the city court in a judge position. Elise and the rest of the Buffalo club worked for cancer prevention campaigns. The club worked hard to continue raising money over the decades for young girls. The money they raised was so that the girls could have funds for their college education. Elise Bradford's obituary appeared in *The Buffalo Courier-Express* in 1963. The write-up states that Elise Bradford was one of the founding members of Zonta in 1919.

ZI in the 1950s

As the 1950s rolled around, Zonta International kept pressing forward with their club's mission. Various means to collect funding for service projects took flight during this decade. The club created a comedic play to swell funds for the club in the early 1950s. The play presented the ideas of gender role reversal: how men would act by taking on the role of women.

1951 When Women Rule the World

The Zonta Club of Buffalo presented the play *When Women Rule the World* on October 7, 1951. The Erlanger Theatre, in Buffalo, NY, hosted this performance. It was a play with a comedic structure. The play intended to raise awareness about the roles of women and how they

“should fit” those roles. On display at the *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership* exhibit was a copy of the first act for guests to read.

A brochure passed around at the play included numerous donor and sponsor ads, including Buffalo businesses like Curves, *The Buffalo News*, and Trans World Airlines, to name a few. Advertisements for enterprises owned by Zontians are seen within this brochure as well. Zontian Olive Frost Plummer had an ad for piano teaching. Zontian Margaret A. Manson Treasurer of Kreiss Sign Co. and Partner of G. C. Manson Painters had two ads in the brochure. Zontian Ada L. Fontana had an advertisement for her travel business. Hodge Liquor Store (which is still open today) also had an ad in the play brochure.

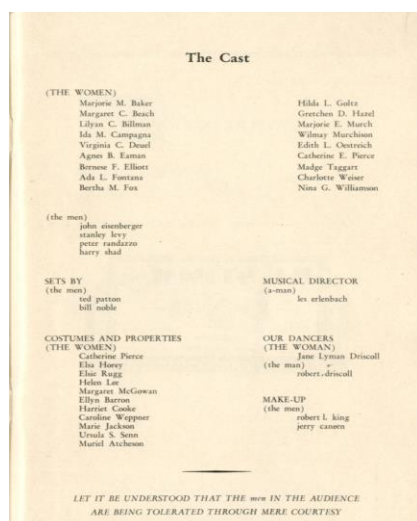


Image 14: Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

Women surely outnumber the men in the cast for the play. A page inside the brochure states, “LET IT BE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE men IN THE AUDIENCE ARE BEING TOLERATED THROUGH MERE COURTESY.”¹¹ If you look at the cast list and script, the word 'men' is always in lowercase letters. Meanwhile, the term 'WOMEN' is always in caps. By looking at **Image 14**, one can see just that, along with the full cast list.

Zontians who were cast as the WOMEN were Margaret Beach, Bertha Fox, and Ada Fontana, to name a few. Buffalo Zonta members such as Harriet Cooke and Ursula Senn oversaw costumes and props. Glass negatives of these women are within the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection. Within the Beach collection resides the full script of the 1951 play.

¹¹ Zonta Club of Buffalo. (1951). *When Women Rule the World [Brochure]*. Buffalo, NY: N/A. Page 7.

1954 Meetings

Several months after Mrs. Beach's father died, the topic of the Buffalo club's August 3, 1954, meeting was on cancer. The guest speaker was Dr. David Nichols from the R. P. Memorial Hospital. In her agendas, it states that her father had often been going to Roswell Park Memorial Hospital, as was her husband. In July of that year, Dr. Rockwell was a speaker at a club meeting, though the topic is unknown. Dr. Henry Storman gave leadership training to club members on August 8th. The theme of the training was how to handle your relations.¹²

Mr. Curley spoke on February 2nd about women in politics. A fashion show was held on May 12th. Members were encouraged to bring one guest with them to this event. Buffalo Zontians served tea at the fashion show. The show was part of a Zonta project where the proceeds went to fund one of their charitable activities. The fashion show presented vacation style clothing as well as the new summer look.

1955 Meetings

In 1955, Zontian Kathleen Sweeney talked about her trip to Ireland and other places. Members were encouraged to speak with and visit other Zontians around the world to help build the club's connectedness. John A. Roche was an FBI Special Agent who spoke at a meeting in September. Ryesha Jacob talked about the roles of women in India at a meeting held on December 6th. March 22nd was listed in Margaret's agenda as being an 'Executive's Day.' The special event for the executive board members of Zonta. Margaret's husband Howard appeared on the program as being her guest (after his 9:15 a.m. doctor's appointment).

¹² Zonta Club of Buffalo. (1954). *Zontafax August*. Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo History Museum. Print.

The club visited Program School 45. At the school, the club held a Christmas shopping event for the students. They also had Santa's workshop. In 1955, the club hosted an event called 'Gorgeous Living' held at Kleinhans Music Hall in Buffalo. The event was held on October 22nd and 29th, as well as November 5th. Food, fabric, and fashion were the draws for the event. The cover of the event brochure stated that the proceeds would be used for community service projects.

Over the course of the three-day event, different themes occurred. Margaret Beach was one of the program committee members involved in this event. Mrs. Beach, Miss Schwinn, and Mrs. Whitham were patrons during these festivities. Each day, different items were for sale in the lobby. The purchase of goods was similar to the sales that were held at the 2019 district centennial. Each club brought items to sell to inflate their club's funds. The sale of the items from the fashion event helped to raise proceeds for future service projects. Items such as candy, jar openers, candles, and aprons were for sale.

Miss Ada L. Fontana

(1898 - 1995)

Miss Ada Fontana (seen in **Image 15**, negative #58872) obtained a machinist certification at the State Teacher's College. Later she worked at Whole Sale Print Inc. During the 1920s, Miss Fontana worked as the bookkeeper for the company. Eventually, Ada Fontana would have her own company and became an influential businesswoman. In 1947, she opened Fontana Travel Services and served as Executive.



Image 15: Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

Ada Fontana was actively involved in the organization for 50 plus years. Over that course of time, Miss Fontana had participated in and contributed to many community service efforts. The Zonta Club of Buffalo held a pageant in the spring of 1928. Ada Fontana was a cast member in the show. The pageant was said to be a clever parody written by fellow Zontian Josephine Wickser. The pageant spelled out what makes Zonta.

During the war years, Miss Fontana was a member of the club's relief committee, internal relations committee, and the program committee. During this time, she was in charge of spreading the word and collecting needed items for war-torn areas. In July of 1944, her focus was collecting clothing for people in war-stricken Italy. By doing so, the club partnered with the Mazzini Society. Ada continued this effort into the 1950s.

Mrs. Emma L. Conlon

(1901- 1995)

In 1935, Mrs. Emma L. Conlon was the first woman to be in the textile dyeing and finishing industry. She was also one of the few women who were actively engaged in management positions. By 1955, Mrs. Conlon became the Chairman on the board of directors for the Puritan-Piece Dye Works Company, where she worked with her husband, Frank. She was a woman who was the first of many things. She was the first woman on the board of directors of the Paterson Chamber of Commerce. Emma was the first woman to be named a Police and Fire Commissioner in the town of Paterson and the entire state of New Jersey.¹³ In 1954, President Eisenhower asked her to be a part of the National Board of Field Advisors. Mrs. Conlon received

¹³ *Lockport Union-Sun Journal*. "Zonta Builds for the World of Tomorrow, 1956-1958 Theme." October 27, 1965. <http://fultonhistory.com/>.

many awards for being an outstanding citizen. But most importantly, she was an exceptional woman.

Mrs. Emma Conlon joined Zonta in 1944 and served as a member for 50 plus years. She served a two-year term as President of the Zonta Club of Morristown, New Jersey, from 1956 to 1958. Emma served as a Chairman and first Vice-President for the club as well. Later she became Zonta International President. During her presidency, Zonta International experienced tremendous growth with the addition of 50 new Zonta Clubs.

At one of the meetings she spoke at, Mrs. Conlon emphasizes that “as the United States grew from 13 original colonies to a world power, Zonta can grow into a power for good throughout the world.”¹⁴ She advocated for a continued push for establishments of Z Clubs in high schools. An award that still exists today was created in her honor due to her outstanding achievements and work towards helping women. The Emma L. Conlon Service Award recognizes those Z and Golden Z Clubs whose projects and programs best express the ideals of Zonta International to empower women through local and international service and advocacy.¹⁵

¹⁴ *The Buffalo News*. “International Leader Suggests Zonta Goals.” October 6, 1956. <http://fultonhistory.com>.

¹⁵ Zonta International (2019). *Emma L. Conlon Service Award*. Website. www.zonta.org/ELCServiceAward.

ZI in the 1960s



Image 16: Courtesy of zontamilwaukee.org

The 1960s in America was a touchy time in terms of race and segregation. Within this decade, Zonta International (within America) witnessed its first African American Zontian. Ms. Ernestine O'Bee joined the Milwaukee Zonta Club. She is depicted in **Image 16** at a Zonta award event. During this decade, ZI would help various persons of color around the world. The inner-city committee created service projects to combat racial issues in

Buffalo and help inner-city youth. In 1968, ZI would elect its first non-American president.

Helvi Sipilä became the first International President who resided outside of America. She died in 2009 and was a native of Finland. She was both a lawyer and a Finish diplomat.

Meetings and Events

Since 1962, Zonta has supported several other organizations. Since that time, they have partnered with the United Nations Relief and Workers Agency. Together they held training workshops for educators in Ramallah, Jordan. For this collaboration, Zonta and UNRWA worked together to train women in teaching and other vocations. *The Watertown Daily Times* reported that the Potsdam Zonta Club contributed \$500 for this same service activity in 1969. They still support his program today. There have been more than 375 scholarships created for this project. It, too, is still a scholarship program that exists today.

A meeting was held by the Potsdam Zonta Club to discuss racial issues in their city. Mrs. Walawender, secretary of the club, suggested a way in which they may contribute to better understanding and finding solutions to the racial problems. Solving racial problems occurred at

both the city college campus and in the community itself. She compiled a list of influential black women who want to accomplish specific goals without sensationalism. January 23, 1968, the Deputy Police Commissioner talked to members about a revised penal law. Zontians attended a Sterling Quartette in 1968. This event was held at Hamburg High School. What the club had done for this event is not clear.

January 1, 1969, African culture was the topic of discussion. On March 3rd of that year, Margaret Beach took her friend (mentioned often in the agendas) Helen, who became a Zontian, to their meeting. The topic, given by Mrs. Gillbert Moore, was on the water pollution in the Buffalo area. The issue could have been about the Love Canal. After the meeting, Margaret stated in her agenda that she had to go to the hospital.

Dr. Virginia L. Cummings

(1921 - 1997)

Dr. Cummings started as an art teacher in the Buffalo Public School system. After four years, she joined the staff at The Buffalo Museum of Science. Dr. Cummings became the first female Director of the museum. She worked there for 51 years. In 1967, Dr. Cummings was the Curator of Anthropology. She opened up the then-new Egyptian exhibit. In the 1970s, she was responsible for introducing many multimedia exhibits at the museum.

Dr. Cummings wrote various books on museums and anthropology. In 1984, The Seneca-Iroquois National Museum celebrated its 7th birthday, a time when Dr. Cummings was elected as one of the board's officers. An honor was bestowed upon her in 2001. She is one of 100 women honored at the Women's Walkway in downtown Buffalo, which also includes Marian de Forest.

Dr. Virginia Cummings served as President of the Buffalo Club from 1961 to 1962. During ZI's Ruby Anniversary in 1959, she was on the executive committee. Her artwork is depicted on the covers of many Zonta Club of Buffalo's event programs. A *Zontafax* from 1971 represents her creation for the Zonta Club of Buffalo mascot, Bella the Buffalo. In the May 1978 issue of the *Zontafax*, a heartfelt message with regards to the retirement of Dr. Cumming from The Buffalo Museum of Science was written.

ZI in the 1970s

Within the Zonta Collection at SUNY Buffalo State, numerous *Zontafax* newsletters from the 1970s are housed. Included is a letter from The Buffalo Historical Society (now The Buffalo History Museum). The Buffalo Historical Society invited the club to the unveiling of a plaque on The Statler Hotel in 1970. In August of 1971, a police captain spoke about the problems the police face. In that year, Mrs. Andrew Berez spoke about being a woman working undercover for the FBI.

Meetings and Events

Club summer outings took place at different parks, sometimes in East Aurora, other times in Clarence. In August of 1971, the cost to attend was \$5 a person. Members were encouraged to participate in this event, as well as to bring guests. The outings consisted of food and games. The games included sack races, pie-eating contests, hoop and stick rolls, and balloon games. Typically, the proceeds of these outings went to help education for underprivileged girls.

Zonta partnered with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 1972. Together they worked on raising funds to create mobile pediatric units. These health care units went to

developing countries, starting with Ghana in Africa. The club had also worked with organizations such as UNESCO and ECOSOC (United Nations Agencies). Zonta has UN observers in New York, Switzerland, and France.

According to the *Zontafax*, the Bethlehem Steel Corporation spoke to the club in 1972. Members were encouraged to bring associates and friends to the meeting. The newsletter states that Bethlehem Steel [had] been a vital part of the growth of the Buffalo area.¹⁶ The beautification of the city was another service project held by the Zonta Club of Buffalo. They raised \$2,000 for trees to be planted by the Peace Bridge and other Buffalo parkways. Puerto Rican and African cultural centers were funded by the club as well.

Zonta raised much money in the 1970s that they would disburse to many other organizations locally. The Buffalo Philharmonic received \$200 used for maintenance funds from the club in the 1970s. The Theodore Roosevelt Fund received \$100 for the restoration of The Wilcox Mansion (Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site). The club gave various camps for children \$175 each. D'Youville College was given \$1,300 for nursing scholarships. Children's Hospital (Oishei) received \$2,000 to furnish their new administration room. The University of Buffalo received \$1,000 in grants for women who were on the medical track. Deaconess Hospital Family Practice Center received \$500.

Each member was responsible for paying their club dues and initial membership fees. A budget report (from 1973-1974) shows that membership fees were paid every year. At that time, the cost was \$38 a member. Within that year, the Zonta Club of Buffalo had 135 members equaling a total of \$5,130 in member dues. Initiation fees for that year totaled only \$125, \$175 less than the year before. Their yearly budget reports show what the club spent and made the last

¹⁶ Zonta Club of Buffalo. (1972). *Zontafax 1972*. Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo History Museum. Print.

year compared to the current year. The budget report marks their expenditures, initiation dues, dues for other organizations, and their scholarship programs. Within the reports, one will also find what each committee spent yearly.

Two occasions in 1974 focused on Buffalo's history. Early in March of that year, the topic of the conversation was about Buffalo in its [present] state. At the end of the month, the club talked about Buffalo's past. Mrs. Darragh Karr spoke to the club in 1976 about living through a Civil War. Mrs. Karr lived through the Karantina Massacre that took place that same year in Beirut, Lebanon.

In 1975, the service committee sent a letter out to their fellow Zonta members in the district. They asked for help in finding new projects. The committee opened the floor for all members to share-worthy projects for the club to partake in for future events. Members had to state detailed information and contact information for organizations or projects they wish their club to choose. The members also had to report why they felt Zonta should help out the organization. The committee then examined compiled lists of possible projects. They then sent out a list to all members and had them vote on which one to focus on for that time.

Child abuse and neglect was the topic of discussion in May of 1978. The issue of abuse and neglect are still crucial to the club today. In 2018, the club was still advocating for rights for women and children, as well as trying to put a stop to child marriages and domestic abuse. In 1978, The Phonic Ear was another topic at meetings. Research in 1978, occurred that would allow the deaf to hear music, a notion Marian de Forest would surely have loved.

On occasion, images and background information on new or current members were also in these newsletters. In 1978, the *Zontafax* read, "Welcome to our Newest Member."¹⁷ Natalie H.

¹⁷ Zonta Club of Buffalo. (1978). *Zontafax March*. Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo History Museum. Print.

Evans (the newest member) was the Director of Hospital Social Services at the Erie County Medical Center (once called the Meyer Memorial Hospital). The write up continues to recognize her achievements working in the hospital since 1947 and how she taught nursing at The University of Buffalo. The write up goes on to state awards given to her, such as The Black Achiever in Industry Award.

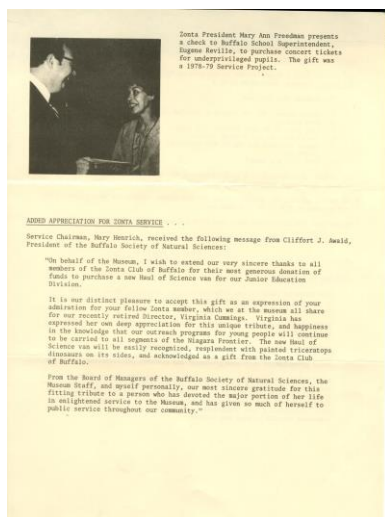


Image 17: Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

Zonta President Mary Ann Fredman, in 1979, presented a check to Buffalo Public Schools. Superintendent Eugene Reville was the one who received the check. The purchased concert tickets for the underprivileged students in the school were to be covered by the check given by Zonta. A letter from Clifford J. Awald, President of The Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences (The Science Museum of Buffalo) to Dr. Virginia Cummings.

Image 17 depicts and talks about these events.

Dr. Cummings was noted for her work in museum studies. The money donated to the museum funded a van. The museum's Junior Education Division used this new van for educational outreach. Painted on the side of the vehicle was a triceratops.

ZI in the 1980s

Dr. Vivian Cody

(Born 1943)

Dr. Vivian Cody received her Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Cincinnati in 1969. She has been a Professor in the Structural Biology Department in the Jacobs School of Medicine at The University of Buffalo since 2001. Dr. Cody was also a Principal Scientist at the

Hauptman Woodward Medical Research Institute, where she directed a research laboratory for 46 years. For her work in research, Dr. Cody received The University at Buffalo Sustained Achievement Award in 2005. She also received The Business First Woman of Influence Award for Innovation in 2010. In 1983, a Zontian came into her place of work at Hauptman Woodward and asked to see the women in high positions . . . and among them was Vivian.

During her time as a Zontian, Vivian was club President, Area 4 Director, Lt. Governor, and Governor of District 4 (2000-2002). Vivian was elected an International Director from 2003 to 2005. From 2017 to 2019, Vivian was on the District 4 Centennial Conference Committee. At the conference in September of 2019, Dr. Cody worked to compile various memorabilia and historical information from the club's 100-year history. She has done her research and is very educated on club history and its founder Marian de Forest.

Vivian often would dress as Marian de Forest (seen in **Image 18**) for various Zonta events. Vivian is in awe of the Zonta founder. At the gala dinner in 2019, Vivian wore the very medal Marian de Forest was awarded in 2001 from the Women's National Hall of Fame. Vivian, during her time as Governor, was asked to give the acceptance speech in honor of Marian de Forest at the award ceremony at the National Women's Hall of Fame. Dr. Cody is currently working on writing and creating a short film on the founding of Zonta in 1919. The film was shown to current members and guests in February of 2020. She stated, "I never met so many women in my life.



Image 18: Courtesy of Jessica Nantka

Because [for research conferences] I was literally the only woman going to almost everything I went to. So, I thought ‘oh this [Zonta] could be interesting.’”¹⁸

ZI in the 1990s

Mrs. Irene (Toni) Majchrzak

(Born 1943)

Irene Majchrzak received her master’s degree in nursing. Mrs. Majchrzak was an administrator for three home care companies. Irene worked as a financial advisor for Ameriprise Financial and wrote an article about the stringent financial constraints the countries of the European Union (EU) faced to maintain their status in the EU.

Now she works at The BullRing raceway venue in Perry, NY, owned by her husband and son. She wrote articles and interviewed the young racers about what they enjoyed about racing



cars. Irene still works part-time for Community Care in Buffalo. She educates staff on bed bugs, sexual harassment, and orientation information. Also, she completes the employee and doctor triage orders.

Irene Majchrzak (seen in **Image 19**) joined the Zonta Club of Buffalo in 1994. She has held almost all the offices in the club and was Area 4 Director. Mrs. Majchrzak was a

Image 19: Courtesy of Jessica Nantka
 Foundation Ambassador and Advocacy Chair. Mrs. Majchrzak served as Secretary for a few years for the club. She also was on the Board of Directors. From 2000 to 2002 and then again from 2010 to 2012, Irene Majchrzak served as Buffalo Club President.

¹⁸ Cody, Dr. Vivian. “Personal Interview.” June 28, 2019.

Most recently, she was the District 4 Conference Chair from 2017 to 2019. During this time, she and other members worked on executing the District 4 Centennial Conference in September of 2019. “Every chairperson was unbelievably - absolutely marvelous.”¹⁹ Through all of the hard and long work, her team was devoted, hard-working, organized, and helpful in creating a successful and beautiful conference.

Her focus is now on the work done through the advocacy committee. She had gone to local and state senators to advocate for putting a stop to human trafficking. She advocates for abused women. Her first advocacy project was when she was President. At this time, the club fought to defend refugees, to help other people understand, and respect them. “Advocacy is really my thing. I would advocate for everything. I just feel like that’s really the role that I should have in Zonta.”²⁰

ZI in the 2000s

Mrs. Diane Kaczmarek

(Born 1950)

Mrs. Diane Kaczmarek (seen in **Image 20**) graduated from Buffalo State College with a bachelor’s and master’s degrees in art education. She worked at her Alma Mater, John F. Kennedy High School, as an art teacher. She was an advisor for various clubs in the school. Mrs. Kaczmarek also taught adult art education.



Image 20: Courtesy of Jessica Nantka

¹⁹ Irene Majchrzak. “Personal Interview.” October 6, 2019.

Diane joined Zonta in 2007. She is the Liaison for the Lancaster High School Z Club.

Diane hands in a yearly report to ZI as to what the Z Club has done throughout the school year.

A lot goes into establishing a Z Club in a high school. Her hope for the 80 members Lancaster Z Club is to keep it running.²¹

The Zonta Club of Cheektowaga – Lancaster, other clubs from district 4, along with the



Image 21: Courtesy of Jessica Nantka

assistance from Lancaster Z Club members assembled birthing kits, as seen in **Image 21**. Cords, soap, razor blades, and gloves were among the items stocked in the birthing kits. These bags are sent to expectant mothers in areas of the world where hospitals and doctors may not be readily available.

The Zonta Club of Cheektowaga – Lancaster contributes to The Family Justice Center (FJC) each year. The Zonta Club of Cheektowaga – Lancaster raised money over the course of several years for posters that were distributed and displayed around Buffalo.

Diane was the co-chairperson for a fundraising event at Samuel's Grande Manor. Diane and a fellow Zontian ran and planned the entire event, which was much work. Among her other duties for the club, Diane and others on her team sell lottery tickets as a means of funding for the club. She enjoys being a hands-on person and helps other committees whenever she can. “It’s very fulfilling. It’s a great organization to be in. It’s a lot of hard work throughout the year, but I always enjoy the fruits of our labor in May, when our monies are distributed to scholarship winners and deserving organizations. It really makes it all well worth it.”²²

²¹ Kaczmarek, Diane. “Personal Interview.” June 6, 2019.

²² Kaczmarek, Diane. “Personal Interview.” June 6, 2019.

ZI in the 2010s

Zonta Awareness on Violence

The *Buffalo News* article from November of 2018 is titled *Zonta Awareness on Violence against Woman*. Zonta members in the Buffalo area set out to Niagara Square as part of 16 days of activism for women's rights. Zontians of District 4 can be seen out on location holding a



Image 22: Courtesy of the Zonta Club of Buffalo's Facebook Page

promotion sign for their Awareness Campaign in 2018 in **Image 22**. It was a brief article and mentioned only two members, Bonnie Clesse and Gina Ann Orsini. The report didn't address what Zonta had planned for these 16 days. It had a few statistics and brief details on what Zonta and

Clesse felt needs to change in the United States and the world when it comes to women's rights.

The article states that in the United States of America, many states don't have a minimum age for people to marry. Clesse says that this leads to child marriages and young women marrying older men, to which she doesn't agree. The legal age in New York State to marry is 18, though there are exceptions. One can marry at 16 or 17 with parent permission. Others can marry at 14 and 15 with the authorization from not only their parents but a judge as well. For the entire United States, there are universal laws, in cases of pregnancy. For boys, the minimum age is 14 to get married. But for that same circumstance, the age for girls is 12. Why the difference? Another article stated that in some cases those under 16 could marry. Back in 2001, Tennessee had girls the age of 10 getting married. They raised the minimum age to 17 in 2017.

For the 16-day event, the Zonta Club requested that the city of Buffalo light the Peace Bridge and the Electric Tower downtown in gold lighting. They wished to represent the color of

Zonta and what they are aiming for - improved status and rights for the female population of the world. Their request was accepted. Roughly 800 members in Zonta all aimed for the same goal. These members were from Owen Sound, Ontario (as the northernmost point) to Geneva, NY (as the easternmost point), all the way to Washington County in PA (as the southernmost point) to Erie, PA (as the westernmost point).

Z Club of Lancaster

Over the course of its 100-year existence, ZI had established offshoot organizations around the world. Z Clubs exist at the high school level. This by-product of ZI follows the same ideals as its mother organization. The hope is to have these youth continue the incredible mission of ZI to empower women as they grow and start their professional careers.

Z Club of Lancaster was established in 1972 as a means to reach young women and encourage them to serve the community positively. Traditionally the clubs were meant for females; however, today, the club is host to all genders. During the 2018 – 2019 school year, males made up 30% of the Lancaster High School Z Club. That year the club had 80 members.

Mrs. Lynn Fisher is the supervising teacher for the Z Club and has been since 2011. The ultimate draw for her was the club's community service aspect. The thing she enjoys most about being a part of Z Club is to see how the students feel when they realize the positive changes they are making. She also enjoys seeing the students take pride in making this difference.

When Mrs. Fisher cannot host a meeting, the students may host their own at the school. This shows devotion and dedication from the students. Every two years new officers are elected in the Z Club by the students. They have a President, Vice-President, and Treasurer. For

students, being a part of the club is a way to advocate for topics that mean the most to them. They can become a more significant part of their community.

During the 2018 – 2019 school year, the Lancaster Z Club participated in many service fundraising events. There are specific organizations that Z Club tries to continue helping each year. Students are encouraged to think of organizations they wish to support and raise money for at the start of the year. Students must fight for their organization and bring their reasoning to the group as a whole. The SPCA was a popular choice amongst the students. Afterward, students then vote on which ones they will fund.

At the start of the year, students have their first meeting and begin work on the spirit week banner, displayed in October at the school. Selling cookie dough to raise funds is a popular fundraising event. In December, students write letters for veterans at the VA Hospital. The students also write Santa letters to second-grade classes in the district. All school clubs buy Christmas trees. Each club then decorates their tree with lights and ornaments. Just before Christmas, the school gives the trees to the local Youth Bureau, and they distribute them to local needy families who otherwise could not afford a tree for the holidays.

Throughout the year, students work on collecting stuffed animals, games, books, and clothing. They have also started making no-sew blankets as well. Once enough are collected, these items get donated to The Family Justice Center. By February and March, students get involved with the Make-A-Wish Foundation. They sell stars around the school for \$1 a star.

Part Six: Celebrating Birthdays

November 8, 2019, marked Zonta International's 100th birthday. Special events occurred throughout the year, while a more significant celebration will happen in the spring of 2020. What about its past birthdays? How did the Zontians of the past celebrate the birth of a powerful women's organization? Images and brochures within the Beach Collection allow us to view these special occasions.

The 10th Birthday: 1929

During the fall of 1929, Anna Griffiths had the pleasure of assisting the program committee in a substantial upcoming event for the club. November of that year was the club's 10th Anniversary. Plans were laid out for the event to occur on November 8th in the Terrace Room of the Hotel Statler. Mrs. Griffiths helped to orchestrate the dinner and reception for the special occasion. Her most significant task was to direct the pageant at the event.

The 35th Birthday: 1954

The *Zontafax* in 1972 stated, "It is our habit to look at a finished thing without giving thought to its beginning and development. We admire the beautiful and sturdy oak tree without thought of the tiny acorn from which it grew."²³ Dr. Schley stressed the importance of looking at the organization's beginning. "Something that even after 100 years, is still imperative. Appreciation to the organization's past members to the band of business and professional women who had the courage, the wisdom, and the foresight to build a foundation..."²⁴

²³ Zonta Club of Buffalo. (1972). *Zontafax Vol. 52 No. 7 February*. Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo History Museum. Print.

²⁴ Zonta Club of Buffalo. (1972). *Zontafax Vol. 52 No. 7 February*. Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo History Museum. Print.

The 40th Birthday: 1959

For the club's Ruby Anniversary party, a particular song was written. Margaret Beach was one of the members who helped to create the 'Ruby Anniversary Song.' For the night's event opening, the members sang the 'Zonta Hymn, Ruby Anniversary Song' and the song entitled 'Hail to Our Zonta Club.' The celebration highlights the club's first 40 years. Then Zonta's birthday presents were distributed. A list of presidents of the Buffalo Club since 1919 was present in the back of the anniversary program.

The 45th Birthday: 1964

The image used in the newsletter for the 45th birthday was the 1944 membership photo. It depicts women belonging to the club of Buffalo at that time. These individuals were strong business and professional women. Included in that depiction are Margaret Beach and Ada Fontana. At the time, the women in the photo had been Zontians for roughly 25 years or more. The club held a luncheon on November 10, 1964, to celebrate their 45th Anniversary.

The 50th Birthday: 1969

A golden issue of the *Zontafax* was typed and circulated in December of 1969. The newsletter was sent out organization-wide and highlighted on Zonta International's first 50 years of existence and accomplishments. The newsletter also highlighted their vision for the next 50 years to come. The International President at the time envisioned a widening of vistas in the

service of mankind.²⁵ While the International Governor saw the light on the path ahead, directing each club and member to the bright horizons.²⁶

The club's Golden Anniversary dinner was held in Buffalo, NY, in 1969. In preparation for the dinner, all members received a questionnaire to fill out. What members had hoped for throughout the next 50 years of ZI was the topic of the survey. Growth and expansion were amongst their responses. Within those next 50 years, ZI has achieved just that.

²⁵ Zonta Club of Buffalo. (1969). *Zontafax: Golden Issue Vol. 1 No. 1 December*. Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo History Museum. Print.

²⁶ Zonta Club of Buffalo. (1969). *Zontafax: Golden Issue Vol. 1 No. 1 December*. Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo History Museum. Print.

The 100th Birthday: 2019

Buffalo hosted the district four conference in the fall of 2019. Districts in the area were pleased to be able to keep this conference in the very city the club started 100 years ago. The Hyatt Regency Buffalo Hotel hosted the four-day centennial conference. Districts from WNY and Canada attended the meeting, as well as the ZI Director Judy Gorton from Australia.



Image 23: Courtesy of The New York Heritage: Digital Collection



Image 24: Courtesy of Jessica Nantka

At this unique conference, tours were open of the Buffalo area for out of town guests. Various workshops and meetings were part of the itinerary. Two all-female music groups (Dive by Diva and the Ladies First Jazz Big Band) entertained guests for two of the nights. At the beautiful gala dinner, various Zontians dressed for the decades, sporting dresses to match multiple eras. The images above depict Zontians from 1932 (**Image 23**) adorned historically. **Image 24** above shows the same occurring at the 2019 conference.

News Anchor Jacquie Walker was one of the special guests to present at the conference. Jackie Walker shared how her long news career relates to the mission of Zonta. The last day of the centennial conference, a memorial service to honor all the Zontians who had passed away occurred.

Various celebrations were held through 2019 to commemorate Zonta International's 100th birthday. A yellow rose garden is in the works as a part of the festivities. The rose was adopted

as a symbol to represent ZI. On November 8, 2019, a cocktail celebration took place at the Statler (where it all began 100 years ago). Friends, family, and political figures joined the Zonta Club of Buffalo to celebrate the marvelous history of the club.

On this day, the Zonta Club of Buffalo received many proclamations and awards from political figures. New York State Senator Gallivan, Congressmen Collins and Erie County Executive Hon. Poloncarz were the political figures who gave the club the proclamations. A representative from Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown also presented a proclamation. The bottom of the declaration stated, "I, Byron Brown, Mayor of the city of Buffalo, do hereby proclaim November 8, 2019, as 'ZONTA CLUB OF BUFFALO DAY'."²⁷

A Zonta film has been in the works through the efforts of Dr. Cody and crewmen. The film crew was present at the November 2019 birthday event. The film depicts the start-up of the club and more. Dr. Cody stated that based on information known on the Confederation of Zonta's beginnings, the film would depict Marian de Forest leading the removal of nine Quota clubs in early 1919. The withdrawal from Quota Club led these women to connect and start Zonta by November quickly. There is a scene in the film that depicts Marian de Forest and fellow Zontian Clara Witt discussing actions to take in building ZI.

In the summer of 2020, there will be an international convention in Chicago. Chicago is where ZI's headquarters has been since 1987. This international convention will mark the end of the centennial celebrations for Zonta International. The Zonta Club of Buffalo plans to refurbish the Zonta plaque on the Statler and 'The Spirit of Womanhood' statue. They hope to move the statue to a more prominent and accessible location. The Zonta Club of Buffalo purchased a time capsule. They are collecting items to place inside the capsule. Items placed inside are not solely

²⁷ City of Buffalo Executive Chamber (2019). *Proclamation*. Buffalo, NY.

items from this decade but throughout the club's 100 years. They will be putting it into the ground next year. The club plans to place the capsule at the base of 'The Spirit of Womanhood' statue, once relocated.

Part Seven: the WOMEN

Olive Frost [Mrs. Glenn S. Plummer]

(1894 - 1955)

Olive Frost was a classically trained pianist renowned in Buffalo for the poetic power of her performance. A graduate of Lafayette High School and the Biblical Seminary in NYC, she was a music teacher for over 30 years. Miss Frost even had a music studio where she taught other individuals how to play the piano.

Olive Frost went far in her profession due to her musical talent and drive. She helped to create events, programs, and recitals all over Buffalo. Most notably were her events at The University of Buffalo, The Museum of Science, The 20th Century Club, and The Technical High School. While at The Museum of Science, she opened a new musical event to the venue. On November 7, 1937, she opened the first-ever twilight music hour. From her performance in December of 1932 at The 20th Century Club, one can truly appreciate her musical talent and progress she made for women in the arts. When she played Beethoven and Chopin, the audience felt the poetic power of her performance. Due to that performance, bestowed upon her was an accolade.

During her time in the Zonta Club of Buffalo, Miss Frost served on the nominating committee (1945) as Director (1943) and the standing committee (1940). To generate more funds for the club, they held a book sale. March 20, 1933, the book sale was held at the home of Miss Drake. Also, a silver tea party occurred at this time. Miss Olive was in charge of assisting guests with books of interest to purchase.

The radio committee worked with WKBW in creating monthly Zonta radio programs in the 1930s. By 1944, Miss Olive was now a member of the committee. On one occasion, she was introduced over the air, and a brief biography of her life read. In closing the radio broadcast, she played a recital over WKBW. Miss Frost had an ad in the brochure of the 1959 club play. The announcement pertained to her giving music lessons.

Zorah (Brake) Berry Logan [Mrs. William D. Logan]

(1888 - 1969)

Zorah Berry was a well-known impresario during the first half of the 20th century. Zorah brought hundreds of talented acts in music to the Buffalo area. Among the establishments that hosted these musical talents were The Consistory, Elmwood Music Hall, and Kleinhans Music Hall. Zorah was a manager for the Philharmonic Concerts, Inc.

Mrs. Berry was a woman of high acclaim in her day. She was most famous in the realm of music. Zorah launched her notable career when working at Kleinhans Music Hall. She started the Zorah Berry Series in the music hall. They were seasonal series of concerts that were performed by famous musicians from around the nation.

As a Zonta member, she served as the First Vice President in 1943 and was active on several committees. Club connectedness was a massive part of Zonta. The club had encouraged members to go out and visit other clubs and see what they are doing in terms of service. The club requested members to visit sister clubs in 1940. At this time, Zorah went to New York City and attended a Zonta meeting there.

Mrs. Berry herself would come to serve on the program committee during her time as a Zontian. Eventually, she would move up to becoming a Chairman. Among her participation in

Zonta, she appears on the club's weekly radio program. Mrs. Florence Nye (a past member) interviewed Mrs. Zorah on her role as a woman in the music world, her high acclaims, and talent.

Anna E. (O'Brien) Griffiths [Mrs. George A. Griffiths]

(1884 – N/A)

Anna Griffiths was Vice President of Steven's Flooring Company in 1942. Before she was a Vice President, a census record listed her as holding lesser positions in the company. There was a time when she was a secretary for the flooring company. Also, census records had once listed her as a homemaker.

Mrs. Anna Griffiths was one of those founding members. An image of her can be seen in a *Zontafax* from 1975. Other founding Zontians surround her in the 1919 photograph. In 1921 (at a convention in Syracuse), Marian de Forest declared a new club creed. Anna was at that meeting. She would help carry out this new campaign bestowed upon the club by the President. At this time, she was on the *Zontafax* committee.

Flooring in one's home was the topic of the radio show on WGR in 1933. During one of the 'Zonta Hours', Mrs. Griffiths got to address the community on her profession. On October 5, 1933, she went on air to talk about flooring in one's home and business. Since ZI members were required to have an executive (or highest position in their field) standing, this leads to great networking. Anna was also Chairman of a bridge tea and fashion show in 1938 for over 600 people.

Ms. Harriet N. Heinze

(1870 - 1952)

According to New York State census records, Ms. Heinze's spent most years working as a private secretary. By the 1930s, Harriet Heinze was working for a chemical company. Starting as a clerk and bookkeeper, Harriet Heinze had a prestigious career as a private secretary at The Howard Brothers Chemical Company. About ten years before her death, she was working full time at the company.

In March of 1924, the Zonta Club of Buffalo opened a new club room at The Statler Hotel. At this time, Ms. Harriet served on the house committee. When one belongs to the house committee, one is to sell tickets to the weekly Tuesday Zonta meetings. They were also to work with the hotel in creating the lunch menu. Her team was in charge of decorating and furnishing the new club room.

To celebrate this happening, the club had a tea reception, and guests numbered over 200. During the reception, Ms. Harriet served as a generous hostess for the guests. Other clubs were in attendance at this event. The Crippled Children's Guild gifted the Zonta Club of Buffalo with pillows for their new room. The Quota Club gifted the club with flowers. A plaque can be seen on the walls of The Statler Hotel today. It was placed there in 1969 to commemorate the club's creation.

Her involvement in Zonta included serving on the publicity committee in 1930. Ms. Heinze got to collaborate with The Buffalo Broadcasting Company to spread the vision of ZI. Another publicity event that she was a part of was in the creation and distribution of the Romance Map of the Niagara Frontier. Harriet Heinze took part in that event as well.

Not only did Harriet Heinze serve on the publicity committee, but she also served on a few others over the course of her involvement with the ZI. In 1933, she became part of the executive office committee. Then in 1939, she had joined the inner-city committee, which was a newer committee at the time. Harriet Heinze died on October 27, 1952, of myocardial degeneration. Her funeral, on October 28th, was at McGinnis – Sauerwein Funeral Home on 2268 Main Street.

Miss Florence I. Drake

(1879 - 1956)

Miss Drake worked for Plumbing Co. as a bookkeeper in 1910. In 1939 she had accumulated \$600 of income for her labors working. By the time the 1940s come around, census records show that she becomes a clerk working at Children's Hospital (now Oishei). In 1955, Florence Drake was the Secretary and the Assistant Treasurer of George H. Drake Inc. Her brother owned this company. It was a plumbing and heating company.

She served as Chairman on the treasury committee in 1931. Florence served on two more committees in the 1930s. These committees were the house committee in 1933 and the membership committee in 1938. She also was a member of the program committee in 1932. On April 12, 1956, Florence Drake passed away at Lafayette General Hospital at the age of 76. She had died of malignant neoplasm of the corpus uteri. The funeral service was held at the chapel at Forest Lawn Cemetery. She was cremated and buried at Cold Springs Cemetery in Lockport.

Miss Edwina B. Hogadone

(1907 - 1994)

Miss Edwina B. Hogadone received her master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh. She had served as Chairman of the international public relations and magazine committee for three years. Miss Hogadone was the author of several vocational guidance pamphlets and magazine articles. She even co-wrote a textbook, *Merchandising Techniques*.²⁸

Miss Edwina Hogadone work in the RIT Retailing Department as the head of the department. In 1961, she was the first female to be the Dean of the College of Business and the Director of the School of Retailing of the Rochester Institute of Technology. Miss Hogadone was a Zontian of the Rochester club since 1938. In May of 1946, she was a guest speaker at an Elmira Zonta club dinner meeting held at the Mark Twain Hotel. In her talk on "What Does Zonta Mean to You?" [she] related personal experiences in which Zonta friendships had meant much.²⁹

Miss Hogadone became the First Vice-President of the Zonta Club of Rochester in 1950 after serving as the Second Vice-President beforehand. From 1941 to 1942, she served as the President of the Rochester club. She died in Florida in 1994. Like Marian de Forest, she had never married and was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 1995.

²⁸ *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*. "Rochester Zontian Takes Office as International Vice-President." July 1, 1950. <http://fultonhistory.com/>.

²⁹ *Elmira Star-Gazette*. "Zonta Hears International Officer." May 22, 1946. <http://fultonhistory.com/>.

Part Eight: The Implementation of an Exhibit

With all the research undertaken and the continuation of doors opening, it was time to narrow things down. One of the hardest things about this master's project was choosing the focus of the exhibit. There were many directions to choose from, many different topics to present. Projects I delved into earlier were based on the structure of the club and a few club events. Since I had focused on the structure before, I decided to change things up by focusing more attention on the women of Zonta. I felt their voices needed to be heard and their stories told to future generations. For too long, women had to hide in the shadows. Though which women should be my focus?

I started with research on about a dozen Zontians photographed in the Beach Collection. This endeavor began in 2017. The question for the exhibit was to dig a little deeper or start with new individuals. Through the process of elimination, focus on 10 to 20 Zontians was my plan. The hope was to find one or two Zontians per decade of the club's existence to research. That became a bit overwhelming, mainly because it became hard to find enough information on early members. In the same sense, it was hard to find members from the 1960s – 1990s. The main focus was on women of Zonta over the decades and the work they had done during those times.

It was interesting to hear how pretty much all of the current Zontians I talked to knew of the Zonta collections at both The University of Buffalo and The Buffalo Public Library. The next decision was to use as much of the Beach Collection artifacts as possible for this exhibit. That is because no Zontian I talked to knew of this collection of Zonta memorabilia. While I did use various sites, databases, and primary sources (Zontian interviews), the archives from UB or the Library were strategically not used.

Having a better focus on the direction of the exhibit (history and membership), made way to start looking for a host. The Karpeles Manuscript Museum and Library on Porter Ave became my first choice. While I was hoping it would work out, I still planned for a second, third, and even fourth option. Thinking ahead was good, though I lucked out with my first choice.

I chose Karpeles for its look and location. I had been to the museum for a wedding before. I knew how beautiful the structure was. I had also been there a few times for my peers' exhibits; therefore, I knew the possible space I could work with. Since the creation of The Confederation of Zonta (ZI) was in Buffalo, I wanted to present my exhibit; *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership* in the very city it was founded 100 years ago.

Advertising for the Exhibit

Upon presenting my proposal for the exhibit to Chris Kelly (whose mother was a Zontian) of the museum in the summer of 2019, I shared my reasoning for wanting the exhibition to run in November. *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership* exhibited at The Karpeles Manuscript Museum and Library from November 5 – 23 in 2019. I was lucky enough to have the exhibit run through the month in which the club developed. I figured it to be an excellent montage to the founding of the club. When Mr. Kelly presented the idea of a wine and cheese social, I felt that it would have been another great idea to attract people to the exhibit. I chose November 9th. One reason is that it was a Saturday; secondly, because it was the day after the club's 100th birthday. I did not want to have anything on their actual birthday because I did not want to overshadow anything the club may have been planning.

Now that the dates and location were all set, it was time to advertise. I was honored to present my research on Zonta and with the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection to

the SUNY Buffalo State College Council. One of the board members was a past Zontian. Once I got the date and location of my exhibit, I had e-mailed her the information. At various Zonta meetings I had attended, I was able to speak in front of the group and even was honored at one to say the Zonta hymn. At these dinner meetings, I shared news of my upcoming exhibit. The Zonta Club of Buffalo also posted it in their *Zontafax*.

Creating a flyer to pass around, hang up and send out was structurally challenging.

Choosing the right images and the right amount of words to draw the eye in was difficult. The

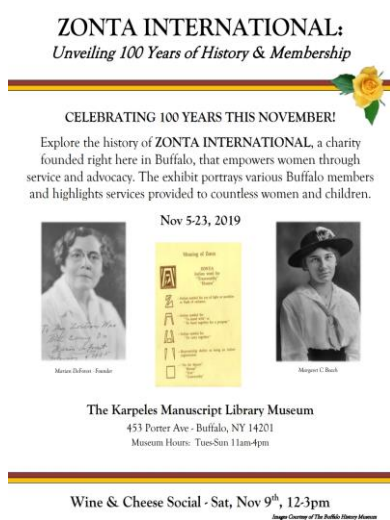


Image 25: Courtesy of Jessica Nantka

initial layout of the flyer that I created was not so eye-catching.

Pictures needed to be moved around and condensed. The text was required to be larger in font and shortened in length. The end product, thanks to the help of my professor, was beautiful.

Before I sent out the flyers, I had sent one to Chris Kelly at the museum for his approval. I got the ok and started advertising.

Image 25 shows how the finalized flyer looked.

A flyer had been posted at The Karpeles Museum. They host poetry sessions and weddings, too. This allowed for a broader audience to see my flyer. On the bulletin board of the Museum Studies Program at SUNY Buffalo State displayed an exhibit flyer. Stacks of flyers were left in the three significant classrooms in the history and social studies education department at the college. I would have liked to have posted flyers on the walls, though I did not get approval to do so. Therefore, advertisements were done via social media. Also, I sent multiple texts and verbal announcements of the exhibit to friends and family.

E-mailed versions of the flyer were sent to various individuals. Included in that were the three Zontians interviewed for the exhibit. The Zonta Club of Cheektowaga – Lancaster

President forwarded the flyer to several other club Presidents. I met Jackie Walker at the Zonta Gala Dinner in September. She gave me her e-mail and asked me to send the flyer her way as well.

The end of my article published in the fall 2019 edition of the *Western New York Heritage Magazine* displayed information on my exhibition. The publication had been delayed. The magazine came out when the exhibit was in its last week. On November 8th, I attended a cocktail fundraising event at The Statler that the Zonta Club of Buffalo hosted. There, flyers were on display at the sign-in table for guests to take. Zontian Irene was working the sign-in table and told everyone she could about the exhibit.

Creating the Panels

I searched to see what the average poster size was to help with deciding on what I wanted to display. The average poster size is 24x36 inches. I pulled some newspapers together to chart out the size of the poster in person, to get a better idea of its size. Various printing sites listed different size posters available and prices. By the looks of the 24x36 inch newspaper layout, I knew that is what was best for what I wanted to do.

Initially, I thought ten posters would be an adequate amount for the textual information I wanted to present. I had the room laid out in my head. Using signs on foam core was another must. I had seen an exhibit with regular (flat) posters, and it did look as 'professional' to me. Comparing poster sizes and quotes from an assortment of companies were next on the list. In the end, I found out of a relative who was starting up his own printing company - EZ Custom Tickets. I stated what I was looking for, posters on foam core, and a sizeable retractable standing

banner. He was unable to print the banner, but he connected me with a colleague at Marketing Tech who could print it.

After receiving the quotes for the posters and banner, it was time to start putting the panels together digitally. As I went through the research, I had a lot more information than what I had room for on the boards, so I decided to add more posters to the exhibit. This time I was going to add smaller 12x18 inch posters. I hoped that the triangular cases at the museum could display these. But yet again, I changed the amount and sizes of signs as I digitally created panels. Changing my mind occurred a few more times. In the end, I ended up creating eight 24x36 inch, four 12x18 inch, and six 10x12 inch posters.

It was somewhat last minute to write up an abstract and a credits poster for the exhibit. I thought of making these when I recalled the peer exhibits I attended. Another last-minute idea was to have a sign containing my name and the exhibit title on it. I figured my title of the exhibition was needed since all exhibits have titles posted on the walls above entering the exhibit space.

Flyers were made, and poster amounts/sizes were chosen. Now it was time to figure out the banner. My advisor's idea was to have a standing poster of Marian de Forest. It was a fantastic idea. I had heard it was hard to find images of her, let alone ones of her smiling. Thanks to The Buffalo History Museum, I had some at my disposal. I had chosen two pictures, where Marian was smiling. When blown up, my first choice - though beautiful - was too blurry.

The second image I chose worked out much better. To make the exhibit interactive, a label prompting guests to take a selfie with Marian was created. To relate to the community, I created hashtags for guests to use when posting the image to social media. I also made copies of the first act of the 1951 play *When Women Rule the World*. I did so for guests to pick up and

read. It was an exciting play that was better off being accessible for guests to read instead of simply tucked away stationary in a case.

Panels combined decade information since it proved challenging to gather information on women from each decade. Panels referencing the 1920s to the 1950s presented guests with two Zontians from each decade. The text contained information on the Zontians' occupations and services while in the club. One Zontian, along with a mixture of events, appears on the 1960s poster. I had no Zontian represented for the 1970s.

Consequently, I combined the 1970s with the 1980s on one board. One side of the poster contained an assortment of information and events about the 1970s. The other side depicted current Zontian Vivian Cody, for that was the decade she joined the club. The next two decades were also combined onto one panel. One woman was represented in the 1990s slot, while another in the 2000s slot.

Instead of creating a 2010s board, I separated that information on other – smaller boards. News and events occurring in the 2010s appear on five different boards. Two boards represented what the Z Club of Lancaster was about and what services they provided. Represented on one board was the June 2019 dramatic reading of *Little Women*. Celebrations of the club's birthdays throughout the century were combined on one panel. Finally, I had created a *Zonta International Today* board.

I knew I wanted a darker background for the poster. It was better on the eyes than having a white background. To add in color, I represented the ZI colors of maroon and gold into the posters, brochure, and flyer. I tried incorporating the 100th color (a shade of blue) instead of having the maroon and gold, though it was not as appealing. I had asked various friends on their opinions about the color layouts to help me decide. Maroon fabric had been used in two of the

cases, as were fake yellow roses. I knew I wanted a text font that was from around the same decade that the club developed to fit the theme. A quick Google search led me to Goudy Old Style text font.

Narrowing down the text was the hardest part about creating the poster. There was way more information than what there was room for. The text should be too small if more were kept on the signs. I ended up picking and choosing the most interesting and the most important or relevant information to present in writing on the posters. Displaying text on each Zontians' professional achievements was a must since a Zontian had to have been in a noted profession, although, more focus was on what they did within their club.

The three current members interviewed had an additional piece of text on their panels. Each one displayed a quote by them on what Zonta means to them. These women were interviewed face-to-face. I took notes as we talked and asked for their permission to record our sessions. Before printing their posters, I sent the texts written on each of them to the women for editing, accuracy, and approval.

Laying out, narrowing down, and finding the right font size was hard. My professor and I often made alternations. Once the sizing of text and amount of text was perfect, minor things were still needed, such as formatting. The last thing I worked on before sending posters to be printed was the images. They were often resized, moved around, and added or subtracted. The constant resizing was due to space, an eye-drawing layout, and blurriness. While formatting the images to be 8x10 inches looked beautiful, it didn't fit the page well. The text would have had to have been moved, downsized, or taken out, therefore I stuck with the 5x7 inch images.

Once all panels were edited and approved, it was time to get printed. The printer had two weeks to print the posters. However, there was one snag. When stating to the printer the original

sizes I wanted for the signs, there was a miss communication. All the posters were smaller than the quote I received initially. The posters ended up being 21.32x36, 10.66x18, and 7.1x12 inches. Though I was not thrilled with this, it was going to have to work. There was no time to find a new printer.

When the posters were received, I was happy with the 21.32x36 sized ones. You could not notice any difference from what I originally wanted. As for the other sized posters, I was not a fan of how small they were. The text ended up being even smaller. It was an issue for the older guests. With finished posters, skimming through the Zonta scans was next on the to-do list. Choosing what artifacts to display within my four cases was quite easy. I used objects given to me by Zontians, personal ones I had collected at events, and from the Beach Collection. Of course, I had to display negatives within my exhibit. I chose more artifacts than necessary. It was better to have too much than not enough.

Other last-minute things I created were labels and brochures. These were two items I almost totally forgot about creating. To represent Zonta's colors of gold and maroon, labels were printed on regular paper, then glued to maroon folded paper. I liked how the tags were propped up instead of being flat when in the cases. It made them pop. **Image 26** shows a flat-display case at the exhibit with how the propped tags appeared. Due to time constraints, I printed labels at home. Initial copies of scans were done at home as well. The Z Club of Lancaster sent me some images to use for the exhibit.

Images from the 2019 dramatic reading were printed as well. It was my intention to have them printed on card stock, as well as the labels, brochures, and copies. Unfortunately, this did not



Image 26: Courtesy of Jessica Nantka

occur. The copy store, where the photos and brochures were printed, had no employee who could print the pages. It was two days before I was to set up the exhibit, therefore, I had to go forward and make copies at the store on my own. The store had no more card stock paper for me to use, therefore regular paper it was. Next time this would have to change. Since the photos were not on card stock, the edges rolled inwards as they laid out in the display cases.

Finding the Flow of the Room

Taking measurements of the exhibit space was a two-person job. Thankfully my peer



Image 27: Courtesy of Alexa Templeton

(and employee of the museum) was able and willing to assist me in this. Having taken measurements for exhibit installation before, I knew what to measure and what factors to consider. In **Image 27**, I am seen measuring the walls for the placement of the posters. I had a measuring tape, a note pad, and a pencil on hand. I measured and drew up the layout of the room. I measured from corner to light, from light to window. For my drawing, I measured the width of the windows and the fireplace.

Lastly, I measured the four cases I would use and calculated the area.

When planning for my poster placements on the walls, I prepared for the 24x36 inch measurements, not knowing until later that the sized would change. Since the large posters followed a chronological order, so should the flow of the room. The large posters hung on the walls. The two front corners of the room were the only logical place for the standing banner and podium to be situated. In the opposite corners were the triangular cases. In the middle of the

room, even with the fireplace, is where the two smaller-rectangular-flat cases stood. Enough space was given between the cases for individuals to walk by and around them.

Many stands were purchased at the Dollar Tree to help prop up the smaller posters and some documents. The display cases looked more appealing with multiple levels than having artifacts lay flat. The triangular cases were way taller than the items on display. It may not have been so bad if they were 12x18 instead of 10.66x18 and positioned vertically.

Dividing up what would go into the cases was easy. One case presented information on the Beach Collection, archives, and the Zonta structure. Also, in this case, were three negative images of Zontians. The other triangular case presented information on past club birthdays, as well as, the club today. Photographs, documents, and memorabilia were also present within



Image 28: Courtesy of Jessica Nantka

them. One of the smaller cases showed artifacts on Z Club. This case was closer to the fireplace, where the text panels on Z Club were propped on the mantle (as seen in **Image 28**). If the text panel were in the case, there would be no room for the artifacts.

The other flat case represented artifacts about the 1951 Zonta play and the 2019 play. While this case was further from the fireplace and its corresponding text panels, on the wall near it was placed the copied play script. Since there not another podium to rest the readable 1951 script on, I mounted a clear picture frame onto the wall. The text was in protective sleeves and bound folder tied to the stand. A label about reading the script and not removing the pages were mounted on the wall as well.

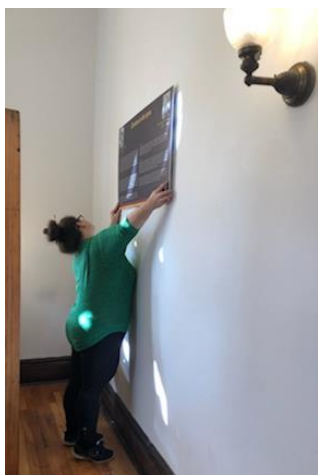


Image 29: Courtesy of Alexa Templeton

Positioning the poster on the wall was challenging. Again, it's a two-person job. It was challenging for two reasons. First, I did not take into consideration that the floor would be unlevel. Second, I am below average height. While a height position on the wall looked good to me, it would be too low for the average guest (as seen in **Image 29**). A step ladder was used for mounting posters and the second set of eyes to help direct in the placement of the signs.

To protect the walls, Mr. Kelly suggested that I use painter's tape to mount the posters to the walls. I figured this to be an exciting and good idea. The room used for the exhibition is occasionally used for other events like weddings. Who wants holes all in the walls or paint peeled off from some mounting tape? I learned in my undergraduate experience (as a teacher) to place the rolled tape vertically on a board when posting it to a wall. That way, gravity won't push it down like it would if the rolled tape was laid horizontally on it. The museum walls were plaster. I made sure to have lots of tape on the posters to help ensure that they stayed up.

I should have rolled the tape in fatter widths than what I had done. Even though much tape was used, using painter's tape for mounting did not turn out to be the best idea. On the morning of the wine and cheese social event for the exhibit, I found out that all the posters had fallen. A museum worker told me that he ended up stapling and hammering all the signs back to the wall. The nails and staples caused posters to obtain unwanted holes in them. Smashed corners developed due to falling. Lesson learned!

Turnout and Guest Reactions

The wine and cheese social selected to be on November 9th for two reasons. One being that it was the day after ZI turned 100. It also happened to be a Saturday. That day of the week works best for most people. If the event were to be held on Sunday, then it would have interfered with churchgoers or those watching the Bills' game.

The event had strategically been scheduled to start an hour after the museum opened and end an hour before it closed. This way, it gave me the needed time to set up tables, food, drinks, and then take it all down. There was plenty of food and beverages for guests. As I was setting up, a couple walked into the museum. They were afraid that I was setting up for a private event. I assured them it was not and they were welcome.

The couple did not know of my exhibit. I explained to the couple what was going on and how it's for my master's project. The couple had chosen to attend the museum because it was something to do and they had never been to the museum. They loved the fact that The Karpeles Manuscript Museum allows graduate students to use the space to present their research. The gentleman was a SUNY Buffalo State professor himself. The couple asked me to show them around and explain my work. I graciously gave them a tour. My aunt and uncle would later ask me to provide them with a tour as well. Another guest would later walk in with a friend from off the streets. One guest was a history major who works with a graduate of the museum studies program. Their coworker told them of my exhibit and thought they would like it. This guest did. We later talked about not only my exhibition but the SUNY Buffalo State Museum Studies Program as well. She became interested in learning more about it as a possibility to pursue a graduate degree in this field.

Aside from friends, family, and the stranger mentioned above, many Zontians from District 4 attended the exhibit to learn more about their club's history. The furthest member to attend (that was known) was from the Rochester club. I made it a point to take an image of each current Zontian presented in the exhibit alongside the poster of them. They, in turn, wanted a picture with me and their sign. One member even wanted her poster. I sent her the digital version of it to keep. These women also took images with the Marian banner and then with Marian and me. A dozen Zontians had e-mailed me sharing congratulations for my work, well wishes, and apologies for not being able to attend the showing.

A guest book resided on the podium. I attached a pen to some string and then to the podium. That way, no one would walk away with it or lose it. The exhibit brochures were also displayed here. Not all guests signed the book or left a comment. The podium was stationed in the corner next to the last large poster on the wall. Examples of the brochures are seen in **Images 30 and 31**.

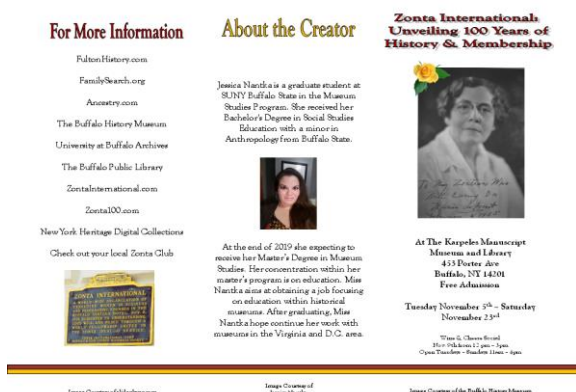


Image 30: Courtesy of Jessica Nantka

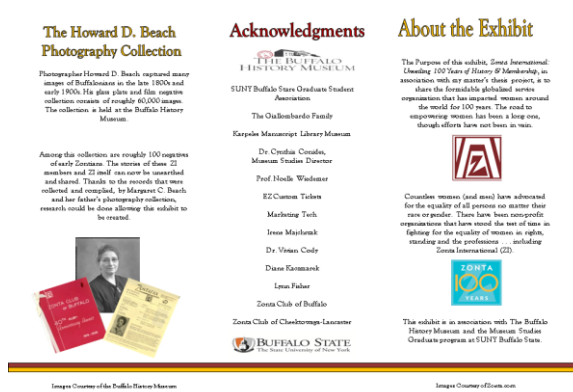


Image 31: Courtesy of Jessica Nantka

Many of the comments stated how lovely the exhibit was, how well it was displayed, and how much Buffalo history they learned. One guess wrote “proud to be part of Zonta.”³⁰ Dr. Cody

³⁰ *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership*. Exhibit Guest Book. The Karpeles Manuscript Museum, Buffalo, NY. November 2019.

wrote in, “thanks for doing this project.”³¹ Others congratulated me on my work. Others wished me luck for the future. Many of the Zontians I spoke with on the 9th were extremely grateful for my hard work, dedication, and research.

There were two discrepancies brought to me about my exhibit research. One member of the Zonta Club of Buffalo pointed out a minor mistake on my *Happy Birthday to Zonta International* panel. I mistakenly wrote that “every two years a lucky ZI district gets to hold an organization-wide conference. In 2021, the conference will be held in Germany. In 2019, the conference was held in Buffalo, NY” - is what I wrote on the panel.³² In actuality, the Buffalo 2019 conference was only a District 4 conference. The meeting in Germany will be an international conference. This was a misunderstanding on my part.

The other discrepancy this Zontian mentioned was on the *A Club’s Beginning’s* panel. The Zontian did not believe the following to be truthful: that “Marian de Forest was the first President of the Zonta Club of Buffalo from 1919 to 1921. In 1924, she became the president of the entire organization. She held many other positions while involved in ZI.”³³ However, it is right according to Zonta documents within the Beach Collection and Dr. Cody. I assured the Zontian that this information came straight from a past presidents list found in the Beach Collection. Zontian Margaret Beach saved this document, a long-serving member and secretary to the Zonta Club of Buffalo in the early-mid 1900s.

³¹ *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership*. Exhibit Guest Book. The Karpeles Manuscript Museum, Buffalo, NY. November 2019.

³² *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership*. Happy Birthday to Zonta International (Exhibit Panel). The Karpeles Manuscript Museum, Buffalo, NY. November 2019.

³³ *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership*. A Club’s Beginnings (Exhibit Panel). The Karpeles Manuscript Museum, Buffalo, NY. November 2019.

Details to Note for Future Changes

Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership was the first exhibit I created from start to finish. With that, this was also a trial run. Creating *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership* was a good lesson in researching topics and displaying information. I took note of changes or alterations that would be both useful and beneficial next time I create an exhibit or recreate this one.

The first thing I would alter is the advertising for the exhibit. I did not think to indicate that it was a free exhibit on the flyer. That might have enticed more people to attend. Secondly, whether it was the flyer text or word of mouth, many people didn't understand that the exhibit was up for three weeks. They did not seem to realize that they could have gone at any time during the early part of November. Many assumed it was just on the 9th (the day of the wine and cheese social) that the exhibit was up.

Jackie Walker had asked me to send her a flyer about the exhibit. Channel 4 had covered a few of the Zonta Centennial events in the fall of 2019, though, I never got a reply from her, nor did I hear anything on the news about it. If I had thought of it sooner, I would have sent in my flyer to the events page of the local news stations. I could have even advertised in the paper and other news stations for free. There are various sites and radio stations that I had advertised on for a charity, but it did not cross my mind to do so for the exhibit.

Now that I think about it, it would have been beneficial to post the event to Buffalo State's Facebook page and the museum studies' Facebook page. Setting flyers throughout the student union and campus library would have helped spread the news and share it to groups of people other than those in the History and Social Studies Education Department.

Since the bulk of the artifacts presented at the exhibit came from The Buffalo History Museum, it would have been a good idea to post a flyer at their facility. They may have enjoyed seeing what was being done with the research on their collections. Subsequently, The Buffalo Public Library and UB have their own Zonta Collection. They, too, may have enjoyed an invitation to see what had come out of researching Zonta material.

The day I met with Chris Kelly at the museum was the day I got accepted to have the exhibit there. On that day I should have been prepared to take measurements, instead of waiting until three weeks from the opening date of the exhibition. This was poor planning on my part. By measuring and drawing the layout that day, it could have saved me time. Besides, I could have better prepared what size panels would have better fit the space. What I was initially planning for the layout did not end up entirely working out. Eight of the larger signs were just enough to fit on the wall, not ten like initially planned. No sized poster that I had printed fit perfectly into the flat-display cases. Seeing how tall the triangular cases were ahead of time would have given me a better idea as to what size panel to place in there. The layout of the posters could have been laid vertically instead of horizontally.

Some other changes would be made for the next time. When the hall was measured, I had forgotten about the height of the walls. I thought that doing so would have helped to place posters better for the average guest's eye level. I came to find out (as I was setting up the exhibit) that the floor in the exhibit space was uneven. An uneven floor is something I wish I would have realized ahead of time. The unevenness caused some troubles in hanging the panels at the same level. Therefore, we relied on our vision to help us make sure all eight large panels measured up height-wise. With that, the use of a level would have also been helpful.

Changes, too, would have been made in the printing process. Though I liked the labels I made, they were not perfect. Having a red background for them was a nice touch. I stuck with the same font found in the poster text. The labels in the cases being 3D helped to make things pop and not look so stagnate. Though you could tell, they were homemade. Next time getting a quote and seeing options for having a company print them might be a better option in terms of presentation.

Some of the prints done at home were fine, however, others, such as the photographs, were not. I had those images printed at OfficeMax. I will never again do so. They had no worker who could print them on the larger better machines. Nor did they have any cardstock paper. Besides, they were overly expensive. The UPS Store does a beautiful job with prints. They are friendly and helpful. Their prices are reasonable, and they print on cardstock. Next time I would go to them and make sure I get the prints done early enough. Since the images were printed on regular paper, laying down for three weeks in a case caused the edges to curl up. The curled edges made it hard for the guests to see and examine the images properly.

The printing of the posters would be a case for future changes. There was a miscommunication on the printer's part with what sizes I wanted and what sizes they could print. Creating the digital posters sooner than when I did might have given me more time in the end to find another printer to get the sizes I wanted. Creating digital posters before looking up quotes might have been a better idea, creating less stress, allowing more time to shop around, and more time to make some changes.

For the social event, only a few minor changes came to mind. Water was the first one; there was just wine offered. Through correspondence with the museum, it was unclear if I had to set up tables for the event or if the museum would do so. It turns out that I had to do so. Since I

had to, and since it was just me, it took time away from me setting up the food trays. Also, it would have been beneficial to know how many tables the museum had for use and if they had tablecloths. Thankfully they had just enough on hand. Regrettably, I was unable to take images of guests touring the exhibit. Lastly, it is a personal preference to have had soft instrumental music playing during this time. Maybe music from the early 1900s or even songs throughout the decades would have been sweet to play in the background softly. It would have set a pleasant mood and tied in the theme of changing decades.

All in all, the entire exhibit *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership* was well done. For my first time around with creating and presenting an exhibition, there were not too many significant issues that I would have changed. The exhibit got its message across to guests. Guests ended up learning information about some marvelous women overshadowed in history. They also learned of the hidden gem that is Zonta International and a new piece to Buffalo's history. Many of the Zontians learned more, rather new information on the very club they joined. It was beautiful to have been a part of the SUNY Buffalo State Museum Studies Program and to have been able to learn so much on this indispensable women's service organization.

Part Nine: Looking to the Future

While my research on the club for school has drawn to an end with the creation of my exhibit (*Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership*) and this thesis paper, it has not entirely faltered. This research topic and my connectedness to the club may lead me to furtherer research. The Buffalo Public Library and the archives department at The University of Buffalo have an extensive collection of ZI material. These are sources in which I have barely looked through. All the research I compiled, studied, and by using other research avenues, this may lead me to write a book.

The vast amount of Zontians I had met were unaware of the Zonta collection of documents, images, and memorabilia compiled by Mrs. Margaret Beach a few decades ago. Artifacts donated to The Public Library and UB came from the Zonta Club of Buffalo themselves in the mid-1990s. Another powerful aspect for this thesis paper and the *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership* exhibit is that a majority of the research did not come from those two establishments. This paper puts The Buffalo History Museum and The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection on the map. It paves the way for Zontians to have a new avenue and sources for research. Next year the club will still be celebrating its 100th birthday. A time capsule is purchased, and artifacts to place inside are being collected. My exhibit brochure and flyer are two possible items Zontians were debating putting inside the time capsule. The Buffalo club can now look into The Buffalo History Museum's collection for help and information to place inside the capsule as well.

This thesis paper and the exhibit do not solely focus on Zonta Founder Miss Marian de Forest. She and her efforts are presented through the continued work of the club and its members

over the decades. Not many Zontians outside of District 4 knew of Marian's importance to ZI. It is a sad but true reality. Looking to the future, there is hope for individuals and Zontians to learn and understand their importance and the powerful impact of the club's creation. There have been some individuals who have used The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection to research Marian de Forest, but hopefully, more will come. Dr. Cody had said that it is tough to find images of Marian de Forest, let alone ones of her smiling. The Beach Collection contains several. After her death, a write up in a *Zontafax* detailed some of her life achievements: her vast importance to the creation of Zonta International.

As the decade passes, advocacy for women will continue to spread around the world. The education of women's history is an important one. By way of this thesis paper, the *Zonta International: Unveiling 100 Years of History & Membership* and the collection held at The Buffalo History Museum, women's studies can further grow and develop. As the advocacy for the importance of women's history flourishes, it is in the hopes that the creation of a physical National Women's History Museum will be constructed, and also that Zonta International's services to women over the course of 100 years may once again be exhibited for guests.

CONCLUSION

Marian de Forest held high hopes and dreams for her organization. Marian de Forest would be proud of her club's fruition. She would be thrilled to know that her work continues through the members of today. Zonta International helps women around the world build status and achievements.

Zonta is an Indian term that had been adopted by the club to create its name. Zonta stands for trustworthy and honest. Two words that perfectly define the club, its mission, and its members. The symbols used to form the Zonta International logo are also Indian symbols. The breakdown of the logo appears in **Image 32**. They stand for banding together for a purpose.³⁴ Just as the women of ZI have done in the past and still do today. The club brings women together to help the other women of the world flourish, to be safe, and to be free.

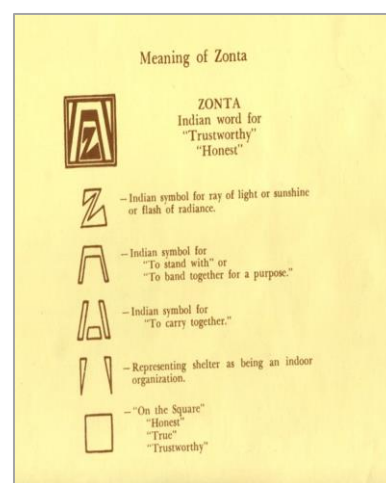


Image 32: Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

The road to empowering women has been a long one, though efforts have not been in vain. Countless women (and men) have advocated for the equality of all persons, no matter their race or gender. There have been non-profit organizations that have stood the test of time in fighting for the justice of women's rights and status in their professions.

Zonta International has encapsulated the history of Buffalo, NY, and of the past [and present] women's movements. It is a club with 100 years of global community service and strides in empowering women. The club always looks for new members. Through Zonta's efforts,

³⁴ Zonta Club of Buffalo. (N/A). *Meaning of Zonta*. Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo History Museum. Print.

women around the world can unite and become empowered. Marian de Forest left a beautiful note to fellow and future Zontian. This note can be seen on **Image 33** (negative #58049.1) below taken by Howard Beach.

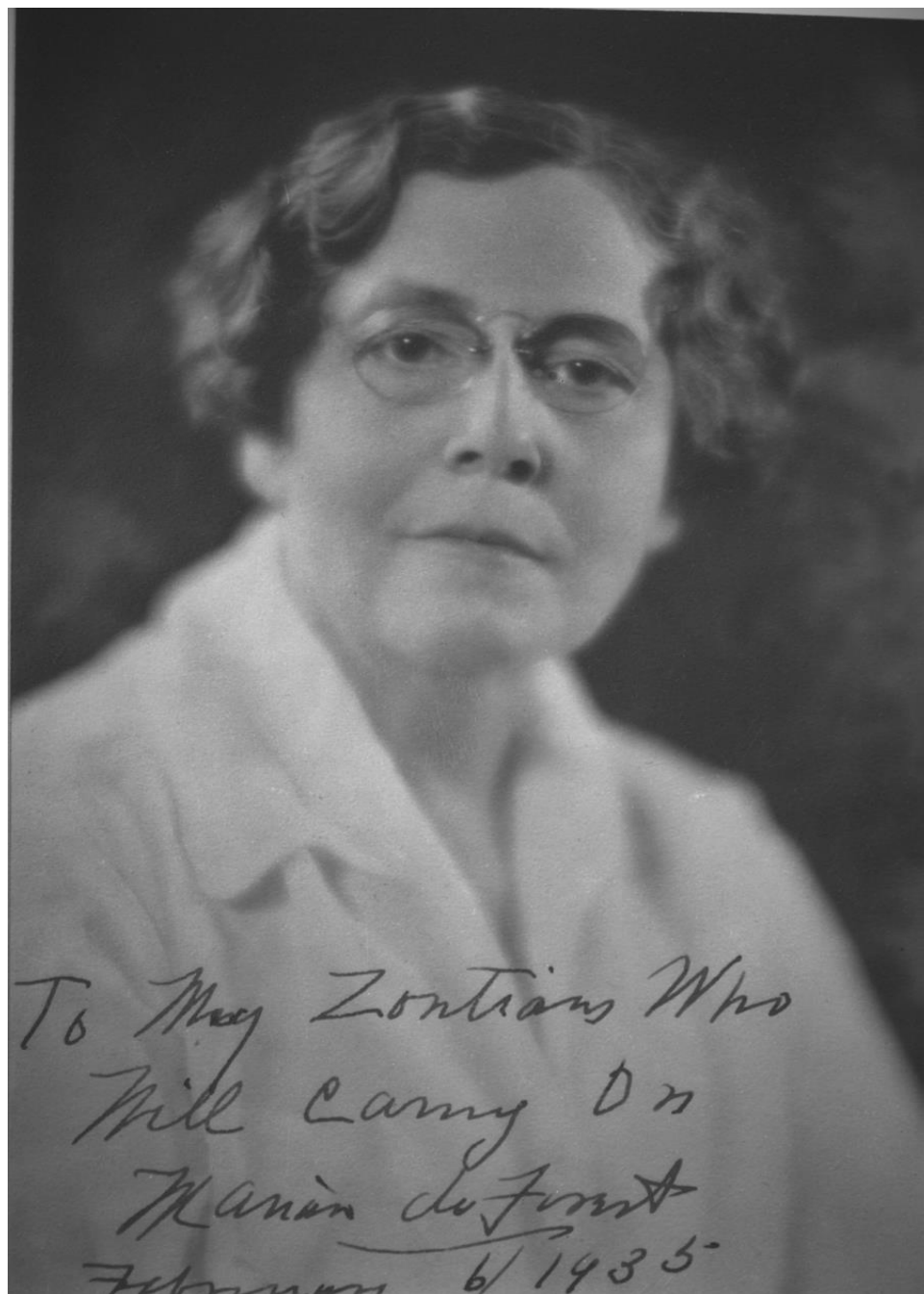


Image 33: Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

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