

Woman's Club

History of the Lake Hamilton Woman's Club

(Source: Woman's Club Centennial Calendar)

It all started with a group of ladies sitting on the porch of the hotel and deciding to go to the new unoccupied school building to clean up after the construction. Afterwards, they discussed forming a service club. Their first meeting was in February 1915 and more ladies joined. For years they met at the homes of members and later at the Community Club of Lake Hamilton's 1924 clubhouse. When that group disbanded, the Woman's Club bought the building and paid off the mortgage in 1941.

Newcomers to town were treated with yeast starter for bread and an invitation to join the club. Mrs. Ramsay, the 1st president, proclaimed there were more pianos per acre than any other section, and they had enough talent to give varied programs. Reading of poetry or literature was given as well as piano or voice selections. The ladies soon filled their days volunteering in the school cafeteria, funding part of the cafeteria equipment plus buying screens for the school room, and paying for sidewalks from the Depot to Nelson St. Later they formed a park committee to beautify the areas near the bandstand first called The Idle Hour Pavilion and later The Rest Room. In 1919 they decided to pay their bills by check only with dues staying at \$1.00 per year. The club monetarily helped various town projects. A bathhouse was built by the club for the local swimming area at Lake Gordon.

Architect B.C. Bonfoey who also designed the old Tampa City Hall and the Cuban Club in Ybor City designed the buildings at 85 Omaha. Some of the community club members were also Woman's Club members having their first meeting on October 10, 1924, in front of the parlor while a Men's group met in the back. In 1927, Mrs Nichols gave the club 200 books for a town library which grew to 1400 books by 1929. Those who grew up in the town remember the women's club building being the center of the community for entertainment, dance lessons, card parties, and other social events before television. Talented winter visitors would often put on a magic show or concert for the town. A stage was part of the decor on the East wall. During the two world wars and other conflicts the members supported troops and country.

The clubhouse offers rentals of non-alcoholic events by the public with funds going toward the club's yearly charities. Reasonable rates are maintained in order to offer the building to the

public. In 2007, the building was professionally decorated and upgraded with the help of Roger Knaus and talents of members who did most of the work. elections are held in the building as well as wedding receptions, church banquets, bridal and baby showers.

For Rental Information, Contact Paula McCardle at 863-242-3080 and please leave a message. Follow on [Facebook](#).