Finding aid to the Mizpah Club Records 1883-1954 SFH 547

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San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library
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Title: Mizpah Club Records  
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Contributing Institution: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library  
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Abstract: The Mizpah Club was a small San Francisco women's group dedicated to helping the poor and needy of the city. The club's main activity consisted of a group sewing circle and pledging small amounts of cash donations to emergency aid to the poor. The collection consists of minutes, financial records, scrapbooks and a treasures bag.  

Physical Location: The collection is stored onsite.  
Language of Materials: Collection materials are in English.  

Conditions Governing Access  
The collection is available for use during San Francisco History Center hours, with photographs available during Photo Desk hours. Collections that are stored offsite should be requested 48 hours in advance.  

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Preferred Citation  
[Identification of item], Mizpah Club Records (SFH 547), San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.  

Provenance  
Purchase.  

Administrative History  
The Mizpah Club was a small San Francisco women's group dedicated to helping the poor and needy of the city. The Club's inaugural meeting with its five founding members, was held on February 14, 1883. The club's main activity consisted of a group sewing circle at its club headquarters (on Clay Street), and pledging small amounts of cash donations (gifts or from the Club's treasurer) to emergency aid to the poor. Sewing was central to their mission. In addition to other sewing projects, the club also sewed layettes for babies whose mothers could not afford to provide them. Each layette included a large crib blanket, two or three smaller blankets, three gowns, three jackets, three kimonos, four shirts, three dozen diapers and also booties and caps.  

Scope and Content  
The Mizpah Club was a small San Francisco women's group dedicated to helping the poor and needy of the city. The collection consists of minutes, financial records, scrapbooks and a treasures bag.  

Arrangement  
The collection is arranged in 4 series: Series 1: Minutes; Series 2: Financial Accounts; Series 3: Scrapbooks; Series 4: Artifacts.  

Subjects and Indexing Terms  
Charities -- California -- San Francisco.  
San Francisco (Calif.) -- History.  
Sewing -- San Francisco, Calif.  
Women -- Societies and clubs -- California -- San Francisco.  

Series 1 Minutes
Box 1

Minutes, Includes Constitution 1883-1885
Scope and Contents
The first record book of the Mizpah Club followed by the "First Minutes of the Mizpah Club," with five members in attendance, and another three who were not in attendance.

Box 1

Minutes January 1892-1895
Scope and Contents
Extensive minute notes on activities and expenditures.
A sample of the text: "Mrs. Breckenfeld sent the case of Mrs Ward to Mrs Bertz, who visited her and found her in great distress, suffering from sciatica, and at present, not able to do any work. She has two children, a girl of 16 years, and a boy of 13 years. The girl wished a situation as nurse maid. Mrs Bertz kindly interested herself in getting a place for the boy and thought 'Mr King of the California Hotel, could give him employment.' The Ladies decided to assist Mrs Ward to the amount of $2.50 which was given to Mrs. Bertz for that purpose" (1/25/1892).

Box 1

Minutes January 1921-October 1921
Scope and Contents
Extensive minute notes on activities and expenditures.
A sample of the text: "Before the regular business meeting Miss Wolf of the Near East Relief organization gave an address on the dreadful and pitiful condition of the Armenian children and how they are looking toward America for support. Miss World showed pictures of these starving little ones, which spoke more eloquently than words of their deplorable state. The Near East Relief is the only organization which offers promises of food, shelter, clothing, etc. for these little unfortunates. They have appealed for help from the people of the United States. Miss Wolf left a book entitled the 'Life of a Child' which explains that $60 will save the life of a child for one year" (4/4/21).

Box 1

Secretary's Notes 1899-1900
Scope and Contents
Minutes and book-keeping information (e.g., dues, expenditures) as recorded during the meetings, later to be written in a more formal style for the Official Minutes.

Series 2 Financial Accounts

Box 1

A Record of Charities 1892-1900
Scope and Contents
Includes notation of people visited by Club members, information on membership at various times (e.g., names, addresses), families assisted, and items created (e.g., aprons, dresses, pillow cases, sheets).

Box 1

Treasurer [notes] 1892-1894, 1899
Scope and Contents
Dated entries on specific contributions — e.g., In the first two years, monthly contributions to the "Nursery for Homeless Children." Also numerous outlays for help with rent, food, clothing. With "reported visits" noted for 1899, and also Correspondence for these six years.

Box 1

San Francisco Savings Union Bank Balance Book 1909-1916
Scope and Contents

Series 3 Scrapbooks

Scope and Contents
Scrapbooks provide documentation of activities from the center of the Depression, through World War II, and then post-War relief. The letters show the group provided services to a variety of relief organizations in San Francisco during WWII.
Series 3 Scrapbooks

box 1 1917-1945
Scope and Contents
Includes certificates, newspaper clippings, photographs, cards, typed carbons of news releases, correspondence, and a small scrapbook assembled by officer on the Club's 50 anniversary fête in 1933.

box 1 1900, 1948-1954
Scope and Contents
Scrapbook includes material documenting activities of the Club, including: newspapers clipping and articles; cards of various sorts; photographs; and correspondence, mostly from various organizations regarding specific donations. The assembler scattered throughout the book pasted decorations, such as die-cut floral designs. Tipped to the inside rear cover is an original document, "Mizpah Charity Club/ Report of Secretary for year ending Jan. 15, 1900."

Series 4 Artifacts

box 1 Collection Bag 1895
Scope and Contents
Blue-cloth bag, with inner flannel lining, bag with string tie at the top. "Mizpah" embroidered on one side and "1895" on the other side.