

# WOMEN'S GROUPS, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS IN MURFREESBORO, TN

## A RESOURCE GUIDE

### INTRODUCTION

This project is an initial resource guide to women's groups, clubs, and organizations in Murfreesboro, TN, largely drawn from nine archival collections and several internet sources. It provides information about each group's founding, membership criteria, and mission. It also indicates where additional information can be found. The guide covers the period of 1910-2018.

This guide is by no means an exhaustive list. It covers only a small portion of women's groups in Murfreesboro and is intended to act as a "jumping off" point for future researchers to become acquainted with women's histories in the city. As this is the first step in creating a collective documentation of these groups, there are several categories that have yet to be researched in depth and require more attention in future additions.



### CONTENTS

The Business and Professional Women's Club	2	The Junior League	4
Black Women for Tennessee	2	Kappa Tau Sigma	4
The Charity Circle	2	The Little Gardens Club	5
The Craddock Study Club	3	Oaklands Association	5
The Daughters of the Revolution	3	Pi Nu Omega	5
The Frances Bohannon Music Club	3	The Rutherford Cable	6
The Garden Club	4	The Woman's Club	6

## The Business and Professional Women's Club



**Founded:** Officially chartered on January 16, 1937.

**Mission:** To promote professional advancement for women in the workplace and development of their individual skills.

**Meetings:** According to their initial set of bylaws, meetings were held at the Woman's Club on the first Friday of each month at 6 pm. Regular dues were \$5, with a 25 ¢ fee for late national dues.

**Events:** Holding candy and rummage sales, food and clothing drives, and sponsoring local Boy and Girl Scout Troops.

Currently, their supervisory state chapter lobbies for legislative matters concerning their position on different political issues as well as maintain their 'Aspiring Leaders of Tomorrow' scholarship for women between the ages of 18-35 who are enrolled in any form of higher education.

Primary Source Materials:

-The Albert Gore Research Center.

Additional Information:

-Bpwtm.org.

-*The Achiever*, the BPW of TN's monthly newsletter.

## Black Women for Tennessee



**Founded:** June 6, 2018. BWTN was a coalition started by over 300 African American women in partnership with the Equity Alliance, an African American advocacy group.

**Mission:** To promote greater voter registration and participation and ensure that minority communities have an equal voice in their governments.

**Events:** Partnering with the Equity Alliance to combat voter disenfranchisement with their "Souls to the Polls" movement to promote voting involvement along with various other organizations across the state.

Additional Information:

-Theequityalliance.org/blackwomenfortn.



## The Charity Circle

**Founded:** October 1910 with 26 founding members.

**Mission:** To serve the poor and needy and advocate for greater education measures, temperance, and women's suffrage.

**Meetings:** During the 1960s the CC met at 219 E. Clark Blvd., then

moved to the First Presbyterian Church at 210 N. Spring St. in 1967.

**Events:** Hosting holiday caroling parties, annual 'Duck Ball' Parties to raise money for service projects, and running the Circle Day Care Center that was started in 1967 at 216 N. Spring St.

The Circle Day Care

Center program was tailored to parent schedules and fees were measured based on income levels .

Primary Source Materials:

-The Albert Gore Research Center.

Additional Information:

-Charitycirclemurboro.com.

## The Craddock Study Club

Founded: 1926. The CSC's name was inspired by local author Mary Noailles Murfree who published under the pen name 'Charles Egbert Craddock.'

Mission: "The mutual improvement and pleasure of its members."

Meetings: Meetings were held every other Saturday, sometimes at the home of found member Nancy Gum Rion at 330 E. Lytle St. At first meet-

ings had several speakers but eventually moved to one that would present her given materials for study and discussion.

Membership in the club was limited to a maximum of 20 members.

Work: Maintaining the Cuma Bell Scholarship Fund started in 1943.

### Primary Source Materials:

-The Albert Gore Research Center.



## Daughters of the Revolution (Murfree Chapter)

Founded: 25 April 1910.

Mission: "... to perpetuate the memory and spirit of the men and women who achieved American Independence... to carry out the injunction of Washington in his farewell address to the American people... to cherish, maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom, to foster true patriotism and love of country, and to aid in securing for mankind

all the blessings of liberty."

Meetings: meetings were held on the third Friday of each month from September to June, with an annual meeting to elect officers held in May. Meetings were usually held at the Stones River Country Club, the Woman's Club, and various member homes.

Membership is open

to any woman over the age of 18 with direct relation to any man or woman who served in some capacity in the military during the Revolution or aided the patriot cause "with unfailing loyalty."

### Primary Source Materials:

-The Rutherford County Archives.

### Additional Information:

-Tndar.org.



## The Frances Bohannon Music Club

Founded: 1924. The FBMC was named after Frances Bohannon, a popular piano teacher at the Tennessee College for Women.

Mission: The appreciation of classical music. Membership is open both for performers as well as anyone with a passion for music.

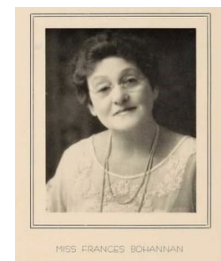
Events: Since 1928, the FBMC has hosted a community recital of William Frederick Handel's *Messiah*, along with many other recitals that are open to the public.

In 1935, the FBMC hosted over 500 members from the Tennessee Federation of Music Clubs (a co-educational group) for a 4-day gather-

ing.

### Primary Source Materials:

-The Albert Gore Research Center.



O Lord, and Father of all mankind, in every work of creation on / this flowering earth I see the handiwork of a Master Gardner, / and I believe His hand to be divine.

### The Garden Club

Founded: 1939.

Mission: "To make Murfreesboro the city beautiful and keep it beautiful." The Gc also adopted Edgar E. McAdoo's poem 'Gardener's Creed' as their accompanying motto.

Meetings: Meetings were held on the second Wednesday of every month at 3 pm; the first meeting was held at the Woman's Club by Mrs.

E.C. Holloway, Mrs. Boyd Williams, and Mrs. JJ Edwards. Meetings had varying themes according to the season and any holidays that were near.

Events: They frequently held group picnics in addition to many city-wide beautification projects. They partnered with other gardening organizations, including the National Federation of Garden Clubs, the Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs, and the Rutherford

County Council of Garden Clubs.

Primary Source Material:

-The Rutherford County Archives.

### The Junior League

Founded: 10 May 1992 with 24 charter members.

Mission: "An organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable. "

Meetings: Generally held on

the second Monday of each month from September-May. Annual dues are \$225 and new member fees are \$300.

Work: This chapter focuses on helping at-risk women and children, educational outreach, and promoting a healthier quality of life.

Additional Information:

-Jlmonline.org/whatwedo.



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MURFREESBORO

### Kappa Tau Sigma

Founded: 2008 by 5 charter members. They are the alumnae group for the local chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. at MTSU.

Mission: "It is the mission of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. to enhance the quality of life for women and their families in the U.S. and globally through community ser-

vice, civil, and social action. Our goal is to achieve greater progress in the areas of education, health awareness, and leadership development. Our members, affiliates, staff, and community partners work to create and support initiatives that align with our vision."

Work: Blanket and gift basket donations, community

youth outreach, breast cancer awareness, and scholarship luncheons for aspiring students. They also participated in Black Women for Tennessee's June 2018 gathering at the capitol.

Additional Information:

-Sgrho1922.Org/SGRho/.About\_us.



## The Little Gardens Club

**Founded:** 1936. The LGC claims to be the oldest gardening club in the city. Their name was inspired by all members having small gardens at their homes.

**Mission:** To share a passion for gardening and give back to the community.

**Meetings:** Meetings were usually held once a month and concluded by 2-3 pm due to many members having children

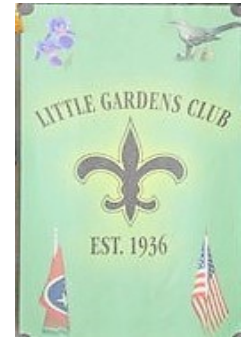
that were school age; according to 2012 regulations they were held on the first Friday of each month from March-December, often at the Stones River Country Club. The first meeting was held at the home of Mrs. David Goldstein on E. Main St. Meetings had varying themes according to the season and any holidays that were near.

**Work:** Aside from commu-

nity beautification projects, in the 1940s and 1950s the LGC held their "Tiny Tot Town" on the 900 block of E. Lytle St. The "Tiny Tot Town" was a play area set up during the summer for children of working parents that gave them supervised exercise and activity.

**Primary Source Material:**

-The Rutherford County Archives.



## Oaklands Association

**Founded:** 1959 by a group of women seeking to preserve the Oaklands Mansion, built in 1815 by Dr. James Maney and Sally Murfree Maney at 900 Maney Ave.

**Mission:** "... to preserve its local history and inspire an appreciation of Oakland's unique past, and to enhance our community's quality of life."

**Work:** Maintaining the Oaklands grounds and using the mansion both as a museum and event space.

**Additional Information:**

-Oaklandsmansion.org/history-of-oaklands.

- Battlefields.org/visit/heritage-sites/oaklands-historic-house-museum.



## Pi Nu Omega

**Founded:** 1986 by 16 charter members. They are the alumnae group for the local chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. at MTSU.

**Mission:** "To cultivate and encourage high scholastics and ethical standards, to promote unity and friendship among college women, to study and help alleviate problems con-

cerning girls and women in order to improve their social stature, to maintain a progressive interest in college life, and to be of service to all mankind."

**Events:** Since 2000 PNO has held their "Taste of AKA" picnic each summer. The picnic has entertainment and food and is open to the public, with any proceeds benefiting

their 'Ivy Enrichment Fund' scholarship for local students wishing to pursue higher education. They also participated in Black Women for Tennessee's June 2018 gathering at the capitol.

**Additional Information:**

-Aka1908.com/about.





## The Rutherford Cable

Founded: 2009.

Mission: Professional advancement and networking opportunities.

Meetings: Held monthly; membership level is dependent on financial status, with the most basic form having an annual fee of \$200. Membership fees include some costs for different events, access to an online directory of business contacts, and promotional posting opportunities. Meetings are

all intended to develop resources for women in the workplaces and foster mentorships between older and younger members both personally and professionally. The most basic membership level costs \$200 for a 1 year period.

Additional Information:

-[Rutherfordcable.com/about/mission](http://Rutherfordcable.com/about/mission).

## The Woman's Club

Founded: 22 July 1916.

Mission: "... to aid and encourage the social recreation, literary culture, and moral, intellectual and social development of its members, and to promote the moral, intellectual, and social improvement of the community and to take part in its philanthropic work."

Meetings: Held at 221 E. College St at the historic

Baskette House, purchased in 1916. In the early years, membership included an initiation fee of \$10 used to pay off property debt as well as a \$5 annual fee.

Work: Various community service projects, fundraising for student scholarships, and literary and cultural appreciation groups. In 1887 the WC began operating what was the city's first lending

library until the Linebaugh Library was built in 1948.

Primary Source Materials:

-The Albert Gore Research Center

Additional Information:

[Womansclubmurfreeboro.org/history](http://Womansclubmurfreeboro.org/history).





## CONTACT INFORMATION

### **Marley Abbott**

Graduate Research Assistant,  
The Albert Gore Research Center

mca3r@mtmail.mtsu.edu

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank both Dr. Norkunas as well as my classmates for being a constant source of support throughout my research process.

To both Sarah Calise and Donna Baker at the Albert Gore Research Center; without them, I would not have been able to progress as much as I did and would have been lost.

To both Hillary Borders and John Lodi at the Rutherford County Archives; their assistance also helped give me a basic history of the Rutherford County area, without which I would not have been able to do these groups justice.

Lastly, I would like any future researchers for using this guide to further document the work that the women of Murfreesboro have done.

[The public history projects created by Dr. Martha Norkunas and her students are designed to shed new light on the Tennessee and American past by researching, interpreting and presenting the histories of communities whose voices have often been omitted from the historical record. Students engage in historical and cultural research and in-depth oral history interviews to create innovative interpretive projects for historic sites, museums, and community organizations. For more information please contact Dr. Martha Norkunas, [Martha.Norkunas@mtsu.edu](mailto:Martha.Norkunas@mtsu.edu).]