

History of Byromville Woman's Club

(From 1918–1970)

In October 1918 a group of ladies met at the school auditorium to organize a club to promote a more friendly relationship between parents and teachers and to work for the upbuilding of the school and community. Mrs. Minnie McDonold was the organizer and suggested the name *School Improvement Club* which was adopted by the club.

Mrs. W. J. Page had the honor of being the first president with Mrs. C. W. McKenzie, Secretary. Mrs. Page served a number of months and resigned. Mrs. W. R. Groves was chosen to fill her place. It was during Mrs. Groves' administration that we voted to join the Dooly County Federated Clubs. On October 1, 1920 we entertained the County Federation. Mrs. Groves presided at the morning sessions and Mrs. S. P. Adams, President of Dooly Co. Clubs, presided at the afternoon session. There were 80 present at this meeting, among the number being Mrs. Louise Hayes, President of the Federated Clubs of Georgia.

In 1921 Mrs. J. H. Page was elected president. It was during this administration that monthly literary meetings were voted being held at the homes of the members. Mrs. J. O. Roberts made out the programs for the year.

Mrs. W. M. Dykes followed Mrs. Page and had such a successful administration in 1922 that she was re-elected for 1923 serving several months when she resigned—the family moving to Climax. Mrs. J. D. Lester, Vice-President filled her unexpired term. In appreciation of her untiring efforts the Club gave her a farewell party at the home of Mrs. E. B. Davis.

In 1924 Mrs. Howard Hill was chosen President. All the while the club was growing in number and achievements. Mrs. Hill managed the affairs so skillfully that she was chosen to succeed herself in 1925.

Mrs. E. B. Davis was President in 1926 and 1927, during which time many improvements were made—a park was laid off in the public square, memorial trees, flowers and grass planted and new curtains were purchased for the school stage.

In 1928 Mrs. A. J. Shirah was elected president and during this administration seats for the school auditorium were bought and paid for. It was a matter of deep regret that Mrs. Shirah had to resign due to illness. Mrs. J. M. Josey ably filled her unexpired term.

In 1929 during the presidency of Mrs. J. H. Page, the Club was represented in the flag contest by Miss Alma Groves who won the district and state contests and later won nationwide over 250,000 contestants. Miss Groves was awarded a four month trip around the world. The club voted to take care of all expenses of the reception given in her honor at the home of Mrs. E. B. Davis.

Mrs. J. E. Holland was president in 1932 and 1933. Work continued on school projects .

Mrs. J. H. Page (aka Maggie L. Page) was president in 1934 and 1935. Mrs. Holland filled her unexpired term.

In 1936 Mrs. W. R. Groves became president. In January of that year the club voted to build a club house. A house and lots were bought for \$75, and WPA labor was acquired for renovation. The club met in its new home the day after Thanksgiving in 1937. In 1940, after four years of hard work and donations by friends the debt was canceled. It stands as a beautiful and useful monument to the efforts of the women of the community.

Mrs. Groves remained president until 1944 when Mrs. Herbert Saliba was elected. During the war years, the club members knitted sweaters, helmets and scarves, helped Red Cross, Cancer, War Fund Drives, Polio, Christmas Seals and Clinics for preschool children. During this period between 1944 and 1952 under the leadership of Mrs. Saliba, work was done on the club house—bathroom fixtures, stove, refrigerator, cooking utensils, dishes, silverware, linoleum, concrete steps. The large mirror was bought with \$100 given by Johnny Byrom. New drapes and cornices were installed. All the time the club was helping the school in various ways. In 1950, under the leadership of Mrs Saliba, the club entered “The Tree of Life” as an attractive and meaningful exhibit at the Dooly County Fair. The exhibit won the grand prize of \$50. It also took the Blue Ribbon and \$20 prize in The Woman’s Organizational exhibits.

In 1952, the club regretfully accepted Mrs. Saliba’s resignation. The unexpired term was ably filled by Mrs. O. W. Kitchens, Jr. Many interesting programs were rendered that year. Mrs. Kitchens was elected to fill this post again in 1953. As a dedicated leader, the club was prodded to think seriously about our country—the people, politics, religion, culture, literature—foreigners who have acquired U. S. citizenship—our country as a world power, and the role the United Nations plays in keeping world-wide peace.

Mrs. Robert Lytle served as the club’s president for the years 1954-55. The theme for the 50’s was *The Southern Woman—Her Place In This Changing World*. Club members were reminded that a woman’s place was no longer limited to the home and classroom and that she is finding fulfillment in civil defense, safety programs, movies, television; and that women are participating in the U.N. and holding responsible offices in the shaping and initiating of the laws of our land.

Mrs. Frank Lester was elected president in 1956. She served the club long and well from 1956–1961. Her five year term in office was a very difficult time and crucial period for our

community. The high school had just been lost to fire. Louisa was able and willing to rally our forces. Her efforts through the club were largely dedicated to rebuilding and refurbishing our school. The club contributed \$50 to the school for free lunches and provided a new piano for the auditorium.

Mrs. Herbert Page served as president of the club from 1962–1967. The first project completed under Mrs. Page's leadership was providing a badminton set for the fifth and sixth grades. Mrs. Frank Lester donated her piano to the club. The club purchased a badly needed freezer for the lunchroom. Song books were purchased for the club as well as new china and silver. The constitution was revised.

Mrs. Warren Taylor, assumed the role of president on September 20, 1968. It was this meeting that a plan was initiated to observe the club's 50th anniversary with a tea and open house on Sunday afternoon, May 18, 1969 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. During these months, the club house was completely renovated. Walls and woodwork were painted, floors refinished, new drapes and curtains for all the windows were installed, and a new tablecloth was purchased. Mrs. Joe Page gave a beautiful chandelier for the dining room. Mrs. John Broughton gave the club a lavabo. The club sent flowers in appreciation of it latest community asset, Rosewood Nursing Home.

Present to greet members and guests at the club's golden anniversary tea were nine club presidents and three charter members. The three charter members were Mrs. A. J. Shirah, Mrs. W. R. Groves and Mrs. James Josey, Sr. The nine past presidents were Mrs. W. R. Groves, Mrs. A. J. Shirah, Mrs. Howard Hill, Mrs. Herbert Saliba, Mrs. O. W. Kitchens, Jr., Mrs. Robert Lytle, Mrs. Frank Lester, Sr., Mrs. Herbert Page and current president Mrs. Warren Taylor. A total of 150 people attended the anniversary tea. The callers were members, friends and families who came to express appreciation for this group of women, past and present, who were all dedicated to doing good.

In 1970, the club voted to change its name to the *Byromville Woman's Club*.

Byromville Woman's Club Presidents

(Known as School Improvement Club 1918--1970)

1918--Present

<u>Service Years</u>	<u>Presidents</u>
1918	Minnie McDonald Smith
1918	Lily Page
1920	Sallie Mobly Groves
1921	Maggie Lytle Page
1922	Mrs. W. M. Dykes
1923	Effie Lester
1924	Ada Leah Harrison
1926-1927	Lucy Grace Davis
1928	Annie Mae Page Shirah
1928	Velma Byrd Josoy
1929-1931	Bronnie Hill Holland
1934-1935	Maggie Lytle Page
1935	Bronnie Hill Holland
1936-1944	Sallie Mobly Groves
1944-1952	Sarah Groves Saliba
1952-1953	Mary Rodgers Kitchens
1954-1955	Betty Lytle Collier
1956-1961	Louisa Lester
1962-1967	Josephine Smith Page
1968-1972	Elizabeth Taylor
1972-1975	Sarah Groves Saliba
1975-1981	Sally Saliba Averill
1981-1983	Phyllis Thompson
1983-1985	Mary Jo Page Jeter
1985-1987	Marion P. Page
1987-1991	Louisa Lester
1991-1993	Sara Woodruff
1993-1995	Sarah Hill Page
1995-1997	Elizabeth Taylor
1998-1999	Brenda Lockerman
2000-2001	Elizabeth Taylor
2001-2008	Rubye Gurr Griffin