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Shown in this photo from the Lycoming County Women's History Collection is the lobby in the YWCA.



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Shown in this photo from the Lycoming County Women's History Collection is the dining room in the YWCA.

A woman's place is in the Y: Building a permanent home

(From Page E-1)

enjoyed parties and entertainments there during the year, and there were 162 meetings of community organizations and clubs held in the building.

World War I, the organization joined with YWs across the country to fulfill an obligation to the war effort, enlisting women in active war work programs. The Williamsport YW raised money for the European Relief Fund by sponsoring a "Hoover Meal," which emphasized a wheatless and meatless menu, and hosted "Invisible Guest" lunches with proceeds benefitting starving children in Europe.

A production of "All Aboard" in 1920, presented by the YWCA at the Majestic Theater, generated the enthusiasm typically associated with the YW's cultural contributions to the community. For this particular production, there was a talent committee headed by Mrs. Charles Noyes Tyndell, a chaperone committee with 20 members, as well as program, publicity, usher and ticket committees. All together there were about 50 women involved. The printed program for the event featured numerous pages of advertisements from local businesses including bakeries, milliners, Williamsport Mirror and Glass Co., Griggs' Coffee, Sweets Steel Co., the Park Hotel and pharmacists.

As early as 1920, the YW board began to discuss the need for a facility that would allow them to expand services. In 1925, this vision was formalized when J. Roman Way, chairman of the board of trustees, made an address at the annual meeting in which he defined the need for more suitable quarters. He listed significant reasons

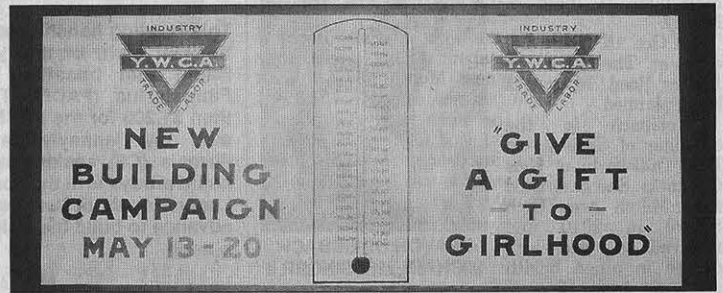


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Shown in this photo from the Lycoming County Women's History Collection is the YWCA campaign billboard.

such as, the present building was far too small to meet the growing demands of city girls, the number of clubs was increasing leading to a need for more club rooms, domestic science programming was required to meet the need for training in home making, cheap boarding houses were demoralizing to women, city girls' activities and dormitory life should be kept separate, girls in search of a heated space should be attracted to a safe place rather than to questionable places of entertainment, traveling women needed places of protection and friendship, a meeting space for many activities for all classes of girls was needed and "girls need to work off a kind of energy which if not rightly directed, may prove disastrous."

Consideration of available properties focused on what would be a suitable location. The board settled on the Mahlon Fisher property, across from the former Park Hotel, now Park Place, available at a cost of \$30,000.

The population center of the city was moving toward Maynard Street, and the west end was closer to work locations for the women residents. There were few restaurants in this area, so a YW cafeteria would be a welcome addition. A railway stop nearby would be convenient for women

travelers, and the close proximity of the high school would encourage young girls to participate in youth activities and organizations. The mansion built by Eber Culver in 1861 on the property would need to be demolished to make way for this expansion.

As the campaign to raise \$450,000 began, various themed letters encouraged donations for this "noble cause." "Message 1" initiated the slogan "Do for our girls what we've done for our boys," telling citizens that "The spirit of a city never rises above the spirit of her women." The slogan was submitted by a student contest winner from the Williamsport school district.

"Message 2" informed people that Williamsport was looked upon as a modern city, but the YWCA building did not fit with that description.

"Message 3" stated that 300 men and women were giving of their time to support this building cause with house-to-house visitation.

Board chairman Way was quoted as saying, "It is impossible for me to give my money away; it always comes back ... in the case of the YWCA — to those who give, it will come back many fold in many ways in years to come."

In May of 1927, the campaign concluded with

a contribution by charter member Mrs. Timothy S. Clark of \$50,000.

For the first time, the YW could consider a facility that was not rented or renovated space.

On June 30, 1929, Mrs. H. W. Whitehead led the dedication service.

Throughout the planning, fundraising and construction process, the members of the board were adamant about maintaining normal YW activities and outreach. They believed firmly in the motto of the national YW: "I am come that they might have life and have it more abundantly."

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Williamsport Women

By MARY SIEMINSKI

A woman's place is in the Y Building a permanent home

By JANET McNEIL HURLBERT
Special to the Sun-Gazette

By 1920, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) was firmly established in Williamsport. The location at 58 E. Third St. offered safe and affordable housing, a cafeteria and day care.

A few years later, records show that there were six staff members, 119 women enrolled in educational classes, 116 enrolled in health education classes, plus many attending religious education classes and vesper services. About 1,000 people

(See A WOMAN'S, Page E-3)