

THE RUMMAGE ROOM

Recollections of Barbara Miller Co-Chairman 1964 - May 1979
Ruth Wright Co-Chairman 1964 - April 1985

Combined and edited by Betty Edgar Co-Chairman May 1979 -

The Rummage Room had its origins in the Women's Guild annual rummage sales. These were held at the church where almost every nook and cranny was used for display and selling; even the kitchen was used for a lunch of hamburgers and hot dogs cooked up there by the ministers, Dr. Daniels and Mr. Libby. The sales were gala affairs, eagerly looked forward to, and attended by large numbers. The line at the door was often five across and extended to Sound Beach Avenue.

Besides clothing and bric-a-brac, furniture was contributed for the sales; it was stored in the three car garage in the church parking lot. Before one sale rain was predicted, and, because the garage was full, a tent was rented. The tent became a regular feature of the sales.

Soon there were two sales a year -- spring and fall -- and collecting for the rummage sales became a year-round job. The room across from the church office became known as the "rummage room" as that is where the things were collected. Ruth Cadley, Ruth Wright, and Barbara Miller sorted and boxed them; and then had the boxes taken across the street and stored in a barn owned by the church.

The routine for the sales was always the same: Monday set up, Tuesday price, Wednesday sale day, Thursday removal of the leftovers by Good Will or Salvation Army, and on Friday the church was made ready for Sunday.

After the spring sale in 1964, even though a great deal had been sold, there was a lot of merchandise left over. It was also known that the storage area could not be used in the future. The question of how best to handle the rummage sales arose. As Ruth Cadley and Ruth Wright had worked at the Greenwich Hospital Thrift Shop, the possibility of starting a similar project in Old Greenwich was seriously considered. Plans were soon underway. The old hardware store at 191 Sound Beach Avenue, with a rent of \$250. per month, was vacant. The Board was skeptical about the feasibility of a year-round store, but agreed to a six month trial. Martha Fingerle was president of the Women's Fellowship at this time and backed the whole idea completely and whole-heartedly. Our landlord, Demetri Odiseos, gave us the month of September free to set up.

Barbara Miller and Ruth Wright were Co-Chairmen of the Rummage Room project. September 1964 was a very busy month -- cleaning the store and basement (the present jewelry case was found there), and making other preparations. Shelves were built, and others that were not being used were moved from the church. Mr. Libby built the shoe rack and hat shelves. Some volunteers painted and others sorted merchandise coming in. Emily Lent provided the screen that separates the work room from the selling area; another friend donated the back work counter and our first refrigerator; and still another friend gave us the cash register.

The Rummage Room opened October 1, 1964 with the Reverend Francis Potter, the new senior minister, cutting the ribbon. On opening day, enough money was made to cover the rent for the trial period. The store was open all day on Thursday and Friday, and a half-day on Saturday. It was staffed completely with

volunteers. At the end of five months it was decided to ask the Fellowship Board for a paid manager, and to add Wednesday to the store hours. Peg Orem was our first paid worker. After three years she moved away, and Shirley Morrison was hired to take her place.

One of the interesting early episodes involved Mr. Tucker and his antique-filled house in Valhalla, New York. After getting acquainted with the Rummage Room, and bringing in some merchandise, he said one day that he wished to donate the contents of his house to us. The Wrights, Millers, Cadleys, Doswells, Morrisons and Streitmatters took on the job of emptying the house -- no easy task as it was stacked with boxes and barrels on top of one another, with only narrow passageways to get through--the collection of years. Many of his antiques were sold in the Rummage Room, but the quantity was so great that it was decided to have an auction at the church. There were over a thousand numbered lots, and some lots had many pieces: for example, a set of Haviland china of over a thousand pieces. The preview was Wednesday; the sale ran Thursday through Saturday, and a large amount of money was realized.

Since the opening of the Rummage Room in the fall of 1964, the hours of operation have gradually lengthened. As this occurred, another part-time manager was hired. Betty Wickham worked for a little less than three years until she moved to California. She was followed by Margaret Burton who served until she retired to Ohio at the end of 1978. In 1976, when the Rummage Room added Monday to its open days, Mary Streitmatter moved from serving as a volunteer to paid status. Shirley Morrison and Mary now share the managerial duties. They operate the Rummage Room on a daily basis, and work with customers and volunteers.

Our volunteers are indispensable. The Rummage Room could not operate without them. It is only because of the volunteers that the Rummage Room can turn over the amount of money it does to the benevolences of the Women's Fellowship.

Evening Guild's Unique Decorations Now On Display In GAZETTE Window



"First" Church Evening Guild members enjoy a coffee break from the pleasant chore of making unusual table decorations out of imitation fruit which they are selling to fulfill a monetary pledge to the church. One volunteer recently commented, "Of course there is plenty of gabbing, and that makes our workshop fun too!" In the picture, L. to R., are: Mrs. Donald Sleath, Mrs. Allan Colegrove, Mrs. Ralph Anderson, Mrs. Theodore Fox and Mrs. Mott Prudames.

—Photo by Cal Hood

Undoubtedly you have noticed (like literally hundreds of other OG and Riverside residents) those fascinating, unique table decorations, candlestick ornaments (bobeche) and other delightful little conversation pieces made of colorful imitation fruit and flowers now on display in the window at the Gazette office, 27 Arcadia Road.

Their sale is a fund-raising project by the Christmas Boutique Workshop of the First Congregational Church Evening Guild — and the display in the window of this newspaper has resulted in literally hundreds of orders being placed during the past fortnight for identical items, or custom-made variations on the same theme.

Asked to describe how the Evening Guild inaugurated this unusual project, Mrs. Harry Woodman, a member of the committee, submitted the following "answer":

"In January, Ida Prudames decided we (the Evening Guild) could do more interesting service in our once-a-month circle meetings and, at the same time, perhaps raise a little more mon-

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and a horticulture section, featuring October blooming flowers. monthly service group meetings Christian Science Churches will be held in members' homes. give a foundation of their day

First Church Evening Guild



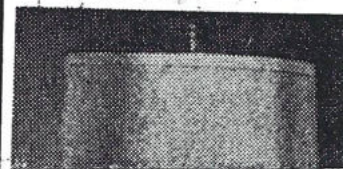
Officers of the very active Evening Guild of the First Congregational Church are pictured above. Seated, l-r, Mrs. Allan Colegrove, vice president and Mrs. Haven A. Knight, president. Standing, Mrs. Robert M. Lewis, recording secretary; Mrs. James Hinman, treasurer and Mrs. Clayton Johnson, corresponding secretary.—Staff Photo by Verderosa.

The service groups will meet as follows: Mrs. Earle Bragg and Mrs. Karl Allen, 9:30 a.m., the first Wednesday of the month; Mrs. Edward A. Coleman and Mrs. F. W. White, 11 a.m., the second Monday of the month; Mrs. Clark Whittemore and Mrs. James Pelham, 8 p.m., the second Monday of the month; and Mrs. George F. and Mrs. David Ficker, 8 p.m., the second Tuesday of the month.

Officers of the year are Mrs. Haven A. Knight, president; Mrs. Allan W. Colegrove, vice president; Mrs. James Hinman, treasurer; Mrs. Clayton C. Johnson, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. R. Miller Lewis, recording secretary.

Committee chairmen include Mrs. A. L. Ringquist, Jr., program; Mrs. Timothy Walker, program; Mrs. Theodore V. Fox, hospitality; Mrs. Donald Sleath, membership; Mrs. E. M.

**Craig's . . .
Fine Lamps**



SOCIETY

Evening Guild Benefit Aides



The Evening Guild of the First Congregational Church, Old Greenwich, will sponsor a marionette show and bake sale to be held Feb. 24 in Binney parish auditorium. Working toward the success of the event are, l-r: Mrs. George Fiske, ways and means; Mrs. James Hinman and Mrs. Bruce Benedict, bake sale co-chairman; Mrs. Paul Palmer, tickets; Mrs. Allan Colegrove, guild president. Absent from the picture, but also serving on the committee, Mrs. Howard Conley, refreshments. —Staff Photo.

Southern Debut

Radcliffe Honors Students

Greenwich girls, Miss R. ♦
to and Miss Eva
among those
for

Youth Orchestra Sets
Concert For Feb. 20

Women's Fellowship Of First Church



Board members of the Women's Fellowship of the First Congregational Church of Old Greenwich, grouped behind the president, Mrs. Charles F. Boudreau, are, l-r, treasurer, Mrs. Wendell Burton; corresponding secretary, Mrs. Alan W. Colegrove; assistant treasurer, Mrs. Frank Preucil, III. Not in the photo, recording secretary, Mrs. Curtis Carlson, and vice president, Mrs. Donald Swanson.

First Church Involves Men

Christian involvement at local, national and world levels is the stated purpose this year for the Women's Fellowship of the First Congregational Church, Old Greenwich. A significant and productive year lies ahead for the members of this organization.

Mrs. Charles F. Boudreau of Old Greenwich, president, hopes that the year's program will appeal to women of all ages and interests in the church and that busy hands and stimulated minds will allow the Fellowship to again successfully render service to church and community.

hip Plan World Levels

Fellowship will present a group of students from the Mulkerin School, who will perform Irish dances following a holiday luncheon.

Miss Jeanne Farrell, Commissioner of the Board of Social Services for Green-

First Congregational Church Women's Fellowship Installs Officers; Views Fashion Show



Women's Fellowship Board, Back Row L. to R. — Harriet Starr, Beverley Howlett, Marion White, Carolyn Colegrove, Betty Finney and Mary Ellyn Swanson; Front Row, L. to R. — Ruth White, Bernice Whittemore and Kitt Hobbs.

The installation of the officers of The Women's Fellowship of The First Congregational Church of Old Greenwich, took place at the May 16 meeting.

The officers for 1977-1978 are as follows — President, Bernice Whittemore; Vice-President, Kitt Hobbs; Recording Secretary, Ruth White; Corresponding Secretary, Marion White; Treasurer, Marie Preucil; Assistant Treasurer, Cornelia Veith; Allocations, Mary Ellyn Swanson; Program, Beverley Howlett; Publicity, Harriet Starr; Hospitality, Sally Jones, Lois MacDonald and Fran Humphrey; Membership Chairmen, Carolyn Colegrove, Betty Finney and Marilyn Cowles; Nominating Committee, Carol Farn.

Luncheon was served following the meeting. A fashion show took place after the luncheon and featured clothes from The Rumage Room on Sound Beach Ave., which is sponsored by The Women's Fellowship.

Women's Fellowship of First Church



Women's Fellowship Board. Seated, left to right, Ruth White, recording secretary; Bernice Whittemore, president; Ki Hobbs, vice president. Back row, left to right, Harriet Starr, former publicity chairman; Beverly Howlett, programs; Marion White, corresponding secretary; Carolyn Colegrove, membership; Betty Finney, membership; and Mary Ellyn Swanson, allocations.

1949 Rummage Sale at the Church (Pre-Rummage Room)





1956 Rummage Fashion Show at the Church
(Pre-Rummage Room)

