The Garden Forum of Greater Akron Collection
Special Collections – Akron-Summit County Public Library

ACCESSION #: 2008-3

ACQUISITION: Donated by Garden Forum of Greater Akron, c/o Mary Ann Ferguson-Rich, on February 1, 2008

ACCESS: Restricted access; materials fragile; access by request at Akron-Summit County Public Library’s Main Library Special Collections division only.

VOLUME: 39 scrapbooks, 33 binders, 32 ledger books, 21 boxes, two envelopes, 36 linear ft.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: The Garden Forum of Greater Akron was founded in 1932. Its purpose was to unite and foster collaboration between area garden clubs. It organized and facilitated several activities, including flower shows, and operated a Garden Center and a library in the O’Neil’s building in downtown Akron. The Garden Forum was also one of the groups associated with the opening of Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens in 1958, and has had close ties with Stan Hywet since.

SCOPE AND CONTENT: This collection consists of a large variety of documents related to the operations and activities of the Garden Forum, including meeting minutes, newsletters, budgets and other financial documents, scrapbooks with photos and clippings, various reports, and documents from flower shows and other events. It also includes a handwritten diary of the day-to-day operations of the Garden Center, 1938-1955.

ARRANGEMENT: This collection is organized into seven series, which are arranged roughly by subject or purpose of documents. Original order of the collection as presented by the donor has been maintained as much as possible, so there are many documents included in a series that are unrelated to the subject of the series. The researcher is encouraged to search thoroughly.

INVENTORY:

SERIES 1: Meeting minutes and corporation books

Subseries 1: Ledger books, 1932-2000 (32 books)
DESCRIPTIVE NOTE: These include minutes for several types of meetings, including regular member meetings, regular and called executive board meetings, and annual meetings. These handwritten records were often later transcribed by typewriter and typed copies may be found in Series 2.

Subseries 2: Corporation books, 1959-2006 (3 boxes, 22 binders, 1 envelope)
DESCRIPTIVE NOTE: These are in three-ring binders and include minutes for several types of meetings. Individual binders may be titled “Recording Secretary Minutes” or “Meeting Minutes.” Earlier corporation books (1959- c.1980) are mostly meeting minutes; later corporation books (c. 1980-2005) include many types of documents such as budgets and financial statements, correspondence, and reports of officers and events.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTE: This series also includes some flower show schedules and specimen and exhibit schedules. Yearbooks are small, handmade decorative books of Garden Forum member clubs
which include lists of officers and brief description of the year’s activities. Many later newsletters are also scattered among other series.

**SERIES 3:** Membership lists and officer reports/notebooks (2 boxes, 3 binders)

**SERIES 4:** Garden Center and Library documents (4 boxes)

**SERIES 5:** Events

- **Subseries 1:** Specimens and exhibits, 1983-2002 (1 box, 2 binders)
- **Subseries 2:** Flower shows, scattered years 1952-1995 (4 boxes, 3 binders, 1 envelope)
- **Subseries 3:** Table setting contests, scattered years 1936-1968 (1 box)
- **Subseries 4:** Other events: May Mart 1980-1981, Ameriflora 1992 (3 binders)

**SERIES 6:** Miscellaneous documents (1 box)
DESCRIPTIVE NOTE: This includes documents that do not fit into any of the above series, or are not dated. It also includes a copy of the organization’s bylaws and policy book from 1996.

**SERIES 7:** Scrapbooks and photo albums, 1920s-2000s (39 scrapbooks)
DESCRIPTIVE NOTE: Includes three scrapbooks kept by others: Federation Garden Club, c. 1925 - 1969; and two garden scrapbooks kept by an unidentified individual, c. 1931 – 1933.