

Mrs. James J. Faran  
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These are my notes on early days  
of the Dramatic Club. I can find  
no exact date of its founding, so  
suppose we consider it as  
of 1882 when the Lyceum began.

A village dramatic club preceded  
this, as the members were  
original Lyceum members perhaps its  
founding preceded that of the Lyceum.

When Gordon Miller said,  
last June, that we were "only 61  
years old" - I wonder where he  
got that information.

Please return this -  
A. L. Faran

Betty Richardson began it by bringing me the book of old Lyceum Dramatic Club programs and asking me to put something on the title page, <sup>stating</sup> when the club was founded and a short history of the organization. Then, at the 1952 annual meeting of the Glendale Lyceum Gordon Miller said, rather apologetically, that the Dramatic Club was "only 61" years old - and it was the 69th annual meeting for the Lyceum. I felt sure this was inaccurate for at least there was a lively group of people in Glendale staging plays before 1880 - and so far as I can ascertain the Lyceum founding must be in some way connected with this old dramatic club. Perhaps it is the same old question - which came first the egg or the chicken?

The Glendale Lyceum was established in 1883. On October 2 of that year Messrs. Samuel H. McMullin, George Shillito, Jr., Walter St. John Jones Alfred M. Allen, George K. Thompson, and Robert Clarke met at the latter's house and determined to establish the Glendale Lyceum. After several meetings a Constitution was adopted which stated that the purpose of the Lyceum was "to promote higher education, promote social and friendly relations among its members, and provide literary, musical, and social entertainment for them and for the residents of <sup>the Village of</sup> Glendale and its vicinity". The first meeting of the members (147 of them) was held November 3, 1883.

For the next nine years the Lyceum activities were carried on in the lower floor of the Town Hall. This is referred to in copies of the Monitor, published from 1887 -1893 by the Glendale School, as the "Lyceum Room". Here was a great collection of books, of natural history specimens including birds, "skillfully stuffed and mounted by Mr. Charles Dury", insect fossils from the Indian mounds around Glendale, minerals, and "marine specimens." Each January the Monitor published as a supplement the Annual Report of the Glendale Lyceum, so this is a matter of official record. Also there is a story in nearly every issue of the Monitor of some program put on by the Lyceum group - plays, lectures, musicales. <sup>By 1887</sup> They evidently had ~~was referred to as~~ <sup>regular</sup> informal monthly entertainment. But they also

GLENDALE LYCEUM

Started in 1883. They held meetings in the Town Hall, lower floor, until Feb 22, 1892. The cornerstone of the Lyceum Building was laid on July 4, 1891. There was an article in a Cincinnati paper 6/7/1896 .

Programme - May 4, 1888

"Ye collectiohof ye tunes as sung by Ye Olde time Folke - in Ye Lyceum Halle in Ye Towne of Glendale. Eventide Friday, May 14 , MDCCCLXXXIII.

Ye Head time-beater.....Tomedad Berry  
Ye Harpsichorder Dame Katharine Gould  
Ye Fiddler Daggett Allyn  
(See notes from Wm Gould (PP 4,5)

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A review of the "Glendale Ideals", of which there is a program in the Lyceum collection:

The Charleston Blues and the Black Huzzars under Captain Allen, military feature of the programme, were received with great enthusiasm. Indeed there was not a feature of the programme that was not excellent. The jokes were new and the voices capitally trained and the whole affair a complete success. The stage was very artistically decorated after designs by Miss Clara Newton. A frieze of Persian rugs encircled the wall and below this were fluted panels of orange and gold fastened by superb shields, one of them, in was whispered, being a gift from General Sherman to his niece Mrs. H.R. Probasco and "looted" for this occasion. The ushers were Chas. E. Gallagher, E.L. B. , Alfred Shepherd, Ben Keys. A large audience including Glendale's best known citizens and a gay party from Cincinnati among whom were Mr. and Mrs. Percy Procter, Mr. Morrison, Miss Morrison of Clifton, Mr. Tom Hanna and Miss Hanna, Miss Resor, Miss Louise Devereaux, and ,oss icy Benedict were present.

In the Monitor for Sept., 1890, is the following article, headed  
The Glendale Lyceum

Among the advantages of the Lyceum we note as follows:

1. It is out of debt, money in the treasury, and its affairs are managed by first-class business men in a business way.
2. Its charges for membership are but nominal. Less than five cents per week for each member.
3. It will build a handsome home of its own some of these days, a thing of beauty.
4. No worthy person is shut out of its advantages. People in moderate circumstances are urged to join.
5. Its handsome library numbers over 2400 volumes,
6. A valuable museum is growing up under its fostering care.
7. Its tables are loaded with the best of periodicals. Harpers Monthly, Atlantic Monthly, etc.
8. Its monthly informal entertainments are always delightful. *(Dramatic Club?)*

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When then did the dramatic club really begin ? The earliest program we have been able to find is for "Glendale Ideals" presented in the Town Hall January 7, 1886. This was reviewed in a Cincinnati paper, and Mr. William Gould quotes from an article in his scrap-book:

"The Charleston Blues and Black Huzzars under Captain Allen, military feature of the programme, were received with great enthusiasm. Indeed there was not a feature of the programme that was not excellent. The jokes were new and the voices capitally trained and the whole affair a complete success. The stage was very artistically decorated after designs by Miss Clara Newton. A frieze of Persian rugs <sup>encircled</sup> ~~encircled~~ the wall and below this were fluted panels of orange and gold fastened by superb shields, one of them, it was whispered, being a gift from General Sherman to his niece, Mrs. H.R. Probasco and "looted" for the occasion. The ushers were Charles E. Gallagher, E.I.

-4-

Bawson , Alfred Shepherd, Ben Keys. A large audience including Glendale's best known citizens and a gay party from Cincinnati among whom were Mr. and Mrs. Percy Procter, Mr. Morrison, ~~and~~ Miss Morrison of Clifton, Mr. Tom Hanna, Miss Hanna, Miss Reser, Miss Louise Devereaux, and Miss Lucy Benedict were present. " This sounds like a pre-cursor of Stunt Night.

But there are still people living in Glendale who remember plays and musical productions in the Town Hall before 1883. Miss Angie Richardson <sup>Remembers that when she was a young girl</sup> ~~says~~ there was a reading club that met around in <sup>private</sup> ~~private~~ houses. They read Shakespeare and other worthy writers. They began putting on plays. The homes of Mrs. Judge Cilly (where Loyal Richardson now lives), of Mrs. Hughes, Sr., (~~Frank Miller home~~) and of Mrs. Daniel McLaren (where the Elders are now) were especially popular. <sup>Miss Fisk of Center had a Shakespeare before</sup>

While Miss Angie was still in the public School <sup>female</sup> ~~and~~ she entered the Glendale College in 1880) she was in the chorus of a fine presentation of the operetta "Trial by Jury." This was coached by Mr. Herbert Griggs, the popular music teacher in the Glendale Public Schools. Among those who had leading parts were Misses Hattie and Louise Cunningham (she later became <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ Mrs. Daniel McLaren), Mr. and Mrs. Harry Hughes (Matie Bugbee), Mr. E.L. Loweree, Mr. <sup>Mr.</sup> Will H. Miller, the Misses Spinning, Mr. <sup>Charles</sup> ~~Henry~~ Bartlett. Mr. George Gallagher, who lived in the house ~~Dr.~~ Allen now occupies, was a hard worker on all these dramatic projects, so presumably he helped with the staging. Miss Angie assures me "there was a lot of talent among the young married group at that time (about 1880) and many of them had splendid voices." Mr. Lawson Moores was a fine singer. Mr. and Mrs. Harry Hughes, <sup>Jr.</sup> who lived where the Frank Millers now do , were Miss Angie's ideal couple, ~~handsome~~ handsome, prosperous, friendly. She remembers naming her best paper dolls for them. The Will Keys, the Willard Shepherds, the Withenburys <sup>people whose children's</sup> and other names still appear on Lycuem and Stunt Night lists took part in these pre-Lyceum programmes.

The stories of early activities in the village sound so like those of today, in spite of newer forms of transportation and electrical household innovations, that one's immediate reaction is - that sounds just like Glendale. Perhaps it is true - then!

Mustel House to raise money

for Lyeum expenses.

Held in Town Hall

Description  
7 to 10  
Lyeum Room  
Mrs. Galt

Stay on left hand side  
entrance at mouth of R of  
chairs - Big tables - carpet  
Three P.M.; was lighted  
when they played cards. Mrs. Clark  
took in the weekly magazine he

donated.

Lyeum Brew. Co.  
Birmingham

It has not been possible, up to this time, for me to find the actual date of the founding of the Lyceum Dramatic Club. Apparently, like Topsy, it just grew. There are records of a lively group of people staging plays in Glendale before 1880, first in the Glendale College Chapel, later, after the Town Hall was built, in the Town Hall. Some of these players were original members of the Lyceum - so it seems to be the same old question - which came first, the egg or the chicken?

In a Glendale Lyceum program for members printed in December, 1929, there is this record of the beginnings of the organization: In 1882 Mr. Robert Clark asked a few gentlemen of Glendale to meet at this house with the idea of establishing a Lyceum in Glendale. After several meetings in Mr. Clark's house the Glendale Lyceum was formed in the fall of the year 1882. The Constitution as adopted stated that the "object of incorporation of the Lyceum is to promote higher education, to promote social and friendly relations among its members, and to provide literary, musical, and social entertainment for them and for the residents of said Village of Glendale and its vicinity." *(This included amateur theatricals.)*

Mr. Robert Clark may be considered as the father of the Lyceum. He was its first president and was active in its management during the remainder of his life. As soon as the Lyceum was permanently formed and had quarters of its own (~~in the Town Hall~~), he presented it with a library of 5000 volumes which were carefully cataloged by himself. Mr. Clark's portrait is in the Library. The other portraits are of Mr. William Gallagher and Mr. W.A. Procter (who were co-founders and contributors with Mr. Clark), and Mr. John B. Rogan in whose memory the John B. Rogan Memorial Fund was established by his widow.

On December 4, 1883, a committee appointed by the president closed the lease for the lower part of the Town Hall at a rental "not over \$25 per year", and further requested that \$250 be raised immediately for furnishings. These quarters were used for some three years, and then in the minutes of that time we find the rather extraordinary statement "That on December 8, 1885, Five Thousand Dollars is to be raised to buy a lot, erect a building, and equip same for Lyceum purposes." This work went on for some years with the result that finally the lot on which the present Lyceum stands was bought, a building was erected and furnished at a total cost of "22,015.73".

The first meeting of the members of the Lyceum (147 of them) is mentioned as having been held on November 3, 1883. For the next nine years Lyceum activities were carried on in the lower floor of the Town Hall. This is referred to in copies of the Monitor, published from 1887 - 1893 by the Glendale School, as the "Lyceum Room". Here was a great collection of books, of natural history specimens including birds "skillfully stuffed and mounted by Mr. Charles Drury", insects, fossils from the Indian mounds around Glendale, minerals, and "marine specimens". Each January the Monitor published as a supplement the Annual Report of the Glendale Lyceum so this is a matter of official record. Also there is a story in nearly every issue of the Monitor of some program put on by the Lyceum group - plays, lectures, musicales. By 1887 they evidently had regular informal monthly entertainments. But they also

*a Lyceum was not a country club, but  
rather an educational institution*

staged plays and musical programs to raise money. The comedy Esmeralda, <sup>of</sup> ~~for~~ which we have a ~~copy of the~~ program in our album, was the "opening entertainment in the New Lyceum Building" on February 22, 1892. The next annual report, January, 1893, records that the proceeds of this netted \$203.95 to go toward the building fund - the building that we now occupy.

The site for this building was acquired October 15, 1890, from Mrs. Mary Allen for the sum of \$ 1500. Plans for the building were prepared by Mr. H. N. Wilson and on May 28, 1891, the contract for its erection was awarded to Mr. Isaac Graveson on his bid of \$14,600. The cornerstone was laid on July 4, 1891. All through copies of the Monitor at this time are articles urging people to contribute to the building fund, publicizing plays, lectures, and musical programmes being presented to raise money for it, and stressing the educational advantages the library, scientific collections, and programmes brought to the community.

They had <sup>lots of</sup> their <sup>pleasures &</sup> troubles with the ~~Lyceum~~ room in the Town Hall - though evidently a great deal of activity went on there. In October, 1889, in the paper, Under Lyceum notes, it says in part:

"The informal <sup>most</sup> monthly entertain~~ment~~ for October by the Glendale Lyceum was prepared and presented by Miss Clarisse Loweree, Miss Gertrude Thompson, Miss Annis Withenbury, and Miss <sup>Mary</sup> Titus. (Here ~~is~~ <sup>are</sup> listed two piano solos, a reading with two tableaux with reading "The Building of the Ship", an illustrated <sup>tableaux</sup> of Evangeline, and several vocal ~~solos~~.) <sup>Also</sup> it was proposed to have a course of six lectures ~~1/2~~ during the season provided 150 tickets at \$2 each were sold. Two dollars, also, was the per capita charge for dues during this period, and the writer continues "Now is the time to greet the treasurer with a \$2 smile." He continues "The ventilation in the Lyceum Hall is bad ~~of the hall~~ Either open a window and expose some of the audience to a cold draft of air or sit and feel the room get hot, hotter, hottest, and still more close and sultry until much of the pleasure of the evening is destroyed. Oh, for the Lyceum Building ! "

Librarian: Mrs. Jennie Kimbrough  
 Mrs. Louise Kibbitt

Older men began  
 life by donating



