

HISTORY OF THE NORTH MECKLENBURG WOMAN'S CLUB

1914 – 1920s

- Organized in 1914 as the Huntersville Woman's Club.
- Primary purpose was creating social opportunities and doing civic work in Huntersville, N.C.
- Average of 30 members.
- Projects included beautification of lawns & gardens; created handicrafts; exchanged recipes; and encouraged music appreciation.

1920s

- Partnered with local schools on grounds improvement, donating books, and helping with fundraising.
- Sponsored our first Boy and Girl Scout troops.

1930s

- Big emphasis was on helping the war effort: Red Cross work and selling war bonds.
- Helped fight growing health issues by assisting with fundraising for polio and heart programs, and providing supplies for cancer patients.

1940s

- Helped establish the first branch library in the county—a small brick building furnished with shelves, draperies, tables and chairs. Our members helped to rebind and catalogue books and for a while, helped to staff the branch.

1950s

- We did clean up, fix up, paint drives, planted trees and shrubs, held garden tours, and sponsored health programs and fashion shows.
- Made quilts for the patients at Huntersville Sanatorium.
- To raise money, we held bazaars, bake sales, antique displays, and a Christmas home decoration contest.
- In 1953, we joined the General Federation of Women's Clubs and grew to 44 members—2 from the original 1914 membership. We established our department structure: American Home, Education, Fine Arts and International Relations.
- In 1956, we partnered with North Mecklenburg High School and the American Field Service Exchange to bring in the first foreign exchange student. We were also the official hosts for the opening of a new branch library.

1960s

- Helped to plant over 50 crabapple trees along Hwy 115 in downtown Huntersville.
- We collected clothes for the schools' clothes closet.

- Provided financial aid for students to attend a summer recreation program.
- For Easter Seals, members addressed 5,000 envelopes for donations.

1970s

- Raised money for donations to create Holbrook Park and its tennis courts.
- Established a fund to build a Community Center for Huntersville.
- Gave financial support to the Boys & Girls Home, Huntersville Hospital. Operation—Homebound, and to Western Carolina Center.
- Awarded the Community Improvement Program Award in 1973 for financial support of the North Mecklenburg Medical Development Association.
- In 1979, club member Sarah McAuley was elected as Huntersville's first female mayor.

1980s

- In 1980, members helped provide a bus for the Huntersville Hospital called the Funshine Express.
- 1981
 - The North Mecklenburg Junior Woman's Club was formed and sponsored by the Huntersville Woman's Club; the Charter President was Dawn Bradford, who is still a member today. These ladies were between the ages of 18 – 35.
 - Girls Haven received \$2,200 from the club in support of their swimming pool and gym.
- 1982
 - Gave \$4,700 and helped complete a two-year community program to restore the Hugh Torrance House and Store.
 - A Fit Trail received a financial boost of \$1,000 from our group.
 - Members fought against the Reames Road Landfill.
- 1983 - We sponsored our first \$1,000 scholarship to a student at North Mecklenburg High School.
- 1986 - Members began meeting at Huntersville Presbyterian Fellowship Hall. Dues were \$20.00 and lunches were prepared by some of the 66 members.
- 1988
 - Financial donations were made to Huntersville Oaks Nursing Home.
 - The official seal was approved. It is a white dogwood bloom on a green background with the Huntersville Woman's Club, organized in 1914.

1990s

- 1991
 - The Lake Norman Juniores were formed by Denise Carter, a member of the North Mecklenburg Junior Woman's Club and a past president of NMWC and an active member today.
 - Erica Whelan was the Charter President.
- 1992
 - Members stood strong to keep the library in Huntersville while the

- library at North Cross was being discussed.
 - Bingo was held at Brookwood Retirement Home.
 - Stamps were collected for World Countries.
- 1994 – A tree was planted at Cornelius Elementary.
- 1996
 - Brookwood Woman’s Club was formed. It was known as the “club within a club.” The Huntersville Woman’s Club paid the dues of these women, but held monthly meetings for them with guest speakers.
 - The dream of building the Huntersville Civic Association Building was dropped by the members.
- 1997 – The North Mecklenburg Junior Woman’s Club disbanded.
- 1998
 - Our general meetings were moved from Huntersville Presbyterian Church to the Peninsula Country Club, with members paying for their lunch instead of the hostess committee cooking it.
 - Bibs were made for Huntersville Oaks residents.
- 1999
 - With membership at only 38, Special Interest Groups were formed in the hopes of encouraging new members. These groups included a book club, lunch bunch, and “make a project.”
 - We planted an historical tree at North Mecklenburg High School for the Horticultural Department.
 - We ended the decade with 40 members paying \$25 for dues.

2000s – The New Millennium

- 2000 - We decided to focus scholarship money on women returning to school to further their careers, and the first award was made.
- 2001
 - Made a large donation to the NC Aquarium.
 - Double Harvest was brought to our attention through Vickie Van Wingerden (an active member today), and we began supporting it through International Affairs.
 - One hundred bibs were made for patients at Huntersville Oaks Nursing Home.
 - Members held a Bridge Benefit at the Huntersville Aquatic Center.
 - First Red, White, & Green Auction was established as the December program.
 - The donations of \$5,000 made to the Civic Center were returned to the HWC because it wasn’t going to be built and we donated it to the Huntersville Aquatic Center.
- 2002
 - We held our first plant sale.
 - A donation of \$2,500 was made to a student at NMHS who broke his neck in a diving accident. The money went towards the purchase of a lift for the family van.

- 2004
 - Renamed our organization the North Mecklenburg Woman's Club (NMWC) to reflect the growing diversity of our membership.
 - We also changed our logo from the Dogwood flower to a branch – branching out to the community.
 - Members were given tote bags with the new name and logo on it.
 - Held the first fashion show as a fundraiser.
- 2005
 - We withdrew from the General Federation of Women's Clubs so we could ensure that more of our funds stayed in the local communities and give us more independence.
 - Butter Braids were sold for the first time as a fundraiser.
 - Supported the Opening of Hope House.
- 2007
 - We helped open Lake Norman Free Clinic.
 - Decorated a bedroom at Hope House.
 - Donated \$5,000 in scholarships.
- 2009
 - Membership reached an all-time high of 135 members.
 - Scholarships were given only to women going back to school—no high school students.
 - We sponsored the Over the Tabletop gala fundraiser for the first time.

2010s

- 2010
 - We realigned our organization by adding a Communications Vice President and having all committee chairs report to one of the now three Vice Presidents.
- 2012 – 2013
 - Over The Tabletop raised \$13,000 that went to ANSWER.
 - Red, White, and Green raised \$8,000 that went to Ada Jenkins Center.
 - Fashion show raised \$12,000.
 - Total of \$30,000 that helped Purple Heart Homes, Hope House, Caterpillar Ministries and many other charities in the area.
 - 146 members participated in the Soup and Chowder event for Susan G. Koman, Education, International Affairs, and Community Affairs projects.
 - Butter Braids were sold to give members a boost for the Blood Drive that was held at the fall meeting.
- 2013 – 2014
 - The beginning of our celebration of 100 years in the community.
 - Each committee was asked to donate items by the 100s: 100 blankets, 100 cupcakes, 100 notes of kindness, 100 items for the Animal Shelter, 100 toiletry items, 100 books for the library, 100 cans of food, etc.
 - Butter Braids, Over the Table Top, and Casino Night raised money for the

- many charities we support.
- Dress for Success was also supported by our ladies as we held a member's brunch and collected items that were needed for job interviews.
- Donated a full kitchen and laundry room to a local resident whose house burnt down, Build Betty A House.
- Supported the opening of Serenity House by furnishing and tidying up their front porch to welcome visitors.
- 2014 – 2015
 - 180 members contributed to Butter Braids, Over the Tabletop (\$10,000).
 - Held Red, White, and Green (\$14,344).
 - Held Casino Night "Saddles and Spurs" (\$9,860).
 - International Affairs was dropped.
 - Community for a Cause was added for the crisis in the area that needed immediate help.
 - Legendary Leading Ladies was added to membership recognizing members with 25 years of service to the club.
- 2015 – 2016
 - Supported 5 main charities: ANSWER, Caterpillar Ministries, Hope House, Purple Heart Homes, and Serenity House, which received up to 80% of our fundraising monies this year.
 - Raised \$66000 for our charities.
 - 13 other charities were supported through hands-on work and smaller sums of contributions.
 - Established an Appropriations Committee and developed a Request for Funding process to help club members learn about charities in the Lake Norman area, as well as formalize the process of how our charities are chosen.
- 2016 – 2017
 - Reached 200 members – a first for the club.
 - Red, White and Green—a favorite among our members—raised \$15,500.
 - Casino Night "Denim and Diamonds" reached an all-time high of \$40,000.
 - A new fundraiser called Make It Grow was held throughout the year with members participating in any way they liked by having luncheons, parties, psychics, game nights, etc., raising \$12,000.
 - Raised \$74,600 for our charities. ANSWER, Hope House, and Caterpillar Ministries received up to 80% of our fundraising monies. Sixteen other charities were supported through hands-on and smaller sums of contributions.
 - New website was developed through GoDaddy.
 - Box tops were collected for Education that put 2 students in summer camp.
 - 300 pairs of shoes donated to Double Harvest.

- Thousands of cookies, donuts, and cupcakes delivered to caregivers and first responders in February.
- 2017 – 2018
 - Prepared brown bag lunches over the summer for Angels & Sparrows.
 - Collected and packed school supplies and backpacks for children at Caterpillar Ministries.
 - Continued to prepare meals, serve them, and clean up two days a month at Angels & Sparrows (3rd Monday and 4th Thursday). Many members volunteer there in addition to our club days.
 - Collected toiletries for Caterpillar Ministries Middle School students. Several members packed them into draw string back packs.
 - Prepared and served meals for the residents of Hope House twice during October.
 - Held a holiday party for residents at Hunter Village, a retirement home for financially challenged patients. Served snacks and played bingo.
 - We made fleece blankets for first responders to use when needed with children.
 - Members selected a child from an Angel tree in November for gifts for Caterpillar Ministries and Hope House children. Gifts were delivered in December.
 - We collected coats for Hope House residents and for Caterpillar Ministries clients in January.
 - In February, we had a Valentine party and made cards with residents of Hinds Feet Farm,
 - For Valentine's Day week, we made and delivered cupcakes or other sweets to police and fire departments in North Mecklenburg.
 - Members joined in small groups to prepare and deliver meals each week in April for the families of patients at Levine Hospice House.
 - For Mother's Day, we collected new and gently used jewelry and accessories and displayed them so children at Caterpillar Ministries could "shop" for their Mothers and Grandmothers.
- 2018 – 2019
 - We joined with teens from Caterpillar to make over 100 blankets for first responders to use when helping children.
 - We prepared lunch and snacks for our two partner school teachers. This year's schools are Hornet's Nest Elementary and Blythe Elementary. Both served economically challenged students.
 - We raised and donated more than \$77,000 to charities in the North Mecklenburg Community and beyond.
 - We helped Caterpillar Ministries kids make Valentine cards for their parents.
 - Our members learned self-defense, wreath making, and more. They also enjoyed Canasta, wine and dine, and other fun activities together.
 - Our team made and served lunch 24 days this year at Angels and Sparrows Soup Kitchen in Huntersville. That's at least 2,400 people fed

- by our hands.
- Our team made summer bag lunches for children who get free lunch at school. More than 100 lunches were prepared each day we worked.
- We filled and delivered more than 120 Christmas stockings for the residents of Hunter Village. We also hosted a Halloween party for them.
- At our meetings each month, we collected donations from our members for at least one local charity, including: underwear for Lydia's Loft, towels for Caterpillar Ministries summer camp, cash donations for Haiti, and more.
- Donated \$900 to our partner schools for end of the year trips and needed supplies for children who could not afford to participate otherwise.

2020s

- 2019 – 2020
 - Kicked off the year with an information fair for members showcasing our committees and volunteer opportunities. We played a Monopoly-like game created by some of our members. Questions & Answers and locations were all based on our work to serve the North Mecklenburg committees. The theme of the game was "Step Up."
 - Participated in the Huntersville Veterans Day Parade wearing costumes depicting each century of our history.
 - Created a new board position for Public Relations. The position was designed to guide efforts to encourage new membership and community awareness. A brochure and redesigned logo were initial outcomes. Public Relations also coordinated our participation in the Veterans' Day parade.
 - Changed our donation structure to ensure rotation of charities and encourage new organizations to participate. Held multiple information sessions with community groups.
 - Provided snacks, meals, and door prizes to teachers at each of our partner schools – Blythe Leggett and Hornet's Nest Elementary. Collected supplies for teachers in Feb 2020, from pencil sharpeners to hand sanitizer.
 - Filled and donated Christmas season stockings to the more than 100 residents of Hunter Village. a retirement home for financially challenged patients.
 - We continued taking sweets to first responders.
 - Our annual March gala was cancelled due to Covid-19. We held an online Facebook live event just to see each other. We also held an online only auction with the items planned for the auction at the gala. Our members and other guests donated their ticket prices and more so we were still able to donate \$88,000 to charities in North Mecklenburg and beyond.
 - Held monthly donations to help with local needs. Our members helped

with underwear for Lydia's Loft, snacks for the Levine Hospice Center in Huntersville, books for Bright Blessings, birthday bags, and more.

- We collected and packed gift bags for Bright Blessings. They give the bags to children who are homeless or otherwise financially challenged so they can have a birthday celebration at school.
- We packaged Bags of Hope so that school children who are on free or reduced lunch have food for the weekends.
- We donated household furniture and goods for Caterpillar Ministries Coming On Home first house. The trailer, named Corey's House, will be a home for two homeless women. We also decorated the living area and filled the kitchen cabinets.
- Through our continuing educational outreach, six of our members or their spouses tutored Caterpillar Ministries' children. Several of our members read every week to the preschool children at La Escuelita to help them learn English.
- Meetings also ended after the March meeting due to Covid-19 so the board met and began efforts to be sure our members were okay and to stay connected. Activities included: phone calls to every member, follow up notes and calls, Zoom meetings, and happy hours. The newsletter featured articles keeping members up-to-date on how our charities were handling the crisis, suggestions on ways to help our charities help families, member profiles, and more.
- We established an "emergency fund" with the help of a very generous member, and began distributing money to individuals who had immediate needs, like rent or food.
- The club purchased a new technology service called Wild Apricot to improve our membership tracking and outreach.
- 2020 – 2021
 - In August, we collected and donated 24 backpacks filled with school supplies for ANSWER, and 6 backpacks and supplies for Hope House. We also collected 220 dispensers of scotch tape, 170 one subject notebooks, 115 three-subject and five-subject notebooks, 180 mesh pencil packs, and more for Caterpillar Ministries.
 - We kicked off the year with an outdoor meeting, we think the first ever. Due to Covid-19, we actually held three sessions, required face masks, and kept our distance. Approximately 75 members attended. Raised just over \$1500 in donations.
 - Postcards were hand addressed and mailed by board members to every club member in August.
 - We continued the emergency fund and were able to help an additional family at the August board meeting.
 - We have determined that we will not be able to have our annual gala due to Covid-19 so we were undertaking other ways to raise money for our charities, including direct requests, additional Make Money Grow events, and a Marketplace where members donate items for sale.
 - Implementation of Wild Apricot for membership began with our member

- directory and donation/sponsorship tracking.
 - We donated over \$100,000 to local charities in spite of Covid 19.
- 2021 – 2022
 - We raised and donated \$107,000.
 - We volunteered 1,700 hours of service across our multicounty area—now defined as all counties where members live—and includes Denver, Concord, and more.
 - We served 17 different organizations with funding, talents, and time.
 - Through Education, 11 members tutored dozens of children from February through May. We also tutored children at Caterpillar Ministries, and several members were mentors to women at ANSWER scholars. Our members read to mostly Hispanic preschoolers at LaEscuelita, helping them to learn English.
 - We reached out to serve the community in service. At Angels & Sparrows, members made bag lunches every week during the summer so children had food at home. During the entire year, members prepared and served lunch at Angels & Sparrows each week for those living with food insecurity.
 - Dozens of us made food packages at Bags of Hope for students to take home over the weekend ensuring food for the child and in some cases, the family.
 - A group of members prepared and delivered a meal once a month to the families at Hope House.
 - We made and delivered more than a dozen each of walker bags and fidget blankets to those living at Hunter Village.
 - At 7 of our monthly meetings, members donated goods for local charities like Answer Scholarship, Levine Dickson Hospice, and two local schools. The amount collected would fill seven car trunks.
 - We were able to donate \$107,000. We raised that money through direct gifts from our members. We held fundraising events including Tacos & Trivia and Woodstock, making and serving the food ourselves. We held a “market day,” where 18 members made crafts and baked goods and sold them to other members and friends keeping none of the revenue for themselves. Also, members created and ran their own mini fundraisers from parties, to crafting, to “how to” sessions. We call these Make Money Grow events, and members put them on at their own cost. Each December meeting, we hold Red, White, Green, a silly auction that raises significant money. Eleven different charities benefited from these activities and the funds they raised.
 - We also served our members’ needs, whether help or fun. We brought food, sent cards and visited with 10 members who lost loved ones or found themselves recovering. We held events like Wine & Dine, movie outings, book clubs, Canasta, lunch bunch, and more to get out and enjoy each other. Even more, at each meeting, there was an interesting speaker offering entertaining and educational topics. We began to see new members as people ventured out from Covid. Our membership team

- began to create improved onboarding and held two new member orientation meetings.
 - We began to emphasize our 3-legged stool...or Triangle of Service...as a description for the club—Philanthropy, Volunteerism, and Member Service.
 - We continued to improve services offered via Wild Apricot (our membership database), and saw increased use among members.
 - Communications increased social media work and continued with meeting slide shows and weekly newsletter.
- 2022 – 2023
 - We served charities and the community throughout North Mecklenburg and beyond.
 - We raised and donated \$106,500 to charities by holding 28 different fundraising efforts.
 - The club officially held three major events: Tacos and Trivia; our first play, called Love Letters; Line Dancing, a Decades Dance with music and entertainment; and Market Days, where members made and baked items which were sold.
 - In addition, individual members held events such as a French Wine experience, Murder Mystery party, cooking classes, pickleball tournament, cookie bakes and more.
 - All the money was donated to 24 organizations. The 10-member Appropriations team reviewed 42 applications to get to these finalists.
 - We volunteered more than 1,500 hours across the area at 10 different places.
 - For Hope House, we made meals for 20 to 25 residents every month.
 - We packed lunches at Bags of Hope.
 - We collected gifts and packed birthday bags for Bright Blessings.
 - We read to children at LaEscuelita Elementary.
 - We also collected donations for Hornet’s Nest teachers and for students at JM Alexander Middle School.
 - We worked one day each month at Angels & Sparrows community table.
 - Several members mentored students needing reading help at Caterpillar Ministries, Angels & Sparrows, and Hornets Nest Elementary
 - Other collections during the year benefited Least of These Carolinas, Feed NC, Hope House, and Dickson Hospice.
 - We served our members by helping in times of need and for just for fun.
 - Some of the fun programs for membership included book clubs, wine and dine events, crafting and other learning experiences, and movie outings.
 - Cards, food and/or donations were made when members lost loved ones or were ill.
 - One of the biggest events this year was Flamingle, a full club party

just for fun.

- To keep the club moving smoothly, we managed a database, newsletter, and website for communications, reservations, and recruitment.
- 2023 – 2024
 - Club members donated school and other supplies, gift cards, food, and other items for 9 different charities.
 - Members volunteered 3,469 hours at 10 different organizations in 5 different counties.
 - Members volunteered over 1,200 hours for students in 6 different organizations. We held teacher appreciation luncheons at JM Alexander Middle and Hornet's Nest Elementary. Members read to and mentored students at Angels and Sparrows, La Escuelita, and Caterpillar Ministries.
 - Members donated over 2,000 hours helping to feed families at Angels and Sparrows, Hope House, and Bags of Hope, provided birthday bags at Bridge of Hearts, and thanked first responders.
 - We reached a total membership of 230. Eighty-five percent of members participated in some club event.
 - We continued social activities with Mahjong, book clubs, Canasta, lunch bunch, and group outings.
 - We raised \$92,500 through large fundraisers like Tacos and Trivia and Red, White, and Green, plus multiple small events under Make Money Grow.
 - 100% of our monies raised were donated to 27 organizations. Our appropriations team spent 300 hours reviewing 40 applications.
- 2024 – 2025
 - Club members donated school and other supplies, gift cards, food, and other items for 8 different charities.
 - Members volunteered over 3,000 hours at 44 different events for 7 different organizations in 3 different counties. We put together 65 Christmas stockings for the residents of Hunter Village.
 - Members volunteered over 1,100 hours for students in 6 different organizations. We provided teacher supplies and held teacher appreciation luncheons at JM Alexander Middle and Torrence Creek Elementary. Members read to and mentored students at Angels and Sparrows, La Escuelita, and Caterpillar Ministries. We introduced a new program at Angels and Sparrows called “Reading Buddies.”
 - Members donated over 2,000 hours helping to feed families at Angels and Sparrows, Hope House, and Bags of Hope, provided birthday bags at Bridge of Hearts, and thanked first responders by providing treat baskets for 26 groups.
 - We reached a total membership of 220. Ninety-four percent of members participated in some club event, an increase of almost 10% over the previous year. We cared for our members through cards and our meal trains.
 - Our social committee provided events totaling 3,160 hours of club member attendance. We continued social activities with mahjong, book clubs,

- Canasta, lunch bunch, pickleball, and group outings.
- Our club history for the year was immortalized in a digital format for the first time.
 - We raised \$83,000 through large fundraisers like Trivia Italiano and OctoberFest Trivia, Red, White, and Green, and Market Days. Multiple small events under Make Money Grow continued to help increase our fundraising dollars. We held our first fashion show in many years, which contributed to almost 25% of funds raised for the year. Club members worked 3,700 hours to support these efforts.
 - 100% of our monies raised were donated to 25 organizations. Our appropriations team spent 850 hours reviewing 46 applications and vetting organizations.