A History

University Club of Indiana University
TIMELINE

1820  Indiana State Seminary established by state legislature, January 20. Located just south of downtown Bloomington.
1823  Baynard Rush Hall appointed as first professor.
1825  First classes begin, with ten male students.
1828  State Seminary name changed to Indiana College.
1829  Andrew Wylie named first president.
1838  Indiana College name changed to Indiana University.
1867  Sarah Parke Morrison becomes first female student. Graduates in 1869.
1883  IU trustees purchase 20 acres of Dunn’s Woods, plan move from Seminary Square.
1895  Marcellus Neal becomes the first African American to graduate from IU.

1912  Men’s Faculty Club organized. James A. Woodburn, president.  
      First home is in the basement of Maxwell Hall.
1913  Faculty Women’s Club organized. Mrs. Warner Fite, president.  
      Beginning in 1915, meetings were mostly held in the Student Building.
1918-20  Spanish Flu pandemic.
1921  Faculty Women’s Club meetings move to Trophy Room in Men’s Gymnasium (currently Garrett Fieldhouse).
1923  Women’s Faculty Club organized. Elizabeth Sage, president.  
      First home is in the basement of Kirkwood Hall.
1927  Faculty Women’s Club organizes Newcomers Club. Mrs. Willard Patty, president.
1931  Women’s Faculty Club organizes Dames Club.
1932  By springtime, Faculty Women’s Club had moved to East Parlors of Student Building.
1945  (or 1946) Women’s Faculty Club moves to West Parlors of Student Building.
1946  Men’s Faculty Club had relocated to the ground floor of the Indiana Memorial Union (IMU) west wing.
1959  Merger of all clubs into University Club (UClub); locates on parts of three floors of Biddle Continuation Center. The constituent clubs retain their names. UClub incorporated.
1960  UClub/IMU lease becomes effective January 1.
1960  Faculty Women’s Club changes name to University Women’s Club.
1964  Mrs. Ruth (Maurice) McGlashon becomes UClub’s first paid staff as executive secretary.
1989  IMU begins remodeling which reduces UClub space to parts of two floors by 1991.
2020  UClub and University Women’s Club (last remaining constituent group) revise bylaws.
2020  Special project committee recommends establishment of funds to provide for significant refurbishing of UClub space.
2020  IU Bicentennial.
2020  Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in U.S. begins and severely impacts the UClub’s operations and the university.
PREFACE

The University Club of Indiana University (UClub) was incorporated in 1959 but the organizations that came together to form it traced roots to 1912, 1913, and 1923. All had social activities and information sharing at their core and catered to unknown thousands through their decades of service. One of them continues as an important element of the UClub’s service to members today.

The University Club is, thus, one of the oldest social organizations at Indiana University-Bloomington and an integral provider of opportunities for current and former faculty and staff, their spouses, alumni, and community residents to gather for social and intellectual relationships throughout each year. Its facilities provide a classical, warm atmosphere for club, university, and community gatherings, and private meetings, receptions, and ceremonies.

This is a history of proud service, although not intended as a definitive description of all that has transpired through the decades. The information for these pages is from files in the University Club and the IU Archives and personal interviews.

The club’s history begins with the histories of three organizations that were brought together to form the UClub. All campus buildings that are mentioned are the same as those that exist today.

This written history was intended to be published in 2020, sixty years from the formal beginning of the University Club as an entity. The coronavirus, COVID-19, changed all that, presenting major challenges to the club’s future.
Men’s Faculty Club

James A. Woodburn was the first president when the club was formed in 1912 and was joined as charter members by William Lowe Bryan, C.H. Eigenmann, E.H. Lindley, C.J. Sembower, William A. Rawls, and others, names associated with buildings or facilities at the campus and one of them the university president for 35 years.

In an annual letter of invitation to join the club, apparently from the late 1920s, “We have two large rooms in the basement of Maxwell Hall, provided with current newspaper and magazines and equipped for billiards, pool, and other games. A meeting, addressed by some speaker of prominence, is held the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. The Club is a convenient place for informal discussions and recreation, and gives to the men of the faculty an excellent opportunity of becoming acquainted.” Dues were $3.00 per semester.

In 1930, Herman B Wells, Instructor, Department of Economics and Sociology, wrote to H.W. Norman, secretary of the club, “I am happy to accept the invitation to membership of the Men’s Faculty Club.” Wells enclosed a check for $6.00 for the first year’s dues. In addition to dues, for many years the club had an initiation fee.


In a letter to the club March 31, 1933, university president Bryan indicated the Indiana Memorial Union (IMU; dedicated June 1932) was already having financial challenges and stated, “I hope the Faculty Club will be disposed to take a generous attitude toward assisting us to balance the budget for the maintenance of the Union Building.” “…if there is in the treasury a surplus, some contribution…would be appreciated and would, I think, be just.”

The club’s Constitution of April 1, 1935, stated the purpose of the organization was “to promote social intercourse and good fellowship among the members of the Faculty” with “membership…open to all men members of the faculty, the executive officers of the University and the trustees…” Other non-faculty males could become associate members.

In January 1946, as the university was preparing for an onslaught of students following World War II, the club wrote to IU’s new treasurer, Joseph A. Franklin, offering some of its facilities, now located in the Union Building, “for emergency housing of students during the first part of the second semester of 1945-46” in exchange for rent and other concessions.
An October 27, 1947, letter to a visiting professor listed the club’s facilities. Club secretary Lynne L. Merritt, Jr., stated, “The club rooms...are located in the west wing of the Union Building just beyond the Grille and billiard room. There we have a spacious lounge, a game room with billiard and pool tables, a card room and a library.” The letter further stated that the card room served as an extension of the Union Grille for lunch.

By 1956, the club had lost its luncheon facilities and membership began dropping.

In the 1959 merger that created the University Club, the Men’s Faculty Club (MFC) was given new quarters on the mezzanine level of the Biddle Continuation Center (now Biddle Hotel and Conference Center). Professor (retired) Timothy Long became a member in 1969. He described the space as three rooms. “Two of them looked out into the courtyard. The smallest room was a library...It had wonderful easy chairs and a selection of current magazines, notably The New Yorker, Time, and Sports Illustrated. There was a collection of books.

“Without a window on the courtyard was a large card room. It had six beautiful, hexagonal, oak card tables each with four Windsor chairs. I never saw a card game at any of the tables.” Apparently, card playing had been a staple in the club but waned by at least 1970.

Long further described, “But the real glory of the space was the billiard room. It had French doors that looked out onto the courtyard. It had two billiard tables (three billiard balls, no pockets) and two pool tables (fifteen numbered pool balls, six pockets).” He explained that a complex-scoring game of “bottle pool” was the rage among members. Both he and Jack Mulholland, who came to IU in 1972 and later served as university Treasurer, agreed they never saw gambling or alcoholic beverages on club premises. Minutes of board meetings often referenced pool and billiards. The April 8, 1956 minutes stated, “…the eight-ball was reported missing.”; June 13, 1962, “…cue stick security problem.” But good news May14, 1963 – a new billiard table had arrived.

In 1989-90, the MFC moved again when the University Club’s overall space was downsized. (In 2021, the MFC’s former mezzanine space was occupied by offices of the director of the IMU. A previous tenant had been the IU Trustees offices.) While pool and billiards were always strong drawing cards for membership to the MFC almost from the outset of the organization more than 100 years ago, interest in the games eventually declined. For several years after the 1959 merger, daily play and tournaments with cash prizes continued to be popular. The January 10, 1962, board minutes listed the names of “the winners of the (annual) billiard tournament” and stated “first prize” was $3.00. While daily competitive play remained a staple, there is no evidence that tournaments with cash prizes continued past the mid-1960s. Today, the club has one pool table, and although daily play has waned, it is important to a dedicated group of members.
Faculty Women’s Club
(Currently, University Women’s Club)

The formation of the Faculty Women’s Club (FWC) was agreed upon April 24, 1913, at a meeting of forty-five women at the home of Mrs. Horace Hoffman, wife of the dean of the College of Liberal Arts. The house was located at the corner of Third and Fess streets, site of the present Acacia fraternity. The first minutes stated, “…a social organization of Indiana University faculty women, wives and teachers, was voted into existence.” Mrs. Warner Fite was elected “chairman.”

The minutes further stated, “Invitation to join the organization shall be extended to all women teachers of and above the rank of instructor, and to all wives of men teachers of and above the rank of instructor, Indiana University.” (Later to include wives of certain staff.)

The second meeting was held May 22, “…a garden party at the home of Mrs. Eigenmann on Atwater Street.” It was at that meeting that the club adopted the name “Faculty Women’s Club” and dues were set at one dollar per year. In a history written for the 75th anniversary of the club, Elise (Harold) Jordan reported, “That first budget was very tight as they allowed $35 for the opening reception, and $5 for refreshments for each afternoon meeting. This would leave a balance of just six dollars at the end of the year.” According to a 50-year history of the club, there were 76 members the first year, providing $76 in income. “After disbursements, there was a precarious balance of $2.18.”

Beginning in 1915, meetings were mostly held in the Student Building. In May 1921, IU’s trustees offered the use of the Trophy Room in the four-year-old Men’s Gymnasium (currently Garrett Fieldhouse) on Seventh Street. In spring 1932, some meetings were moved to the newly constructed Union Building but by then the FWC’s home had already moved from the gymnasium back to the East Parlors of the Student Building until the merger into the University Club in 1959.

The club stepped outside its stated purpose of being purely social when it engaged with the Local Council of Women to help fund a drive for a hospital in Bloomington.

Elise Jordan stated in her 75th anniversary history that in May 1917 the club “adopted a French War orphan, and to support her, they cut their tea budget, later cutting out refreshments.” In 1918, after the outbreak of World War I, the minutes stated, “The February meeting was held in the West Parlors of the Student Building. Besides knitting, garments were made for the Club’s French orphan, and handkerchiefs were hemmed for the French Relief. A letter of thanks for money sent to the little orphan was read.”

Jordan further reported, “With the war in progress the women volunteered to make surgical dressings, both at the hospital and their meetings. They knitted for overseas,
made garments for Germaine Marie (the war orphan), supplied yarn for college women to knit, and not only kept their hospital pledge but added to the hospital maintenance fund. With the influenza epidemic (Spanish Flu), all meetings were cancelled in the fall of 1918, the first being in February of 1919." This account is supported by an entry in the club’s 1913-25 minute book. The last meeting recorded for the 1917-18 program year was May 1918. A page with "1918-19" written atop doesn’t give the exact date for the February meeting but notes: “This was the first meeting of the year on account of the epidemic of influenza.”

After a presentation by Dean of Women Agnes Wells in 1922 that she wanted a dormitory built for women, the club conducted fund raisers for the university’s Memorial Fund. The events included School of Music concerts, lectures, luncheons, and bridge parties. The Alumni Council (now Alumni Association) -led effort included several fund drives over an approximate ten-year period and supported the construction of Memorial Hall (Third Street), the Indiana Memorial Union building, and the Memorial football stadium (Tenth Street; site of the current arboretum).

“The (club’s) opening reception in October 1925 was held in the President’s home at the invitation of Mrs. Bryan. The president’s house in the center of the campus had just been completed late in 1924.” (75th Anniversary history)

There were financial challenges in the early years. “In 1926 membership had dropped so drastically there were insufficient funds to print the revised constitution. And in April 1938, after heated discussions about the purchase of a tea table, it was discovered there were insufficient funds over and above the balance required by the constitution to make the purchase of either a circular or rectangular table.” (50-Year History written by Dorothy C. Collins in 1963)

New members of the club “were encouraged to meet informally during the 1926-27 academic year to get better acquainted and to discuss with each other the problems that all newcomers to a town have – what butcher sold the best meat, which doctor to go to, and so forth. This led in the fall of 1927 to the organization of Newcomers as a part of the FWC with Mrs. Willard Patty as the first President.” (50-Year History)

Newcomers Club membership was open to any faculty member of three years or less on the faculty and their spouses. In 1931, the other women’s group, Women’s Faculty Club, formed the Dames Club which was initially for wives of students and later included female graduate students. (75th Anniversary History). (In the 1974 revision of its Constitution and Bylaws, the University Women’s Club declared it would sponsor the Dames Club, “whose members are wives of all students in the University and married women registered in the University.” In the 1987 revision, the document no longer mentioned Dames Club, nor did any UClub publicity throughout the program year.)

The 1930s were a period of austerity and although the club operated, its menus for meetings were kept to a minimal price, some of less than one dollar.
The 1938-39 program year began with a reception to honor new university president Herman B Wells and President Emeritus and Mrs. Bryan.

The constitution of the Faculty Women’s Club was revised in March 1939 and stated that membership shall be limited to wives of men on, and women on, the instructional staff and rank of instructor or above, administrative officers and their wives, library officers and their wives, the wives of the manager of the Bookstore and the Union Building, “the mother or sister who is homekeeper for a faculty member,” the secretary of IU’s president, and “women trustees and the wives of trustees…who reside in Bloomington.”

In a “Memories” presentation to members in 1991, Dorothy Collins, who came to IU in 1939, humorously stated, “My most persistent memory of those early days was the presence of hats. Yes, HATS. For a young faculty wife struggling to live within a budget bounded by her husband’s yearly salary of $2300, the price of a hat amounted to a sacrificial fee.” “I devoutly wished that Dr. Wells’ mother, who set the pattern, would reverse the trend. Instead, she wore hats on more and more occasions – until bouffant hair styles or some such divine intervention set us free.”

In the merger and creation of the University Club in 1959, the Faculty Women’s Club voted at its annual meeting, April 21, 1960, to change its name to University Women’s Club. The organization was assigned space on parts of two of the three floors of the UClub.

In 1985, the club became one of the founding members of the Big Ten University Women’s Clubs and last hosted the annual meeting of the Big Ten Women’s Conference in 2019.

**Women’s Faculty Club**

The earliest minutes that were located (February 5, 1923) referred to the organization as “The Women of the Faculty.” Elizabeth Sage of the department of Home Economics served as the first president. Helen Duncan was secretary. The club’s announced purpose was “to promote acquaintanceship and to foster a spirit of friendliness among the faculty women.”

The following month’s minutes reported the group wanted to talk with university president William Lowe Bryan “about the matter of a club room.” In April, minutes reflected “It seems certain from remarks made by Dr. Bryan that we shall be assigned the northwest rooms in the basement of Kirkwood Hall when readjustments are made.”
The Women’s Faculty Club (WFC) and the already-established Faculty Women’s Club (FWC) had similar social and educational events and the WFC organized many interest groups such as book study, Bridge, hiking, and garden study. The FWC would later develop many more such groups, with twenty in existence in 2021, with both men and women participating.

At its October 23, 1923 meeting, the club adopted a constitution and the name “Women’s Faculty Club of Indiana University.”

The constitution dated 1928 said regular membership was open to “Women who are full-time members of the faculty…of the rank of instructor, administrative officers, heads of departments in the Library and trustees.” It listed the Purpose as being “to promote co-operation and sociability.” A later version changed the wording slightly to “to promote professional cooperation and sociability.” In 1953, the wording became “to provide professional and social stimulus for its members.” Seven years later, the constitution referred to the organization as “A Division of the University Club.” That came after the merger detailed later in this history.

The club expressed an interest in 1945 in moving to the West Parlor of the Student Building, space occupied by the Department of Physical Education. The expanding university needed the Kirkwood Hall basement area for academic purposes. The club was successful in moving to the West Parlors.

A former club leader, Moya Andrews, expressed feelings about the organization’s importance. She came to IU in 1971. “There were not many women faculty in those days, so we all knew each other from the club mainly, and it was helpful to have contacts from all parts of the campus.” “The regular members were mostly older established women faculty who were the only women in their departments, and they were wonderful to me when I first came and continued to support me across my career. The club was a very important group for me.”

Another former active officer, Marianne Mitchell, expressed similar sentiments. “They clearly WERE a support group for me. Our ‘meetings’ were more like animated discussions of various things about academic life, as I recall. We enjoyed each other’s company and support.”
The Merger = University Club

IU President Herman B Wells is generally credited for urging the three clubs to consider merging and then occupying space in the new Biddle Continuation Center attached to the east side of the IMU.

An undated “PROPOSAL FOR A UNIVERSITY CLUB” attached to a “Tentative Draft” of club by-laws, both most likely written in early 1959, stated that when plans for an addition to the IMU “were being developed several years ago,” the men’s and women’s faculty clubs “were approached about accepting new and more spacious quarters.” Who did the approaching is unknown. It is known that in a 1957 note to the Men’s Faculty Club, the Women’s Faculty Club expressed appreciation for the former’s “willingness to share some of the space allocated to it in the new Union addition.” Planning for the IMU’s addition was conducted over several years.

The two clubs agreed that a joint move to the IMU space “would contribute to their well-being and formed committees to help plan the area.” They worked with IMU director Harold W. Jordan and “certain changes were made in the blueprints for the new wing.”

The Proposal further stated, “About this time several representatives of the Faculty Women’s Club” met with President Wells “in which was developed the idea of a University Club which would act as a center for social gatherings.” It was believed that activities would be “more comprehensive” than those conducted individually by the three organizations. Further, in addition to “developing an attractive social program,” hope was expressed there would be “food and recreational discounts” for members at the IMU. (Such discounts were available for some period of years after the merger but did not continue.) There were even efforts to obtain membership discounts to athletic and cultural events when the club was being formed. No evidence could be found to show any was ever instituted.

The organizational meeting was held April 14, 1959, in Room 101 of the Business and Economics building (currently Woodburn Hall). Assistant Dean of the Faculties Eunice Roberts conducted the session as chair of the steering committee which had overseen merger discussions. She had succeeded Professor Shelby Gerking.

Minutes from the organizational meeting: “Dean Roberts began her remarks with a brief account of the steps leading up to the present meeting: the origin of the idea of a University Club when it was realized that space would be available…for such a club, of President Wells’ support of the idea, and of the appointment of representatives from each of the cooperating clubs to form a Steering Committee.”

The April 23 minutes reflect further “…President Wells’ desire for such a group that might utilize the spacious quarters so generously made available…and that would include members from all faculty groups.”
Dues were set at $10 per year. The elected board of directors: Professor “John B. Daugherty, President; Mrs. Frances H. Ellis, Vice President; Mrs. Mary (Oscar) Winther, Secretary; Charles H. Spencer, Treasurer; Mrs. Aline (Sid) Robinson, Mrs. Eunice C. Roberts, Mrs. Eleanor (Newell) Long, Miss Dorothy G. Kelley, William R. Brenneman, and Richard D. Yoakam.”

Incorporation papers were approved by the Secretary of State, May 28, 1959. The Purpose of the new University Club (UClub): “To promote the social and intellectual intercourse by persons associated with Indiana University through providing to its membership club rooms and other facilities for meetings, gatherings, lectures and other means of social and intellectual intercourse.”

An Indiana Daily Student article in October stated the new club was engaged in an effort to enroll charter members. The organization’s first newsletter (University Club Bulletin) was a four-page offset newspaper that was used in the enrollment campaign. “Headlined ‘Come and Join in a Dream Together,’ the Bulletin tells briefly of the amalgamation of” the clubs “into a single organization.”

President Wells was presented with the first UClub membership card by club treasurer Spencer. That December, Wells and his mother attended the organization’s Christmas party and greeted the guests. He expressed in a note to the club that “Mother and I” had an enjoyable evening.

The lease agreement with the university was signed by Daugherty, Spencer, and IMU director Jordan, to take effect January 1, 1960. Rent was $250 per month.

Occupying 9,737 sq. ft. on parts of three floors of the building, the space was allocated thus: The Men’s Faculty Club operated on the ground level (Mezzanine), the Faculty Women’s Club and the University Club offices on the second (current club main entrance) and third floors, and the Women’s Faculty Club on the third floor.

The three constituent organizations under the umbrella of the new organization maintained their own identities and received an annual allocation from the mother club. Anyone who was a member of the University Club automatically could be a member of a club of their gender.

The groups brought furnishings and various equipment with them but new items were purchased. In fact, a January 1960 interdepartmental communication from Charles H. Spencer to William S. Armstrong, president of the IU Foundation, referenced an enclosed check for $5,128 “to be applied against the Club’s obligation to the University for the furnishings and equipment which the University has purchased for us.” The new UClub board’s meeting minutes of April 9, 1960, reflected that a “special Gift Campaign committee” had been organized to solicit members “for special gifts.” But the university pitched in. A December 15, 1960, letter to President Wells expressed appreciation for a gift of $15,000 from the IU Foundation for “the purchase of major equipment and furnishings for University Club rooms.”
A Men’s Faculty Club library was begun in 1939 in remembrance of Frank Senour (Professor of English who died in 1928) by his widow, Helen G. Senour, Oberlin, Ohio. She donated books and monetary funds from at least 1939 to 1959. The club’s board minutes of January 14, 1958 stated, “...Mrs. Senour...has contributed more than 400 books to our library since 1939. (She) has probably contributed about $1600...” for purchasing more. Her original gift to establish the library was reported as $500. Professor J.J. Galloway, club librarian, reported in 1960 that “Mrs. Senour made a gift of $200 in savings bonds in 1943-44 which are now mature and are to be used for book purchases in the future.”

The library’s collections grew but there were problems. Minutes of February 13, 1962 reflected that “710 books are in the library and 220 were lost since the library was established.”

In a June 1963 letter to the club, and in reference to a $2,000 gift she had made, Mrs. Senour wrote, “I wanted to be sure that there would be a fund for future book purchases for the Senour Library, and am glad to receive the Club Members’ full approval. I regret that I did not manage to establish this fund before Dr. Galloway’s death. As the Club’s first librarian, he would have been pleased to know that the Library would be kept alive.” The club approved the design and construction of a plaque with the inscription “Frank C. Senour Memorial Library.” The library was formally named for Professor Senour by the club board in March 2021.

Mrs. Senour’s generosity was not confined to books and money. MFC board minutes of March 29, 1960: “Mrs. Senour has recently donated a T.C. Steele painting which has been hung on the west wall of the combined lounge and bridge room” of the club’s mezzanine level facilities. (In 2021, The First Snowfall (1922) painting was on display in the second floor Reading Room of the UClub.)

(Theodore Clement Steele (1847 – 1926) was Hoosier-born and known for his Indiana landscapes. The club is fortunate to also own two other of his paintings.

Untitled landscape (1913).
This large painting hangs in the President’s Room. Steele had a one-man exhibition at the University in 1916 (the centennial of the State of Indiana) and this piece, the largest canvas in the group, was in the exhibition. At the close of the commencement period, the painting was retained by the Men’s Faculty Club to be placed on their club rooms. (Source: The House of the Singing Winds: The Life and Work of T. C. Steele; Rachel Berenson Perry, Selma N. Steele, Theodore L. Steele, Wilbur D. Peat; Indiana Historical Society Press, Indianapolis, IN (2016) p. 141-142.)

Untitled landscape (1921).

(This piece hangs above the fireplace in the Faculty Room.)

One of the other early purchases was reported in the May 9, 1960 board minutes: “…Mr. and Mrs. Don Clark have a 4’11” Chickering grand piano to sell for $600.” A representative of the School of Music looked at it and reported “it is a fine instrument. The piano is twenty years old and is in excellent shape in every way.” Purchase was made.

The club’s first honorary members were reported in the June 6 board minutes: “Judge and Mrs. (John) Hastings have accepted with pleasure the University Club’s invitation to become the first honorary members.” John S. Hastings, an alumnus, was chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals in Chicago. He wrote to the club in September that he and his wife “are deeply grateful to you…we shall prize our life-membership....Nothing could please us more than this recognition from our friends on the University Faculty.”

In the first membership booklet, the 1960-61 fiscal and program year, the following were listed as presidents:

- University Club: Mr. Clum Bucher
- Men’s Faculty Club: Mr. W. Howard Mann
- Women’s Faculty Club: Miss Jane Flener
- University Women’s Club: Mrs. Robert Shaffer
- Newcomers Club: Mrs. Roger W. Russell

Additionally, there were “Sponsors” to the Dames Club.
House Rules, published in April 1961 stated:

- “Main Lounge and kitchen on the first floor and designated common committee rooms on the first and second floors are for use of the entire membership.”
- "Ground floor (Mezzanine) is reserved for the exclusive use of The Men’s Faculty Club except when the University Club Board requests its use for special occasions…"
- The second floor, with the exception of the designated common committee rooms, was for the exclusive use of the Women’s Faculty Club except when the University Club board wanted it for special occasions.

Alcoholic beverages and “gambling” were prohibited. However, numerous documents show club members lamenting the unavailability of alcohol to be a detriment to gaining membership. President John Ryan prohibited the serving of alcoholic beverages anywhere on campus until late in his presidency (1971-87), although the university looked the other way by allowing UClub members to bring in such beverages for club and private functions. One former official termed it “liquor by the ‘wink’.”

From 1960-77, records show membership averaged approximately 1,100 per year.

As with many social organizations, especially one with facilities, the UClub began having financial challenges early on. Its primary income came from dues and space rentals.

It needed paid staff and Ruth (Maurice) McGlasson became the first executive secretary. Prior to the 1964-65 budget, she had worked on a part-time basis, handling all reservations, serving as host at parties and assisting in getting new members. The budget contained a line item “Membership Secretary $1,300.” However, the 1966-67 budget had reduced the figure by $100. The March 8, 1967 board minutes stated, “Mrs. McGlasson pointed out that her salary does not reflect the number of hours she works nor their inconvenient times nor the responsibilities she assumes.” The board concurred and decided the next fiscal year budget should “include adequate compensation for Mrs. McGlasson.”

In the mid-1960s, the board grappled with how its space should be used and whether and how it should be rented. Throughout the decades since, house rules on how the property and various rooms were to be used were continually being rewritten to meet the needs.

In 1965, the club urged IMU director Jordan to establish food service for its members. From September 1965 to nearly the end of November, the IMU offered “Georgian Room Tray Service for the exclusive use of University Club members and their personal guests on a daily basis from 11:30 – 1:00.” The self-service facility offered soup, sandwiches, salads, one hot entre and vegetable, and desserts. Jordan stipulated that
“In order to maintain this service on a satisfactory basis, you will have to provide a minimum of 125 customers per day.” The trial proved unsuccessful.

(As previously noted, so did another service. At the outset of the 1959 merger, the IMU offered 5% discounts to members in the public dining areas, with private seating spaces in the Tudor Room. Additionally, members could purchase “an associate membership” in the IMU for $1 per person on a six-month basis. This provided use of activities areas of the building at “student rates.” Neither discount service lasted.)

Only five years after forming as a combined organization, the club appointed a self-survey committee to “investigate the current state” of the organization. In 1965, the group reported it needed more time due to “the complex nature of the financial status of the Club and the possibility of an off-campus facility.” Further, “A stronger feeling than ever before has developed for off-campus facilities where Club members can be served meals and drinks.” Such a venture, the report stated, would be financially risky because meal and bar service might not pay their own way. The club was operating on a break-even basis at the time. The committee, chaired by Shelby D. Gerking, expressed concern that the catering department at the IMU was not cooperating fully in service to the club.

Five years later, board minutes of February 23, 1970 reflected the club was again looking at off-campus space. A high-powered committee had been appointed the previous year, consisting of William S. Armstrong, president of the IU Foundation, Frank B. Jones, the chief executive of the IU Alumni Association, and university and UClub officers. “There have been several committees for such a purpose over the years.” (Minutes.) Replacing that group in November 1969 was yet another committee. A footnote in the minutes stated, “One important factor in looking for new quarters…(will be) the raise in rent” by the IMU.

The committee went so far as to create another group, the Facilities Committee, to plan for off-campus facilities. Eleanor Auer was named chair.

The February minutes also state, "Mrs. Fattu (UClub president) reported that President Sutton, Chancellor Carter, and Chancellor Wells are interested in and in favor of off-campus facilities."

In a survey, members had expressed interest in private food service and a bar.

The Long-Range Planning Committee, then chaired by Jeannette Fattu, met on October 21. Committee member John Cooper voiced his concern “over having liquor in the club and thought it would be unwise to publish the club’s request for a liquor license.” The minutes state that IMU director Jordan suggested lockers in the club rooms, presumably for members to store their own liquor.

Among sites the committee explored as possibilities for an off-campus club location were the Poplars Hotel at North Dunn and East Seventh Street, the Sigma Chi
Fraternity house at East Seventh and North Indiana Avenue, Hanson House (located on the by-pass), a tract of land at Lake Monroe, land near the (then) Headly School, and a building at the IU golf course. The March 15, 1971 minutes stated President Wells “has expressed his approval of the (Hanson) site in a letter to Mr. Cooper” (president of the club).

In its meeting March 29, the board’s minutes reflect that the Fattu-led committee had expressed a preference for the Lake Monroe property but that Mrs. Fattu “mentioned several other possibilities for a club site...(including) SAE property near outdoor swimming pool…” The board asked Mrs. Fattu and her committee to continue their research.

In the end, after years of meetings and considerations, the UClub remained in its present facilities although continually struggling to produce sufficient income to break even, often failing to do so.

One of the most significant developments in the club’s history began in 1989.

Winston Shindell, director of the IMU, had proposed major changes in the building. In a November 1990 Chronology of Events of UClub renovation, he wrote in third person to IU-Bloomington Chancellor Kenneth R. R. Gros Louis, “…because of the sensitivity of the space and the ‘politics’ involved,” (Shindell) “requests the support and backing of the President” when he (Shindell) meets with the club’s board of directors. The chronology stated that “President Ehrlich reassures Shindell of his support and volunteers to join the meeting…”

At a special board meeting April 28, 1989, Ehrlich expressed that he wanted a club offering interaction between faculty, staff, alumni and the community. He believed clubrooms were under-utilized. The minutes stated, “His hope would be, a few years from now, that the University Club could provide such welcoming place for new faculty, staff, and spouses. Food and meals, and perhaps drinks. Maybe a pub.” He wanted the club “to enhance its image.”

The president stated his support of the organization. (1989 UClub report prepared by its president, Marcia Busch-Jones.) In her Program Statement of the club, Mrs. Busch-Jones wrote, “The University Club is an organization, a schedule of activities, and a facility.”

The club decided to focus on getting “faculty and staff, their spouses, and retirees of the Bloomington campus” to be members. “We plan to continue our programming of lectures, receptions, and presentations on a variety of topics and interest.” (1989 report) The organization decided “to unify its image as one club and discontinue references to constituent groups (e.g., Women’s Faculty Club), which are perceived as restrictive.”

It began promoting itself as “The NEW University Club of Indiana University.” Its booklet of programs for the 1989-90 year contained the following:
We at the University Club want to debunk some myths you may have heard about the club. If you’re a professional staff member, you may have thought this group wasn’t available to you. Not so. It’s called the University Club, not the Faculty Club, and lots of our members don’t teach.

We’ve made some changes. All our programs are now under the heading of the whole club. If some big, strapping fellow wants to join the needlework interest group, that’s just fine with us. And you’ll be just as welcome.

The booklet promoted the reservation of its space for public and private use and a 5 percent discount on meals in the Tudor Room. Dues were $17.50; $15 for new members. The club listed 14 special interest groups ranging from golf and cross-country skiing to Bridge and gardening. It offered luncheon and afternoon speakers (including Bloomington’s Angelo Pizzo, screenwriter of the 1986 film Hoosiers), evening events, tours on campus and bus trips to sites in Indianapolis.

Following up on President Ehrlich’s comments about the possibility of a pub, the organization wanted its facilities “to be a place for snacks and wine, beer” and “appropriate for a pre-game brunch or a post-lecture reception.”

However, during that same 1989-90 school year, the Marriott Corporation signed a contract to operate IMU food service. An alcoholic beverage permit was issued to Marriott for the exclusive right for food and alcoholic beverage service in the building. In 2009, the club waged another effort for alcoholic beverages to be made available on a regular basis in its facilities, served by IMU licensed staff, but that effort was abandoned. IMU continues to maintain the exclusivity of food and beverage for its contracted service provider.

In the 1991 building renovation, the club’s space was reduced to its current 6,265 sq. ft. on two floors. In relinquishing its space on the Mezzanine level, the club was successful in getting IMU director Shindell to convert hotel room space into an area for a billiards room on what is now the organization’s second floor. The university included new furnishings, draperies, and other items in the construction project cost. The UClub did not pay for the improvements.

Yet in 1992, the university again had concerns about the club’s appeal. Vice President for University Relations and External Affairs Doug Wilson appointed a committee to determine club direction. He said membership, which had been 1,000+ for two decades had been declining, attendance at club events was “disappointing” and room rental revenues “are down considerably now that groups can reserve other rooms in the IMU and serve alcoholic beverages.” The latter reference likely meant that such beverages could be served by the Marriott catering service. But the club continued its operations through effective leadership. It made more of an effort to engage the community as members and topics for speaker programs and it enhanced efforts to seek university and community rentals of space.
The club entered the travel business by offering international and domestic trips to members. Eventually it was competing with Meadowood retirement community and in an agreement with Meadowood, club members were allowed to register for Meadowood trips in exchange for the senior housing community’s residents receiving free membership in the club.

As with most social organizations, there have always been challenges in attracting more members. As early as February 1977 the University Women’s Club was concerned that fewer younger women were attending its events. Board minutes from that month show the club wanted to find a way to get Newcomers Club women to join them after the three-year Newcomers Club membership period. In a 1989 report, UClub was making a major effort to get faculty to join. Thus, club members became involved in a “buddy system” with individuals assigned to acquaint new faculty with the club. Similarly, efforts were begun to attract professional staff.

In time, the Men’s Faculty Club and Women’s Faculty Club along with the Newcomers Club and the Dames Club ceased to exist. A Women’s Faculty and Staff Club operated for several years, and it and the MFC formed a Luncheon Club in an effort to serve members, but that, too, was eventually discontinued as a name.

In 2016, Svetla Vladeva returned as manager of the club.

Today, the University Club and its University Women’s Club continue with an annual variety of programs and special events. In 2018, the two organizations created one programming committee for the ease of developing quality, non-competitive programs and activities. The lineup of offerings to members continued virtually via the internet and arguably as strong as ever throughout the course of the coronavirus pandemic.
Current

A variety of social changes over the decades led to fewer faculty and staff desiring – or having the time – to belong to the club. Membership is mostly retired persons who gather for an array of interest groups, special evening events and monthly luncheon presentations that focus on university, faculty, alumni and community subjects. The club remains an important part of their lives, offering education, entertainment, social contacts, and the furthering of friendships. Appointed in 2019, a membership committee proposed numerous steps to increase membership and its diversity including race and age. Membership remains open to current and retired faculty and staff, spouses, alumni, and the general public whether the person is an IU alumnus or not. As a perk to those faculty and staff who retired from university service with benefits, IU pays their annual fee if they apply for membership.

Utilizing its elegant yet warm furnishings, the club serves wide-ranging and multiple uses by more than 750 members, schools, departments, and other Bloomington campus-wide entities, families and the community. Uses include meetings, forums, workshops, lunches, dinners, receptions, weddings, retirement celebrations, career fairs, recruiting, recognition events, award ceremonies, and fraternity and sorority events.

Membership dues and space rentals continue to be the organization’s primary sources of income. Yet, there has been no significant updating of furnishings since the 1989 remodeling. A special project committee, appointed in 2019, looked at space, furnishings and equipment, identified needs and recommended funds to support them. Its report specified furniture and equipment that needed to be replaced or refurbished where possible. It said some carpeting needed replacement either by carpeting or wood flooring, draperies should be replaced, wallpaper removed, and repainting.
undertaken throughout the two floors. Also recommended were two funds, an annual one for smaller expense items and a larger one for significantly larger replacements and additions. The club’s board acted on the funding recommendations and members stepped forward in 2021. Much remains to be accomplished.

Through the past six-plus decades the UClub and IMU have been partners. In carrying out its purposes, the club and its important University Women’s Club provide thousands of dollars in revenue to Dining Services and Meeting Support annually. While the club supplies hostesses, Dining Services is the only allowed caterer for food and alcoholic beverages. Additionally, many out-of-town guests at events in club facilities stay in the Biddle Hotel’s rooms. Visitors eat and shop at the IMU.

As with virtually all social, civic, and fraternal volunteer organizations, a constant challenge has been to find a sufficient number of persons who wish to serve in leadership positions. A key decision by the UClub in 2004 was to develop “co” positions. For the 2004-05 program year, Clinton and Patricia Chase became co-president. In the one-and-one-half decades since, eight coupled pairs have served in the position and others have had the same arrangement as co-vice president.

As part of its outreach, the club has been engaged in scholarship. When it was formed in 1959, it had an Educational Foundation to receive funds for “scientific, literary, educational and charitable purposes” and to “grant scholarships, fellowships...to worthy students, teachers, and organizations.” It could also provide financial assistance to libraries, museums or art collections. However, records could not be located to show the scope of the fund’s efforts or when it ceased to exist. In the early 2000’s, a Scholarship Fund was established, and each year two or three scholarships have been awarded – typically, $1,000 per recipient per year – to IU students who work at the IMU. An annual appeal to members is the primary source of the funds.

The Future

As Indiana University celebrated its 200th birthday in 2020, the University Club observed 60 years in its home in the Indiana Memorial Union and continued quality service to its members. In addition to the house improvement project and membership committees’ studies, both the UClub and its University Women’s Club revised their constitutions and bylaws in 2020, further refining their operations and service as part of the university fabric.

The UClub’s purpose is “to promote the social and intellectual interest of its members through lectures, gatherings, trips and other events that provide education, enhance communication, and foster networking.”

The purpose of the UWC is “to promote friendship within the University community and beyond, to promote scholarship opportunities for Indiana University students, and to
offer social, educational and special interest activities for its members.” Women members of the UClub are automatically members of the UWC.

Challenging the UClub’s future are the unknown final effects of a coronavirus that began slowly encroaching on the world in late 2019. In March 2020, a worldwide pandemic was declared and IU began offering its classes only online, with prohibitions of any on-campus meetings and events. University staff were asked to work from homes unless their jobs (such as police) required them to be on the campuses. All spring athletics’ events were ordered closed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Commencements were cancelled. Every organization that had rented UClub space cancelled their rental agreements. The IMU, and thus the club, were closed.

By late March, club officers had begun assessing potential long-term financial challenges and preparing for operations that would be crippled. A budget was approved with knowledge the future could be dire. Nonetheless, the programming committee developed a slate of speakers and other events through the end of the 2020-21 operating year and offered them virtually, with speakers and attendees appearing on computer screens. When classes resumed in fall 2020, every student had to be tested for the virus once they came to campus for the first time. Throughout the 2020-21 academic year, students attended some classes in-person but mostly online. The university prohibited group meetings on campus and attendance at all athletic and cultural events was banned.

Although the club continued to operate in limited fashion beginning in March 2020, it had to meet monthly financial obligations. During the 2020-21 fiscal year (June-May), co-presidents Steve and Sandy Moberly worked doggedly to plan for the future along with the board and club manager Svetla Vladeva. One-half of the club's income – rentals – was not available but members showed their belief in the organization by
continuing to pay dues, the other half of revenues. A federal grant of more than $13,000 assisted in offsetting some expenses. The City of Bloomington offered low-interest loans to non-profit organizations and the club obtained one for $25,000, funds that could be drawn on as needed to help weather the pandemic.

A strong array of speakers and programs continued virtually once or twice per month throughout the 2020-21 fiscal year.

The impact of the pandemic began easing in spring 2021, but a worrisome variant was infecting an increasing number of those who refused or otherwise did not get vaccinated against COVID-19. IU, believing the worst had passed, announced plans for in-person classes for students in Fall 2021 and a return of attendance at cultural, athletic, and other on-campus meetings and events. All students were required to prove they had been vaccinated in order to attend classes. Hope for rental income returned to the club and in-person monthly luncheon and evening programs returned in earnest.

Despite some challenges for the future, the UClub has thrived because of the foundation built and enhanced by thousands of members who, over the decades beginning in 1912, served as officers, board members, committee chairs, program and event planners, and volunteers in more capacities than could be counted. And by paid staff and hostesses who have served with dedication, always striving to make the member and guest experience worthy of remembrance. The club’s place in the history and service to Indiana University-Bloomington has been an important one.
UNIVERSITY CLUB ROOMS

The Presidents’ Room
On the main level, it’s the club’s largest, with more than 1,800 sq. ft. of hardwood floors, sweeping ceiling, fireplace, grand piano, and fine works of art. Capacity ranges from 100 persons for a stand-up reception to 72 at nine rounds of eight chairs.

The Manager’s office, receptionist’s area, two restrooms and a kitchenette are also located on this floor.

The Faculty Room
On the second level, the club’s second largest, with a fireplace, grand piano, fine works of art, and a small library. Can be utilized by 75 – 85 guests.

A restroom and a kitchenette are also located on this floor.

The Library and The Reading Room
Both are used for small groups, UClub committee meetings, or by members who wish to read, use the television or computer, or engage in discussions with others.

The Billiard Room
Utilized by members, this room continues the tradition begun decades earlier by the club in providing relaxing entertainment.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

History researched and written by Kenneth A. Beckley, Co-Past President, University Club 2020-21. Published October 2021 and dedicated to the memory of Co-Past President Audrey J. Beckley who died of the coronavirus August 19, 2020.

Information for this document is from files in the University Club and Indiana University Archives and personal interviews.

IU Archives:
- University Club, Collection C172, Boxes 1 and 2.
- University Women’s Club, Collection C21, 1913-04.
- Women’s Faculty Club, Collection C308, 1923-88.
- Office of Women’s Affairs (Women’s Faculty Club, 1990).

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