



THE GFWC WOMANS CLUB OF MACCLENNY CLUB HISTORY

The GFWC Woman's Club of Macclenny traces its origins to the establishment of the "Mother's Club" in 1919, which later evolved into the present organization. Formally federated in 1920, the inaugural president was Mrs. C.M. Griffin, succeeded by Mrs. C.L. Hodges as the first president post-federation.

Membership dues stood at \$1.00 annually, payable at 10 cents per month. Initially, meetings convened in various locations such as homes and schools, eventually finding a venue in the local Eastern Star Hall on the first and third Friday of each month at 4:00 p.m. In the years 1994-1996, the club underwent a name change from Macclenny Woman's Club to the GFWC Woman's Club of Macclenny.

On May 15, 1925, a building committee was established to discuss plans for a club home. The committee's efforts materialized on May 24, 1928, when Sheriff Joe Jones and his wife, Alma, generously donated a well-located lot just across from the courthouse. Individuals contributed a total of \$1,760, ranging from \$1.00 to the largest donation of \$500. The present clubhouse was constructed in late 1929 and early 1930. In 1938, the club acquired an adjacent lot for \$200, paid in monthly installments. In June 1968, the Woman's Club deeded half the property to the Macclenny Lions Club, which had long assisted with upkeep, insurance, and maintenance. House committees from both clubs now manage maintenance, renovations, cleaning, and rentals.

Throughout its history, the club members have been actively involved in civic, school, health-related, and community activities. Initiatives included cleanup drives, obtaining streetlights, paving roads, and supporting the first public library in Baker County. During wartime in 1942, members volunteered to keep the club doors open, and the club purchased the first band uniforms. Recent projects include supporting the summer reading program, a covered walkway in Heritage Park, donations to various causes such as Canine Independence, Operation Smile, Heifer International, recycling, scholarships, and numerous monetary contributions for local, state, and national projects.

The club's commitment to health care dates back to its inception, including hosting clinics and supporting health and social issues organizations. The GFWC Woman's Club of Macclenny played a vital role in establishing the Baker Council on Aging, donating equipment and actively working with local nursing homes to provide comfort items for residents.

Over the years, club members have received awards at District, State, and National levels, earning certificates and three silver trays for Outstanding Projects. Former President Cheryl Lunn received the Lois B. Perkins Award for leadership in 2008. The club has maintained active participation in District and State meetings, conventions, the Southern Region Conference, and International Conventions since 1994 when Mary Finley attended the International Convention. Despite fluctuations, membership has persisted, starting with twenty members in 1925 and currently maintaining around 40 members