

# American Association of University Women, Brookings Branch Records

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## Collection Summary

**Identifier:** MA 15

**Title:** American Association of University Women, Brookings Branch Records

**Dates:** 1935-2007

**Extent:** 1.42 linear feet (1 record box, 1 document case)

**Creator:** American Association of University Women, Brookings Branch

**Language:** English

**Repository:** South Dakota State University Archives & Special Collections, University Station, Box 2115, 1300 North Campus Drive, Brookings, South Dakota, 57007

**Access Note:** Open. Materials must be used in-house and do not circulate.

**Preferred Citation:** Title or description of item, date, MA 15, box number, folder number, American Association of University Women, Brookings Branch Records, South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections, Brookings, South Dakota.

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## Abstract

The American Association of University Women, Brookings Branch, has played a significant role in advocating for women's education, community involvement, and social progress since its establishment. The branch has actively engaged in initiatives such as supporting early childhood education, fundraising for scholarships, and promoting legislative advocacy for women's rights. Over the years, it has adapted to changing societal needs, organizing study groups, community programs, and fundraising efforts that reflect its commitment to education and civic engagement. Key figures such as Gertrude Stickney Young, the branch's first president, and Vivian Volstorff, instrumental in its accreditation, have contributed to shaping

its legacy. Through its work, the Brookings Branch has fostered leadership, provided educational opportunities, and influenced local and national policies.

This collection preserves the history and operations of the Brookings Branch through a range of administrative and historical materials, including reports, meeting minutes, bylaws, correspondence, and financial records. These documents reveal the decision-making processes, organizational priorities, and evolving initiatives of the branch. The collection also includes newsletters, event programs, and promotional materials that highlight the branch's outreach and public engagement. Correspondence, news clippings, and a dismantled scrapbook provide additional perspectives on its advocacy and impact. Materials related to membership, fundraising, and policy development offer insight into its strategic and financial operations. Researchers will find this collection valuable for studying women's organizations, grassroots activism, and the intersection of gender, education, and civic engagement in local history.

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## **History**

The Brookings Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) was established in 1931 with 37 members under the leadership of Miss Gertrude Young. In 1950, after considerable effort, the national AAUW granted membership to all women holding degrees from South Dakota State College (SDSC), retroactively and currently.

The branch engaged in various initiatives, including operating a private kindergarten from 1932 to 1941 before its integration into the public school system. During World War II, members contributed to the war effort by distributing rationing cards, participating in Red Cross work, and salvaging materials. Fundraising efforts supported the National Fellowship Fund through events such as bridge benefits, style shows and selling various items.

Scholarship programs were a priority, starting with a fellowship for a junior at SDSC. In 1962, the program expanded to include scholarships for high school seniors and incoming college seniors. Following Miss Young's passing in 1964, the scholarships were renamed in her honor.

Study groups became a significant part of the branch's activities, addressing topics such as child study, money management, and international relations. From 1963-64, study groups were structured around four areas: community problems, cultural interests, education, and world issues. These groups contributed to various action programs, including promoting educational television, distributing reading materials abroad, advocating for special

education, and addressing urban space concerns, consumer education, and women's rights. Legislative engagement, particularly in education and gender equity, remained a key focus.

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## Scope and Content

This collection documents the activities and governance of the American Association of University Women, Brookings Branch, offering valuable insight into the organization's role in promoting education, women's rights, and community engagement. It includes reports, minutes, newsletters, programs, bylaws, and correspondence, though no series is complete.

The collection provides documents related to the branch's administrative functions, including annual reports, bylaws, financial and fundraising activities, and meeting minutes from both regular and executive board sessions. These records highlight the decision-making processes, organizational priorities, and project initiatives undertaken by members. Membership lists and reports on various projects further illustrate the group's impact on local and national issues.

Of particular significance is the documentation on accreditation efforts, project initiatives, and study groups, which reflect the branch's commitment to education and social advocacy. The history of the Brookings Branch contains valuable narratives on its founding and key figures, including Vivian Volstorff, who played a crucial role in the branch's accreditation, and Gertrude Stickney Young, its first president. The collection also includes correspondence, news clippings, and a scrapbook that was dismantled for preservation purposes, offering researchers insight into the branch's evolving role in civic engagement.

Newsletters and event programs further illustrate the organization's outreach efforts and evolving priorities over time. Fundraising records, member surveys, and policy documents provide context for the branch's financial and strategic decision-making. Photographs, brochures, and promotional materials add a visual dimension to the collection, offering a deeper understanding of the group's public presence.

This collection is a valuable resource for researchers studying women's organizations, grassroots activism, and local history. It sheds light on the Brookings Branch's contributions to educational initiatives, legislative advocacy, and broader societal issues, making it an essential reference for those examining the intersection of gender, education, and civic engagement.

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## Access Points

### Subjects

- Women college graduates--Societies and clubs
- Women in education

### Names

- American Association of University Women. Brookings Branch
- Volstorff, Vivian W. (Vivian Virginia), 1907-2002
- Young, Gertrude Stickney, 1883-1965

### Places

- South Dakota -- Brookings
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## Conditions Governing Access

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## Container List

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
1	1	Annual reports	1941-1958
1	2	Annual reports	1980-1989
1	3	Bylaws	1948, 1981-1983
1	4	Financial	1954-1993
1	5	Minutes	1935-1941
1	6	Minutes	1936-1943
1	7	Minutes	1940-1947
1	8	Minutes	1973-1982
1	9	Minutes	1982-1985
1	10	Minutes	1985-1990
1	11	Minutes	1998, 2003-2004
1	16	Bylaws	1992-1997
2	1	Suggestions for the president	1954-1965
2	17	Affiliate agreement	2004
2	19	Budget	2002-2006
1	12	Officer information	1995-1998
1	13	Member survey	2004
1	14	Membership	1996
1	15	Membership award	1985
2	2	Accreditation	undated

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
2	3	News Clippings	1969-1992
2	4	Collected booklets, pamphlets, flyers	1944-1993
2	5	Correspondence	1947, 1963, 1969
2	6	Correspondence	1985-1986, 1988-1990, 1992-1993
2	7	Correspondence	undated
2	8	History of Brookings Branch	1963-1991
2	9	Luncheon and Gift Basket Auction	2007
2	10	Member funeral programs	1991-1992
2	11	Photographs	1981, undated
2	12	Projects and study groups	1968-1998
2	13	Scrapbook (folder 1 of 2)	1953-1972
2	14	Scrapbook (folder 2 of 2)	1953-1972
2	16	Beacon	1996-2004
2	18	Brochure and button	2001, undated
2	20	Correspondence	2001-2005, undated
2	21	Fundraisers	1998-2005
3	10	News clippings	1995-1998
3	11	Policies and strategic plan	1989, 1996
3	13	Events	1995-1998
2	15	The Beacon	1985-1991
3	1	Brookings Branch	1955, 1975, 1981
3	2	Brookings Branch Gazette	1974
3	9	News	1999
3	3	Program Books	1946-1947
3	4	Program Books	1956-1957
3	5	Program Books	1964-1970
3	6	Program Books	1970-1975
3	7	Program Books	1977-1987
3	8	Program Books	1987-1993
3	12	Program books	1994-2005
3	14	Executive Board files	1998-2004
3	15	Dimensions - newsletter	2003
3	16	Minutes	2002
3	17	Bylaws	1996-2003
3	18	Policies	1996