**Hamilton Library  
Cumberland County Historical Society  
Carlisle, PA**

COLLECTION REGISTER

**Name:** The Lydia Baird Home Papers **MG-001**

Materials: Papers, Books, Bound Volumes (1917-1990)

Volume: 1.5 Linear Feet (Document Boxes 1-2)

Usage: No restrictions on these materials

HISTORICAL NOTE

The Lydia Baird Home for Aged Women was a facility operated by the Female Benevolent Society of Carlisle established in 1828. The Lydia Baird Home provided rent-free lodgings for elderly women who were physically able to care for themselves but could no longer afford to live in their current residences. The first mention of the Lydia Baird Home in the Female Benevolent Society’s minutes is in 1901 when Mrs. Henry J. Biddle of Philadelphia bequeathed it to the Female Benevolent Society. According to histories about the Female Benevolent Society, the Lydia Baird Home was originally established as the first Carlisle Hospital. Mrs. Henry J. Biddle, however, bought the hospital and named it the Lydia Baird Home after her sister who had died in 1876. As a result of growing up poor, Mrs. Biddle understood the suffering of elderly women who did not have homes of their own and were faced with the poor house or living in overcrowded houses with relatives. Because of her background, Mrs. Biddle enacted a plan to help these elderly women.

The Lydia Baird Home consisted of ten rooms, halls, two sitting rooms, and an apartment for the matron. Originally, each woman was provided with a stove so that she could cook for herself as well as with lamps. The wood stove was later replaced with a gas stove and the lamps with electricity. It was not until 1921, however, that electric lights were available in all of the rooms. In 1901 rules were enacted, and it was noted that there was difficulty in obtaining bequests because the Female Benevolent Society had not been incorporated. In 1902 Mr. and Mrs. Hays became the wardens and were noted as providing the guests with New Years dinner. Over the years, renovations ensued, and in 1928-1929, there were no applicants who could fill available rooms. An ongoing “controversy” had been about changing the name of the Home because it was believed that since the Home was named after an individual, it discouraged others from giving and financially supporting the home. The Biddle family, however, refused to allow the name to be changed.

The Lydia Baird Home was voluntarily placed under the Department of Welfare, committee on aging in 1962 meaning that the Home had to be approved annually and submit suggestions for improved safety. By 1965, it was officially decided that the Lydia Baird Home could not discriminate against guests or applicants for management positions based on race, color, or creed. Finally, in January of 1984, The Lydia Baird Home transferred its funds and trusts to the Sarah A. Todd Memorial Home because the services of the Lydia Baird Home were no longer needed in light of government programs and agencies, which provided assistance to the poor. In addition, the Lydia Baird Home had become run down and required extensive renovation and remodeling. The Sarah A. Todd Memorial Home, on the other hand, was in good condition and could provide care for elderly women over the age of fifty-five.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

This collection consists of two boxes. The first box includes seventy-five files of the women who were admitted to the Lydia Baird Home for Aged Women. Each file contains papers such as financial statements, letters of application, recommendations from pastors and others who knew the women well, doctor’s notes of health, sponsor sheets, and agreements to give up one’s current residence in order to move into the Lydia Baird Home. Some files also contain personal planners. There are also some files that include letters of application and correspondence with Mrs. Robert C. Todd of the Todd Memorial Home.

The second box of this collection continues with the residents’ files but also includes the Constitution of the Female Benevolent Society of Carlisle (1828) and other related documents such as Account notebooks with the Carlisle Trust Company, Dauphin Deposit Trust Company notebook, documents from the Orphan’s Court, the official court documents transferring funds and trusts of the Lydia Baird Home to the Sarah A. Todd Memorial Home in 1984, and letters from the United States Senate among other letters. Wills, trusts, and bequests, and newspaper clippings are also documented. Also included are minute books of the Female Benevolent Society of Carlisle from January 1884 to October 1, 1984 with a gap from July 1923 to October 1923.

The residents’ files are arranged by surname while the other documents in the second box are arranged chronologically.

COLLECTION INVENTORY

Box 1 MG-001   
Admission records of female residents at Lydia Bard Home

Folder 1) Elizabeth B. Baird

Folder 2) Jean Barbour

Folder 3) Clara M. Bear

Folder 4) Elsie Bentz

Folder 5) Inga Berg

Folder 6) Annie M. Boger

Folder 7) Laura Brandt

Folder 8) Lovina Bream

Folder 9) Katherine H. Brennaman

Folder 10) Florence Brubaker

Folder 11) Helen Byers

Folder 12) Mabel Burkholder

Folder 13) Verna J. Campbell

Folder 14) Clara I. Carothers

Folder 15) Mary Emma Ceartoss

Folder 16) Adolphine Chapman

Folder 17) Blanche E. Clippinger

Folder 18) Lillie Darr

Folder 19) Laura Drawbaugh

Folder 20) Mrs. Dasher

Folder 21) Mrs. Davis

Folder 22) Elizabeth Deitch

Folder 23) Laura A. Egolf

Folder 24) Mrs. Ernst

Folder 25) Mary E. Ewing

Folder 26) Sarah J. Faber

Folder 27) Mary Farrow

Folder 28) Myrtie M. Finkey

Folder 29) Kathryn Forsythe

Folder 30) Treva Fortney

Folder 31) Bessie M. Fought

Folder 32) Anna S. Frick

Folder 33) Irma Givler

Folder 34) Carrie Gordon

Folder 35) Ella Hays

Folder 36) Irene V. Hays

Folder 37) Alice May Heckman

Folder 38) Annie Heffelfinger

Folder 39) Elsie Highland

Folder 40) Emma Horst

Folder 41) Mrs. Hubbard

**Box 1- MG-001 (cont.)**

Folder 42) Colleen Hubbert

Folder 43) Dorothy Hubbert

Folder 44) Alice Johnson

Folder 45) Clara Johnson

Folder 46) Ida Kuhns

Folder 47) Nell M. Lentz

Folder 48) Alice Isabella Lichty

Folder 49) Leila Lindsey

Folder 50) Mrs. Long

Folder 51) Kathryn Martin

Folder 52) Matilda Brown Mentzer

Folder 53) Mary E. Messinger

Folder 54) Grace A. Miller

Folder 55) Marie Miller

Folder 56) Pearl D. Miller

Folder 57) Anna M. Myers

Folder 58) Mary K. Nickle

Folder 59) Eugenia Noll

Folder 60) Clara B. Ohrum

Folder 61) Eva Otstot

Folder 62) S. Mae Otto

Folder 63) Margaret Snyder Paden

Folder 64) Anna Mae Plew

Folder 65) Carrie S. Rice

Folder 66) Bertha Richcreek

Folder 67) Nellie F. Roney

Folder 68) Lillian R. Seitzer

Folder 69) Edith E. Shoap

Folder 70) Sarah B. Shoemaker

Folder 71) Emma Shover

Folder 72) Mary Smith

Folder 73) Velva E. Smith

Folder 74) Jane Spangler

Folder 75) **Madaleyn** Stanbaugh

## Box 2 MG-001

**Admission records of female residents at Lydia Bard Home**

Folder 2) Cora F. Waugaman

Folder 3) Mary V. Weightman

Folder 4) Minnie E. Werntz

Folder 5) Esta M. Wise

Folder 6) Leila Wise

Folder 7) Sara F. Wolf

## Box 2 - MG-001 (cont.)

Folder 8) **T. E. Yarnall**

Folder 9) Cera Zimmerman

Folder 10) Lucy Zimmerman

Folder 11) Mary E. Zimmerman

Folder 12) Miscellaneous

# Records of the Female Benevolent Society

Folder 13) Original Constitution of the Female Benevolent Society of

Carlisle, 1828

Folder 14) Records

Folder 15) Miscellaneous Papers

Folder 16) Wills, Trusts, Bequests

Folder 17) Wills, Trusts, Bequests

Folder 18) History of the Female Benevolent Society and the Lydia Baird

Home

Folder 19) Newspaper Clippings

Folder 20) Minute Books: January 1884-June 1896; July 1896-November 1904

Folder 21) Loose Materials from the 1884 Minute Book

Folder 22) Loose Materials from the July 1896 Minute Book

Folder 23) Minute Books: December 1904-May 1913; October 1913-September 1917; September 1917-July 1923

Folder 24) Minute Book: October 1926-July 1930

Folder 25) Minute Book: October 1930-June 1933

Folder 26) Minute Books: 1933-November 1941; December 1941-May 1955

Folder 27) Minute Book: October 195-April 1971

Folder 28) Minute Book: May 1971-October 1984

Folder 29) Lydia Baird Home Records

Folder 30) Blueprint and Lydia Baird Home Memorial Book

This collection register was prepared by Amanda Snyder, June 2010