Bloomfield Hills Seminary

Records, (1912-1918)
0.627 linear ft.

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HISTORY

In early June of 1912 a small group of Bloomfield Hills residents assembled at the home of William T. Barbour to discuss the formation of a small local private school. This meeting resulted in the establishment of a small corporation with capital of $5,000.00 which would fund the school. The objectives of the school were to “give the young people of Bloomfield Hills, and those from nearby towns, the opportunity to study in the country; to offer a course of study that will fit them for life as well as for college.” With these objectives in place, the Bloomfield Hills Seminary was incorporated in August.

Often referred to as the precursor to Brookside School, the Seminary was located on five acres at the corner of Woodward Avenue and Lone Pine Road, in a historic house built in 1820 by Ezra Parke. George Booth, who had purchased the property in 1910, offered use of the house and added a five-class-room addition with the caveat that the property would revert back to him should the school ever close.

Mary Eade, who had been the principal of the Detroit Seminary for Girls, became the principal and taught grammar and upper level courses, including History of Art. Elizabeth K. Seward (granddaughter of William Henry Seward of the Alaska purchase fame) taught intermediate classes including French, and Winifred Eastman was responsible for the elementary age children. The coeducational day school used the Montessori method of instruction.

In 1916, the trustees voted to change the name of the school to the Bloomfield Hills School. At its peak, there were eight teachers and fifty-one students enrolled. Due in part to the resignation of Mary Eade (who resigned to do war work) and the construction of new public schools in Birmingham and Pontiac, the school closed in 1918 after six years. The property reverted back to Booth who purchased all of the stock certificates back from the trustees.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This small collection contains correspondence, minutes, and stock certificates pertaining to the Bloomfield Hills Seminary between 1912 and 1918. It is arranged in alphabetical order. Additional materials can be found in the George Gough Booth Papers.
Box Number--Description

Box 1

1. Correspondence, 1918
2. Minutes (Excerpts), 1912-1918
3. Minute Book, 1912-1918
4. Report on Audit, 1918
5. Stock Certificates, 1912-1918