

“My fondest wish is that I could be in Seattle on a meeting day and so attend one more meeting. Oh, well...one can dream.”

— Margaret Siegley, 1987, written while holding her forty-year-old invitation to membership

In September of 1894, twelve women walked into a parlor on a Seattle hill and founded a literary club. They kept meeting — every other Thursday, through two world wars, a pandemic, and the deaths of every woman who founded it — for more than 130 years.

They left behind a million words: papers, minutes, letters, memoirs. This book is what was found inside. A dining-room ceiling that fell the night before the husbands came to dinner, and the fishnets that saved the party. An imaginary ship that sailed around the world through the Great Depression. A first woman principal, forgotten for eighty-one years and read back to life by the club’s own archivist. A prairie childhood, read aloud by a dying daughter thirty years after her mother wrote it down.

And one letter, mailed to the club in 1987 with a check for overdue dues, that is the reason this book exists.

Every quote is real. Every woman was real. Everything happened.

THEWOMENONTHEHILL.COM

Woven from the archive of the Queen Anne Fortnightly Club · Seattle, 1894–2025

THE WOMEN ON THE HILL · ANDREW CONRU

THE WOMEN ON THE HILL

A Story of Queen Anne Fortnightly

Seattle, 1894 - 2025