Bethlehem Area Public Library
Local History Collections
Finding aid for the Papers of Catherine L. Barlieb

Creator: Barlieb, Catherine L. (1889-1969)
Title: Papers of Catherine L. Barlieb
Dates: 1934-1970
Extent: 1.8 linear feet
Location: Bethlehem Room
Language: English

Abstract:
The papers of Catherine L. Barlieb (1889-1969) reflect her keen interest in bird watching through numerous notebooks containing detailed accounts of her walks around the city of Bethlehem, meticulous tables chronicling approximately 210 species of birds, and her work with school children through the Junior Audubon Clubs she organized. Barlieb's passion for wildlife is evident in her papers, offering the researcher an inside view of one woman's efforts to identify and chronicle numerous species, aiding in conservation initiatives and inspiring an interest in birds in the Lehigh Valley.

Access to materials: This collection is open to research.

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Preferred Citation: [Item], Papers of Catherine L. Barlieb, 1934-1970. Bethlehem Area Public Library Local History Collections, Bethlehem, PA.

Biographical Note:
A devoted bird watcher, Catherine L. Barlieb (1889-1969), also known as the "bird lady" spent three decades carefully identifying and recording her observations of approximately 210 species in Bethlehem. An elementary school teacher, Barlieb became fascinated with birding in 1930 and disseminated her passion for wildlife to children by organizing the first Junior Audubon Club in Edgeboro School in 1933, followed by similar clubs in both the Nitschmann and Neisser Schools. In teaching her pupils to observe and identify birds, collect owl pellets and express

themselves in dramatic sketches and mock trials, Barlieb inspired in them a deep appreciation for wildlife conservation.
Beginning in 1933, Barlieb began recording her frequent walks in her notebooks, detailing bird sightings, weather conditions and interactions with other bird watchers. At the same time, Barlieb kept meticulous records of the species she identified, tracing their appearances chronologically to learn more about birds' habits and behavior. In 1965, the Moravian College Conservation Association published a compilation of her notes and a chronicle of the species she identified in table form. *Bethlehem's Birds as I Found Them 1933-1962*, characterized by its delightful vignettes and reliable research, is a legacy of Barlieb's passion for the richly diverse birdlife of the city. It is a captivating precursor to the ecology and conservation movement of the late twentieth century.
In addition to her teaching and Bird watching, Barlieb was an active member of the Lehigh Valley Bird Club, National Audubon Association, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association, and the Bethlehem Natural Science Association. Always eager to serve her community, Barlieb also dedicated many hours to volunteer work in the YWCA, St. Luke's Hospital and the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind.

Catherine L. Barlieb passed away on January 16, 1969 at the age of 79.

Scope and Content:
The papers of Catherine L. Barlieb (1889-1969) reflect her keen interest in bird watching through numerous notebooks containing detailed accounts of her walks around the city of Bethlehem, meticulous tables chronicling approximately 210 species of birds, and her work with school children through the Junior Audubon Clubs she organized. Barlieb's passion for wildlife is evident in her papers, offering the researcher an inside view of one woman's efforts to identify and chronicle numerous species, aiding in conservation initiatives and inspiring an interest in birds of the Lehigh Valley.

The papers are organized in five series. The **Correspondence Series** (1965, 1970) consist of two letters, both addressed to Robert P. Snyder and relate to Barlieb's published work *Bethlehem's Birds as I Found Them 1933-1962*. The **Professional Association Series** (1934-1967) documents Barlieb's involvement with the Bethlehem Natural Science Association, the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association and the Junior Audubon Clubs she organized at the Edgeboro, Neisser and Nitschmann Schools. Reports, newsletters, correspondence and newspaper clippings make up this series. The Junior Audubon Club subseries is of particular interest as it includes some of Barlieb's reminisces of her involvement with the three schools, photographs of some of the children, dramatic sketches performed by the children and the radio programs in which Barlieb spoke about the clubs. The **Notebooks and Research Series** (1934-1968) consist of Barlieb's carefully documented data on bird sightings. For the most part, records relate to Bethlehem's birds and reflect data compiled for Barlieb's published work on the subject. Incidence tables chronicle the variety of species identified by Barlieb while several notebooks contain observation data by additional observers mentioned in Barlieb's published work. Many of the notebooks contain personal reflections about Barlieb's bird walks combined with newspaper clippings depicting the weather conditions or unusual events. The Reference materials subseries contains articles and poems about nature by various authors, copies for Barlieb's own reference. The **Writing Series** (1934-1965) consists of several handwritten manuscripts. A revised manuscript of *Bethlehem's Birds as I Found Them, 1933-1962* as well as the printed copy are included. A supplement to the books entitled *My Note Books and I: A*

Supplement to Birds of Bethlehem as I Found Them, 1933-1962 can be found in three versions and a similar work *Just Notes* consisting of brief diary entries also reflects Barlieb's bird watching efforts. A number of short essays on topics such as the seasons and Bethlehem's Predators illustrate Barlieb's interest in ecology. The **Other Observers Series** (1958-1968) consists of the records and notes of Mrs. Eunice Schafer, fellow observer mentioned in *Bethlehem's Birds*, during bird watches around the country.

Organization of the Papers of Catherine L. Barlieb

1) Series: Correspondence (1965,1970)
2) Series: Professional Associations (1934-1967)
    a. Subseries: Bethlehem Natural Science Association (1960)
    b. Subseries: Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association (1940-1967)
    c. Subseries: Junior Audubon Club (1934-1948)
3) Series: Notebooks and Research (1934-1968)
    a. Subseries: Incidence Table
    b. Subseries: Notebooks
    c. Subseries: Reference Materials (undated)
4) Series Writings (1934-1965)
    a. Subseries: *Birds of Bethlehem as I Found Them 1933-1962*
    b. Subseries: "Just Notes"
    c. Subseries: "My Note Books and I: A Supplement to Birds of Bethlehem as I Found Them, 1933-1965"
    d. Subseries: "Some of Bethlehem's Birds (As I Found Them)"
    e. Subseries: Short Essays
5) Series: Other Observers (1958-1968)

Names:
Barlieb, Catherine L.
Snyder, Robert P.

Subjects:
Bird-watching.
Birds-Pennsylvania-Lehigh Valley
Birds-Ecology.
Wildlife conservation.

Container Listing

Folder Title	**Date**	**Box**	**Folder**
Series 1: Correspondence	1967, 1970		
Scope Note: Consists of two letters addressed to Robert P. Snyder			
Barlieb, Catherine L. "Supplement" to Birds of Bethlehem (includes comments about the book, personal notes to Barlieb)	1965-07-13	1	1
Richter, Helen Moyer	1970-07-25	1	1

Series 2: Professional Associations 1934-1967

Subseries A : Bethlehem Natural Science Association 1960
Scope Note: See Box 2, Folders 16-22 for notebooks entitled “Field Trips Out of Town” for Natural Science Association Surveys.

A Report of the 1960 Field Trips of the Bethlehem Natural Science Association	1960	1	2

Subseries B: Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association 1940-1948

Annual Reports	1940-1962	1	3
Correspondence	1948-1955, undated	1	4
Newsletters, 14-23	1946-1954	1	5
Newsletters, 24-27, 29-31, 39	1955-1967	1	6
Newspaper Clippings	undated	1	7
Publications -articles, pamphlets, conferences	1929-1959, undated	1	8
Reports of the President	1958-1960	1	9

Subseries C: Junior Audubon Club 1934-1948
Scope Note: Organized by Catherine Barlieb during her work as a teacher in the Bethlehem School District. The first of these clubs began in 1933 at Edgeboro School. A similar club was organized at Neisser School and Nitschmann School. Each club was divided into groups based on age. Children participated in field trips, class work and a variety of projects, including the collection of owl pellets that sparked a nation-wide interest in the Neisser School. Barlieb composed dramatic sketches for the children to perform and short instructional stories to be used in the clubs.

Edgeboro School	1934-1935, undated	1	10
Neisser School	1941-1948,undated	1	11
Nitschmann School	1936-1938	1	12
Club information -Association of Audubon Societies	undated	1	13
Presentations and radio programs	1947, undated	1	14
“Reminiscing with the Bird Clubs”	undated	1	15
Writings (dramatic sketches, nature study)	undated	1	16

Series 3: Notebooks and Research, 1934-1968
Scope Note: This series consists of Barlieb’s carefully documented data on bird sightings. Records relate to Bethlehem’s birds and reflect data compiled for Barlieb’s published work on the subject.

Subseries A: Incidence Table
Scope Note: Consists of handwritten tables and index cards recording sighting data of Bethlehem's birds. Information corresponds to the incidence table at the back of Barlieb's published book Bethlehem's Birds…

Incidence table	1934-1962	1	17
Incidence table - by month	1935-1965	1	18
Incidence table - by year	1934-1963	1	19

Index Cards (arranged by American Ornithologists Union checklist)

Horned Grebe-Virginia Rail	undated	1	20
Sora-Northern Horned Lark	undated	1	21
Prairie Horned Lark-Paula Warbler	undated	1	22
Yellow Warbler-Song Sparrow	undated	1	23

Subseries B: Notebooks 1934-1968

Notebooks entitled "Bird Records for the City of Bethlehem Only, 1934-1963" (2 notebooks, both contain a listing of birds according to the A.O.U (American Ornithologists Union) checklist, handwritten tables, notes by Barlieb, wildlife conservation stamps, and articles from "Game News" about some of the species.

Notebook 1 # 1-50	1934-1963	1	24
Notebook 1 # 51-100	1934-1963	1	25
Notebook 1 # 101-150	1934-1963	1	26
Notebook 1 # 151-218	1934-1963	1	27
Notebook 2 # 1-50	1934-1963	1	28
Notebook 2 # 51-100	1934-1963	1	29
Notebook 2 # 101-150	1934-1963	1	30
Notebook 2 # 151-217	1934-1963	1	27
Bird Sightings Notebook # 115-160	1934-1963	1	32
Bird Sightings Notebook # 161-210	1934-1963	1	33

"Birds of Bethlehem" Notebooks
Series of unlabeled notebooks containing lists, diary entries, newspaper clippings. Similar to the information contained in the Bird Walks notebook, but less detailed.

Birds of Bethlehem Notebook	1958-1962	1	34
Birds of Bethlehem Notebook	1962	1	35
Birds of Bethlehem Notebook	1963	1	36
Birds of Bethlehem Notebook	1964	1	37
Birds of Bethlehem Notebook	1965	1	38

Birds of Bethlehem Notebook, list and notes	1966-1968	1	39
Birds of Bethlehem Notebook,“An Amateur’s Beginning”	1934-1954	1	40
Birds of Bethlehem Notebook,“Birds by Month”		1	41
Birds of Bethlehem Notebook, Observational Records	1934-1962	1	42
Birds of Bethlehem Notebook, Record of Warblers	1934-1964	1	43

Notebooks labeled “Bird Walks”
Notes are titled “Birds Seen in Bethlehem by Ralph Mancke, Walter Thurber, Mrs. Schafer, Marion Barnes and Myself.” Handwritten lists, dated journal entries, newspaper clippings recording Barlieb’s walks.

Bird Walks Notebook	1933-1936	1	44
Bird Walks Notebook	1937- 1938	1	45
Bird Walks Notebook	1939-1940	1	46
Bird Walks Notebook	1941-1942	1	47
Bird Walks Notebook	1943	1	48
Bird Walks Notebook	1944-1945	1	49
Bird Walks Notebook	1946	1	50
Bird Walks Notebook	1947	1	51
Bird Walks Notebook	1948	1	52
Bird Walks Notebook	1949	1	53
Bird Walks Notebook	1950	1	54
Bird Walks Notebook	1951	2	1
Bird Walks Notebook	1952	2	2
Bird Walks Notebook	1953	2	3
Bird Walks Notebook	1954	2	4
Bird Walks Notebook	1955	2	5
Bird Walks Notebook	1956	2	6
Bird Walks Notebook	1957	2	7
Bird Walks Notebook	1958	2	8
Bird Walks Notebook	1959	2	9
Bird Walks Notebook	1960	2	10

Notebooks labeled “Field Trips Out of Town (1937-)” Contain handwritten notes, dated journal entries, lists, clippings, tour guides

“Bird Observations Out of Town”	1937-1949	2	11
“Natural Science Society Botanical Survey”			
Field Trips Out of Town	1947-1952	2	12
Field Trips Out of Town	1953	2	13
Field Trips Out of Town	1954-1957	2	14
Field Trips Out of Town	1958	2	15
Field Trips Out of Town	1959-1962	2	16

“Time of Arrival and Leaving”- Bird Calendar	undated	2	17
As It Was	1935-1958	2	18
As It Is	1959-1963	2	19

Subseries c: Reference materials (undated)
Scope Note: Writings and articles about bird watching. Includes essays by various authors copied by hand into notebooks and collected poems about nature and God by various authors.

Collected poems about nature and God by various authors	2	20
Essays by various authors (on topics such as bees, winter, and wildlife)	2	21
Materials about hawks and owls (2 folders)	2	22-23

Series 4: Writings (1934- 1965)
Scope Note: Consists of several handwritten manuscripts. A revised manuscript of Bethlehem’s Birds AS I Found Them 1933-1962 as well as the printed copy are included. A supplement to the book entitled My Note Books and I: A Supplement to Birds of Bethlehem As I Found Them, 1933-1965 can be found in three versions and a similar work Just Notes consisting of brief diary entries also reflects Barlieb’s bird watching efforts. A number of short essays on topics such as the seasons and Bethlehem’s predators illustrate Barlieb’s interests in ecology.

Subseries a: “Birds of Bethlehem As I Found Them, 1933-1965” (Revised), handwritten manuscript.

Birds of Bethlehem As I Found Them - Introduction	1933-1944	2	24
Birds of Bethlehem As I Found Them	1944-1955	2	25
Birds of Bethlehem As I Found Them	1956-1965	2	26
Printed copy of “Birds of Bethlehem As I Found Them	1965	2	27

Subseries b: “Just Notes”
Scope Note: Brief diary entries beginning in 1935. There is a longer handwritten version of this manuscript as well as a shorter condensed version beginning with 1934.

Just Notes	1935-1960	2	28
Just Notes	1934-1952	2	29

Subseries c: “My Note Books and I: A Supplement to Birds of Bethlehem As I Found Them, 1933-1965”
Scope Note: Two Handwritten versions of this manuscript were found. They are not exact copies, but contain different vignettes from Barlieb’s notebooks. A third typewritten version (accompanied by a handwritten copy) is labeled by Snyder as Barlieb’s addition

to Bethlehem's Birds. This note is dated 1988 and the text contains entries between 1960-1965. Please note that the labeling of the manuscripts as versions 1, 2, and 3 are arbitrary designations imposed for the purpose of organization and do not reflect Barlieb's intentions.

Version 1	1935-1944	2	30
Version 1	1945-1954	2	31
Version 1	1955-1965	2	32
Version 2	1934-1944	2	33
Version 2	1945-1945	2	34
Version 2	1955-1965	2	35
Version 3	1960-1965	2	36

Subseries d: "Some of Bethlehem's Birds (As I Found Them)"
Scope Note: Consists of a list of species conforming to the A.O.U. (American Ornithologists Union) standard checklist. This list is an excellent index to the organization of Barlieb's observations and notebooks because she often used this numbering system in her note taking. The list also conforms to the incidence table at the back of her published book *Birds of Bethlehem*…

A.O.U. numbers 1-210	undated	2	37

Subseries e: Short Essays (undated)
Scope Note: Contains the following titles: "The Adventures of a City Bird Watcher"; "An Amateur's Year with the Birds"; "The Balance of Nature Concept"; "Bethlehem' Predators"; Bethlehem's Rare Visitors"; It is Winter"; "Tis Spring"; What of the Future?"; "Why We Should Have Bird Sanctuaries" (1 folder)

Short Essays	undated	2	38

Series 5: Other Observer (1958-1968)
Scope Note: This series consist of the records and notes of Mrs. Eunice Schafer

"Bethlehem Area" (handwritten notes)	1966-1967	2	39
Field Cards - completed Audubon Daily Field Cards for various trips around the world.	1958-1965	2	40
Other observer notes	undated	2	41
Trips to Nueces County, Texas	1968	2	42
Photocopies of clippings	undated	2	43