

100 years is a lot to celebrate!

Centennial Celebration Guide for Branches and Members

We want as many of our members and branches as possible to mark the occasion in their own community. Here are some suggestions for holding celebrations in YOUR town!

Whether you are a branch or an at-large member, there are strong benefits to making this a public event to crow about!

The visibility will help WILPF in so many ways. And it can make a big difference in your community too!

Your event could mean new members for existing branches, or increased interest in starting a new branch!

It's a great way to get young people and folks with an interest in history involved.

And it's a strong reason to connect with local media!

We'll have suggestions for doing all of that below.

Connecting with US celebrations

To find out about and participate in national celebrations and to see what other branches are doing to celebrate the centennial, please email centennialcoordinator@wilpfus.org.

What you can do in your own community!

There are many things (both large and small) that you and your branch can do to celebrate the centennial. Any of them will make your branch more visible, strengthen your visibility in your area, lead to new members for your branch or maybe build excitement to start a new WILPF branch!

1. Please send out a notice about the conference to all your branch members. Include the sign-up website!
2. You can add the centennial celebration to your webpage.
3. Are you a member of another group? Invite them to the celebration. Everyone is welcome at The Hague.
4. Start a crowdfunding page. Not sure how to do that? Check out the crowdfunding guide

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/15e096gY4AFvmeq1zKHPy8ywe5P2U0iRmOkMqYyzhrWc/edit#heading=h.3ygjjqvzrq2r> or write to the centennial coordinator.

5. Hold an event for the Growing WILPF! campaign that is raising funds to support our peace activities in the US and internationally.
6. Host a branch meeting to discuss and celebrate our founding mothers.
7. Host a movie screening of "Crossing Borders" or "Women, War, and Peace." If you need a copy of the movies, please let us know.

Going to The Hague

One really great way to celebrate the centennial is to go to The Hague for the International Conference in April. Thousands of people will gather to honor the 100 years of WILPF peace building and to chart a course for the next 100 years.

The conference is April 27-29, 2015 at the World Forum in The Hague, Netherlands. For more information visit www.womenstopwar.org. If you register with your branch mates, there are discounts for groups. We hope to see you there!

What other Branches are doing

Branches around the country are engaged in some fun, informative, and downright celebratory activities to showcase our 100 years of peace building. From the West Coast, WILPFers and a cutout of Jane Addams will travel on a Peace Train to Chicago to celebrate the event at Hull House. Branches are partnering with local libraries to display and discuss archives of WILPF documents. Book clubs reading about Jane Addams and the other founding mothers are happening coast to coast. Some branches are holding fundraisers to expand the Growing WILPF! campaign and others are joining with universities to introduce young women to WILPF and peacebuilding for the first time.

How-to plan your event

- **Get a committee together to help plan this.** Two heads are better than one and four or six make it easier to spread both the work and the enthusiasm. Then no one feels it's too much for them alone. If your branch is small, or you are an at-large member on your own, join with someone else, another group or a friend who is also strong and feisty!
- **Hold the event someplace FUN.** Book the meeting room of the most popular coffee shop in town, or at a private room at a fun and fancy restaurant/bar or at the house of someone everyone enjoys being around, a local "celebrity." Make it someplace accessible, popular, and maybe a new place in town. Better to have it be a little smaller and cozy than an enormous space with too few people.

- **What if there is a cost?** Try to find a place that does not charge for the space. But if necessary, consider charging a nominal admission price to cover the cost of the room. If possible, charge just a little more than the cost, so the event can contribute to your WILPF branch fund, or to gain enough seed money to START a new branch. Ask around. Where do other organizations meet when they want to celebrate but don't have a lot of money?
- **Food and drinks?** You can encourage guests to order off the menu at a restaurant and settle their own bills. Or if it's not at a restaurant, you can make it a potluck and have everyone bring something special. Your "sponsor" might be willing to help provide some food, plates, cups, etc. Offer wine and beer or ice tea and coffee. Have your members bring some homemade cookies or whatever they are known for! Scottish Pasties? Kielbasa and Pierogi? Spaghetti?

Make it FUN! There are ways to make it gracious without spending a fortune. Ask a friend to prepare flower decorations. Ask a local musician to play the piano or harp or accordion. Ask someone to perform a poem or reading of one of Jane Addams' speeches. Order a life-size photo of Jane Addams from https://www.lifesizelegends.com/H58084-Jane-Adams-Cardboard-Cutout-Historical-Woman-Women?filter_name=Jane%20Addams. Check with the centennial coordinator if you have questions.

- . You can offer to have folks get their photos snapped alongside Jane! Be sure you have a way of getting them their photos!

You can also have a life-size photo (just put their face on top of someone's long length body) of someone else, more contemporary, but appropriate... perhaps the President, a popular State Legislator, a historic labor leader like Samuel Gompers, or Martin Luther King, Jr. Abraham Lincoln; Bella Abzug or some other famously feisty woman!

- **Find a sponsor!** If there is a prominent Progressive contributor in town, would they sponsor your event? Maybe pay for the room, printed materials and food? They may never have heard of WILPF, or they may not know about WILPF's long history. This is a great way to let them know more. Even if they say "NO thanks" to sponsoring, maybe they'll attend and bring some friends. Maybe the local Unitarian Church would be willing to sponsor!
- **When to schedule it?** Always a tough question. You know your community better than anyone. Not on Wednesday nights when folks go to church? Not on Saturdays during football season? Ask around to see if there are conflicts you can avoid. Then go for it! There is never going to be a perfect date for everyone! A lot depends on what kind of event it is. A lecture? A brunch? A potluck dinner? A bagged lunch speaker? A library display?
- **How far ahead should you plan it?** If you begin planning 3 months ahead of time, and get your ducks in a row, you have extra time to spread the word about your event. Leave at least a month for open attendance meetings. Send invitations at least 3 weeks in advance and be clear if you want an RSVP.

- **Whom to invite?** Each of you knows more people than you think you do. Whom do you go to church with? Whom do you talk politics with? Who usually invites you to their fundraising or social events? Invite EVERYONE, and be prepared for just a small percentage to show up.
- **How to invite folks?** Written invitations are wonderful and make it feel very special. If you type up an invitation and print them out, try to write personal notes at the top, signed by people who know the invitees. There are some nice invitation templates on our website.

If you choose to invite folks **by phone**, be sure you actually speak to them, instead of just leaving a message.

If you **email**, ask them to confirm that they got your E-Vite!

If you want to have an **open invitation**, be sure to advertise the meeting or event at least a month ahead in local bookshops, coffee shops, libraries, grocery stores, farmers markets or coops, anywhere people gather.

Ask churches to post this in their newsletters.

Ask progressives to spread the word for you, and bring friends.

- **Cosponsors?** Chances are you have worked with partner organizations in town for years. You support them in so many ways. You show up for events, you donate, you serve on boards or committees, and you support them with membership fees. Now is a good time to ask them to return the favor.

Offer to let them set up a table at the back of the room if necessary.

But insist that co-sponsor responsibilities include either a financial donation to the event, bringing a minimum number of people, advertising the event in their newsletters and meetings and emails, or buying a certain number of tickets.

- **Pass the hat!** Even if you choose not to charge admission, consider passing the hat to offset your costs or to help fund your branch's future efforts at recruitment or activism. You plan to do great work! Makes sense to ask folks to invest in your future!
- **Order a banner from our website or make one yourself** from (felt or canvas) that makes the name Women's International League for Peace and Freedom very visible. Maybe combine it with your branch name... or a slogan you like. Consider "Empowering Strong Feisty Women for over 100 Years" or "Peace – Justice – Human Rights – The Environment". You can use this for all sorts of actions and protests and rallies, so they know WILPF was there! Information on the banner options will be posted on the growingwilpf.com site in the coming weeks.

- **Ask for HELP!** We can help. *Contact us* for advice or support. But look locally too for help. You might consider asking a local marketing company to donate some time to help you advertise the event. You could ask a young graphic designer to design a flyer for you and invitations. You could ask a local media person to cover the event. You could ask the local librarian to recommend people to invite. The more people you ask for help, the more your community is invested in your event.
- **Invite local celebrities** -- Invite the mayor and city council members. Invite local legislators. Invite media representatives. Invite prominent businesswomen. Invite leaders of the political parties. Invite local celebrities people respect and admire. Invite progressive donors – they need to learn more about WILPF! Invite pastors of local churches. Invite African American leaders and Native American leaders. Invite college faculty members. Invite former officeholders. Invite former branch members and their families. Invite leaders of ally organizations – labor unions, environmental groups, farmer coops, alternative medicine representatives, chairs of the political parties and of political groups.
- **Have a SIGN UP form! VERY IMPORTANT!** Capture the contact information for everyone who comes. Use it to send out thank you notes or membership applications for your branch. Keeping a good list of ‘community supporters’ is important to the continued life of your branch. And if you are an at-large member, you want to ask attendees if they are interested in STARTING a local WILPF branch!
- **What other groups do you (and others) belong to? Ask them to participate or promote your event.** Groups like the League of Women Voters, the NAACP, the local labor unions, the local women’s shelter, the library, churches, the Unitarian Church, the Quakers, the National Lawyers Guild, the ACLU, Move to Amend, environmental groups, farmer coops, Veterans for Peace, Code Pink, women’s groups, social justice groups.

Don't assume they won't help. ASK them *HOW they will help!*

Below you will find some examples and suggestions on how to set up different events.

Library Papers

Many libraries and individuals have papers from the founding mothers of WILPF and its early years. During the centennial years, several libraries are hosting events to showcase these papers (including the Swarthmore and New York Public Library). You can have your local or university library or a local museum showcase your WILPF papers.

Step 1: Determine if you have any papers in your local area. If you do, we are on our way. Papers can include journals, letters, books, newspapers, etc.

Step 2: Speak with a local librarian or curator to see if showcasing your papers would be possible. You can request a short or long showcase and request a space that would accommodate them.

Step 3: Plan an event to launch the showcase. This is often the most appealing part for your partner organization because it garners them attention as well.

Step 4: Invite interesting speakers to discuss the papers (possibly the owners or experts on the papers or WILPF).

Step 5: Ask local restaurants to donate food, wine, or tea to have at your launch event (if your partner organization allows this).

Step 6: Invite community members to join you at the opening.

Step 7: Hang flyers and send out media releases to community media to advertise your event.

Tip: This is a good place to use a committee and to have your partner organization help you plan and advertise your event.

Book Club

You can start your own book club or suggest books for the book club at your local library (or one you already belong to).

Step 1: Pick out some books. A search on Amazon shows hundreds of books on Jane Addams and other founding mothers. Some suggestions are

Women at The Hague by Mary Jo Deegan

Democracy and Social Ethics by Jane Addams

Newer Ideals of Peace by Jane Addams

Emily Greene Balch: The Long Road to Internationalism by Kristen Gwinn

The Women and the Warriors by Carrie Foster

Step 2: Find a location (using your branch meeting is a great way to start a book club). For locations you can host at a member's home, the local library, or a local coffee shop.

Step 3: Make some flyers (Appendix A) advertising your book club. Hang these around town. Make sure to notify your local Unitarian Universalist Church to print in their newsletter.

Step 4: Develop several discussion questions to ensure the conversation keeps moving.

Step 5: Host your book club. End your session with an invitation to The Hague!

City Hall Celebration

During Women's History Month, women's groups around the nation got together at city halls and celebrated women's contributions to their communities. Wouldn't it be fun to have a birthday celebration for WILPF at city/county halls! You can invite other women's groups to partner, invite the mayor or other prominent figures to speak. You can also get on the city council agenda and have your celebration during a meeting!

Step 1: Contact your local city hall administrator and find out the permitting or room request procedures. (Find out how you can be included on the city council agenda).

Step 2: Pick a date and fill out the paperwork.

Step 3: Invite partner organizations to participate.

Step 4: Invite community members and prominent community leaders to speak.

Step 5: Pass out flyers and advertise on social media and with the newspaper.

Step 6: Have your event. Make sure to have a big birthday cake for everyone to share.

Fundraising

Fundraising can be a difficult task. The first place to start is by starting a crowdfunding page. If you need more guidance in how to start a fundraising page, visit the guide at <https://docs.google.com/document/d/15e096gY4AFvmeq1zKHPy8ywe5P2U0iRmokMqYzhrWc/edit#heading=h.3ygjjqvzrq2r> . Fundraising for the centennial is an important role of celebrating for the 100 years. As mentioned above, one helpful thing is to always pass the hat and ask for donations at all your events. You can also sell tickets to events. Other ideas include selling merchandise, hosting a bake sale, having an auction, etc. If you need help with fundraising or fundraising efforts, please contact the centennial coordinator.

Tea Party

Having a tea party is a fun way to involve community members in the 100th anniversary. You can even turn it into a fun play on words with the Boston Tea Party or an Anti-Tea Party (in response to the current political tea party).

Step 1: You could select the theme as “Well Behaved Women Seldom Make History.” It is the perfect way to lead the discussion toward WILPF and founders like Jane Addams.

Step 2: Local a place to host your tea party. It could be someone’s home, a church, a community center, a park, etc. Select a date.

Step 3: Invite mothers and daughters, aunts, grandmothers, and women of your community to participate. Determine if you are going to charge for tickets or hold a free event.

Step 4: Collect materials. Ask women to lend you their tea service items (often mismatched items make for a cute tea party). Collect linens (such as table cloths).

Step 5: Ask for donations for food. And select a menu. Finger foods are best like cucumber sandwiches, fruit trays, cakes, muffins, etc.

Step 6: Make discussion cards for each table around WILPF issues and current peace and women's issues.

Step 7: Set up your event and have fun!

Other Event Ideas

SHOW A SHORT 30 Min. FILM ABOUT WILPF

Crossing Borders - 1/2 hour video created in 1987 by the Film Project for Women's History and Future documents highpoints of WILPF US's history.

Peace Train to Beijing (1995 - watch 11 minute trailer here www.youtube.com/embed/dq7-Y7YIkAs) or visit GreenValleyMedia.org website for many more WILPF videos.

The DVDs Crossing Borders, and Peace Train to Beijing are documentaries worthy of viewing. Show them to your own branch membership, or to the public. Either way, combine the viewing with a social occasion. You can request the DVD by emailing RobinLloyd8@gmail.com. You will have to pay for the shipping but the DVD will be free.

INVITE A SPEAKER to talk about WILPF at this 100th Anniversary.

We have several good lecturers within WILPF. Find one in your area by checking in with our Centennial Coordinator, Heather Wellman. You may decide to offer a small honorarium for the speaker or pay for travel. But if they are close enough that may not be necessary. You may have a local historian who would be willing to do some research on Jane Addams and WILPF and give their own lecture. Jane was called by J. Edgar Hoover "the most dangerous woman in America." Maybe you can use that title for your event!

HAVE A COCKTAIL PARTY. Invite younger folks or professional women to celebrate at a fun local watering hole, and plan to make a pitch about the history and accomplishments of WILPF.

START A JANE ADDAMS BOOK CLUB for pre-teen or teenage girls.

There are great books you can suggest the girls read, then meet as often as they wish to discuss the books they are reading and the kinds of activism they can envision for themselves.

POLITICAL SOUP. Hold a potluck and ask folks to bring their favorite soups. You bring the bread and some wine and other beverages. Ask some folks to bring cookies or

cupcakes for dessert. Have some music. Show one of our DVDs or have someone speak about WILPF. Invite folks to get their photos snapped with Jane Addams! Maybe have someone dress up as Jane... or just furnish a large photo of her.

JUST DESSERTS. Invite people to come by in the evening after the dinner hour for dessert, or on a Saturday afternoon. Ask folks to bake something to bring. Or try to furnish some goodies. Be sure to include a speaker or film or entertainment of some kind that makes it fun. You could promote it as “Just Desserts From Strong Feisty WILPF Women.”

PIZZA PARTY. If you are near a college campus and can make contact with a women’s studies professor, ask if they will help you set up a pizza party that invites young women students for free pizza and to learn about WILPF and “the most dangerous woman in America – Jane Addams.” The college might help with the cost of food or beverages. Be sure you have someone there to speak about WILPF! Pass out membership applications, brochures, and “want to start your own local WILPF Branch?” cards.

JANE ADDAMS DAY – Have your mayor declare Jane Addams Day or Strong Feisty Women Day -- with a formal proclamation that recognizes Addams and WILPF and the members of your branch. Get the media to cover the event. Bring along a life-size photo of Jane so the mayor can get his/her photo snapped next to Jane Addams!

LEGISLATIVE PROCLAMATION – get your local legislators to issue a formal statewide proclamation about the 100th Anniversary of WILPF and the importance of Strong Feisty Women Peacemakers in your state! Get the media to cover it. Bring a photo of Jane! Honor local strong feisty women too!

STRONG FEISTY WOMAN AWARD DINNER -

Who doesn’t know and appreciate a host of strong feisty women in your area?! We all know these wonderful women!

They get so much done. They give of themselves. They take courageous stands. They act as mentors for other women.

Why not hold an event that recognizes THEM and honors WILPF?

Your branch can sponsor the event. Or as an at-large member, form a committee of women to make it happen.

Make it a formal dinner, a Wine & Cheese evening or a Saturday Brunch event. Ask people to nominate the awardees. **Make up Awards** to give them, or an inexpensive pretty Certificate or a gavel or a bullhorn!

Invite important folks in town to nominate people or serve on a committee to decide on which person(s) to honor.

Sell tickets, especially to the family and friends of the nominees and awardees.

Several branches already do this very successfully and it has become an annual event.

The Des Moines branch honors one local WILPF member, and one community member not in WILPF. They've honored a local newspaper columnist, a legislator, a historian, an organic farmer, an environmentalist, a doctor and many others over the years. It's a great way to get WILPF's name on the radar screen!

Invite a local bookseller to sell copies of a book about Jane Addams. *Here's a list of books* to choose.

Be sure you have handouts that indicate how people can join WILPF, and when your local meetings are. Ask if anyone wants to start a new branch if there isn't one already!

Get out of your comfort zone and consider inviting women of color, women from below the poverty line, women who are different from you, younger, working women, or stay at home moms.

Connecting with International Celebrations

The www.womenstopwar.org webpage is full of good and interesting information on the centennial celebration including an Atlas that shows all the celebrations around the world. Visit the webpage to find out more about the events at The Hague and to find out what our sister sections are doing to celebrate 100 years!

Appendix A: Book Club Flyer

Women's History Book Club

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

[Address of Event]

City

[Date]

[Time]



[Book Title]

Describe your book here. You can share information about your organization, the plans you're making for the event, or items that attendees should bring. If you don't need to provide more information about your event, delete this text.

Sponsored by
[Branch name]

Appendix B: Tea Party Flyer

You're invited to the WILPF 100 Year Anniversary

tea party celebration

[Add a brief description of your event here. To replace this or any placeholder text with your own, just click it and start typing.]

Where: [Event location]

When: [Select event date]

Time: [Event time]



Appendix C: Town Hall Celebration Flyer

