



Our Founding and the Early Years 1909 - 1919

On a fall day in 1909 a group of women gather at a private home on Spokane's South Hill. Were they gathering to do needle work? To drink tea and gossip? No, they were there to organize!

It was October 9 and Miss Inez DeLashmutt, a teacher, had invited a group of college educated women to her home to organize a local branch of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae. ACA, an early incarnation of AAUW, was having its Annual Meeting on October 26 and they wanted their branch to be admitted at that meeting. They had about two weeks to write a constitution and determine the "work to be taken up."

The women rose to the occasion. They formed a committee to write the constitution, then, they got to work. The following Saturday, October 16, they met at the home of Mrs. James Evans. The constitution was done! It was read and approved by the members of the newly formed branch. The next order of business – elect the officers. Miss DeLashmutt was rewarded for her efforts by being elected the very first branch President.

Various things familiar to us today had their roots very early on. Our "newsletter" came into being at the December, 1909 meeting when it was decided that members be notified "by Postal" of the date and place of monthly meetings. The October, 1910 meeting would be "in the form of a luncheon"; thus, the tradition of the luncheon meeting began. By the way, it took place at the Davenport! And, just as now, the social aspects of the organization were important. Such as when Miss Hughes, at the May, 1913 meeting, "extended an invitation to the ACA for a social afternoon at her home on June 7th." Do you think she served margaritas?

And speaking of margaritas, our scholarship program began in May of 1911. The branch had \$50 in the treasury. It was suggested the money "be lent in the fall to some senior in one of the State Educational Institutions...." The members didn't go for that, so it was proposed to put all the money in the bank and to set aside \$25 for a scholarship fund. The members liked this better. By October, 1911, they were able to set aside another \$25 for the scholarship fund. Then in March of 1912 the secretary reported that "...the scholarship fund of \$50 had been loaned for the coming year to Miss Julia Cox, a senior in the State University."

Service to the community has always been important to our branch. In 1919 a war poster exhibit was held to finance a "summer Rest Camp for needy mothers and under-nourished children." The exhibit cleared \$200. It's not known where that first camp was located, how many days it operated, or how many mothers and children were accommodated. Eventually the branch bought a site for the camp and operated it for many years.

From the beginning, the branch has been at the forefront of social issues. At the second meeting, November 6, "Miss DeLashmutt spoke of the work being done to elect a woman member for the school board, and asked the support of the ACA for Mrs. Prager, the candidate of the Woman's Clubs." (*Even though women weren't give the right to vote in Washington until 1910, the legislature, in 1890, reinstated the right of women to vote in school elections, which had been authorized by the State Constitution in 1889.*) January of 1910 had the members discussing the absence of a matron in the city jail and the need for ACA to support actions to remedy this situation. Later that year, child labor was a topic of discussion. Members voted to back a proposal to appoint a Child Labor Commissioner by Congress. Miss DeLashmutt spoke of woman suffrage in March, 1910, suggesting a survey of the attitude of the branch regarding this. The members voted against conducting this survey; we can only speculate as to the reason. The program for the January, 1911 meeting had Mrs. Fuller speaking on "Public Censorship of Amusements." One wonders if she was for or against censorship, or perhaps amusements.

When one reads the reports of these early meetings, there is a sense of familiarity in the images that come to mind. Except for the fashions, the absence of technology, and the formality of address (married women had no first names, single women at least did) I'm sure any one of us would feel at home at their meetings.



Of War, Radium, and Rest Camps Through the Roaring Twenties

Just as today, our members didn't sit around when there was work to be done. Several members gave their services in Europe during World War I. Branch President, Elizabeth Davis spent thirteen months in war work traveling with the Y.M.C.A. She, along with other volunteers, was assigned to General Pershing's First Division. They followed behind the troops, setting up canteens anywhere possible, in barns, tents, or shelled buildings. They believed they were the only women who ever actually hiked with the American Army. And these women weren't wearing military fatigues! When the troops were massing for the Battle of Soissons, they marched for five nights with the hospital unit to which they were then attached. They assisted about five thousand wounded over a period of five days at the town of Pierrefond.

Ruth West, another member and future Branch President, went to Europe with the Red Cross. She served as the "directress" of the canteen in Nevers from September 1918 to June, 1919. Her work, apparently, was not finished because in October, 1919 she went to Brenable, where she had charge of the Women's French Orphan Board. There was a French War Orphanage there, and when the directress left, Miss West took charge until March, when she returned to the U.S.

In March of 1921, a letter from the National Association was received telling of the proposed gift of one gram of radium from the women of America to Marie Curie. The cost seemed unobtainable, \$100,000! It was felt that the college women of America should lead in contributing toward this sum. We can all be proud that the Spokane Branch decided to give \$25 and urged its members to contribute individually as generously as possible. The treasurer reported in April that in addition to the Branch contribution, \$24.35 was received from members, and \$24.15 from other Women's Clubs in the city. The 1931 history of AAUW said it best: "Although the amount contributed by the membership...was only a small part of the whole fund, the branches throughout the whole United States still recall with pride and emotion the privilege they enjoyed in making even tiny contributions..."

The Branch's commitment to the needs of women and children was shown by the development of the Summer Rest Camp. This camp provided a needed break for working mothers and their children. In May, 1919, proceeds from a play netted \$215 and a War Poster Exhibit cleared \$200. This allowed them to rent a small cabin on Del Cardo Bay on Lake Coeur d'Alene where 22 mothers and their children were given a summer outing. The second summer, Taylor Inn on Newman Lake was rented and 90 mothers and children were served. The third year (1921) a cottage at Loon Lake was rented.

The Branch's dream of a permanent camp was met in 1922 when a site was purchased on upper Twin Lakes. There were three cottages and two tent houses on the site. The camp opened on July 12 and served 39 mothers and 98 children by early September. The records indicate that in the summer of 1923 the cost per person for one week was \$3.96; about the current cost of a latte! At the March, 1928 meeting, an "Announcement of our final payment on our summer camp debt was made." That summer the camp was run for 8 weeks in July and August. There were a total of 202 guests - 52 mothers and 150 children. The average cost per person increased to a whopping \$4.54!

Tune in next month for more adventures of the women of Branch-Spokane.

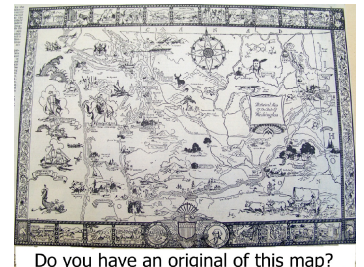


Politics, Fellowships, Finances, and Surviving the Depression

From Reba Hurn to Kim Thorburn our members have sought public office. And who was Reba Hurn? In November, 1913 she was a new member who addressed the branch “on the Legal Status of Women in Washington.” A recent graduate of the UW Law School, she had just joined her father in his law practice. By 1922 she was elected to the State Senate, the first woman to serve in that position in the State of Washington. She served two terms, during which she was chairman of the Public Morals and State Library committees.

In 1928 the Million Dollar Fellowship Fund was created. In October the branch voted to transfer \$1000 from the scholarship fund to this fellowship. Promotion by the national organization induced our branch to join with the North Pacific section in pledging an endowment of \$30,000; the estimated quota for our branch was around six hundred dollars per year. That was November 4, 1929. No one knew how the growing financial crisis was going to effect our branch’s ability to fulfill that pledge or to continue with other worthy projects.

To fulfill their obligation to the Fellowship Fund, “a historical map of the State of Washington” was chosen as a fund-raising measure. The map was researched throughout 1930 and ‘31 with the assistance of prominent northwest historians. Bertha Ballou, a widely known artist, was commissioned to draw the scenes for the map. Appropriate fanfare, including a color guard from the Washington National Guard, accompanied the map’s unveiling at the meeting of October 3, 1931. The map sold for \$1.50 or \$2.25 for a jigsaw puzzle. Either this item was not the great hit they anticipated it would be or the economic situation took its toll, because by October 1, 1932 there were still 3000 historical maps on hand and members were urged to take an active part in selling them. (Sound familiar, Nancy?).



Do you have an original of this map?

Branch leaders began to worry about finances as early as the spring of 1931. At that time they considered asking for help from the Community Chest to assist with maintenance of our summer camp, but instead decided to rent the cottages when not being used for the Summer Camp. (Rental to be \$5.00 for each cottage for a weekend.) The fall brought more concerns. The Board considered “the general financial condition of the association” and “recommended that each section present programs using its own talent” to cut expenses and suggested that the year books be mimeographed rather than printed if that was less expensive.

January 1932 arrived and the meeting centered on arguments presented in favor of keeping the Summer Camp or discontinuing it. The membership was told they would vote on this in February. Before that meeting, however, an emergency meeting was convened to consider a plan to negotiate with a suitable organization to take over the management of the camp. Unfortunately this was unsuccessful. The financial report by the treasurer showed they would be \$500 short to fund the branch’s two major projects, the Fellowship Fund and the Summer Camp. Undaunted they forged ahead, intent on running the Summer Camp despite the setbacks.

May 7, 1932, a Special Board meeting was called before branch meeting. Recent action for reorganization taken by the Spokane Savings Bank froze deposits, with the result being a major portion of the Summer Camp fund was not available for use. The Summer Camp would not be run that year; the camp would be leased whenever possible and the money used for charity work for women and children. By December it was decided to not open the Summer Camp in 1933, a decision that portends the end of the camp.

The branch opened a safe deposit box in September of 1932, but for what purpose? Clues emerge in the records for March 1933. Funds had also been tied up in the First National Bank and they had apparently become gun shy of the banks. They had placed the branch funds in the safe deposit box!

Of course the branch survived the depression, but the experience highlights the continuing demand on resources between national and local projects.



As Clouds of Depression Clear, Clouds of War Appear

The Branch didn't just survive the Depression, but came out of it in fairly good financial shape. And they started doing something that people do when they have money. They started spending it. They chose a new pet project in September 1934; they voted to give \$200 to the Child Guidance Clinic to provide for an executive secretary for three months. Support for this project continued for several years.

In 1935, Nursery Schools were made possible by Federal funds. AAUW provided financial support for the purchase of additional supplies. What kind of supplies? Well the Bulletin informs us that the "...school day begins at 9:00, with orange juice and cod-liver oil at 10:00..."¹ Yes, we bought the cod-liver oil.

Another project that the Board considered was the purchasing of a clubhouse. President Gladys Guilbert said in May, 1935, "Our next big venture should be the acquiring of a clubhouse...where we may meet and where we may keep the many, many things we have acquired, things and records are too valuable to be without a permanent home."² By January, 1936, the branch considered a cooperative plan with the Woman's Club to save the Club Building from foreclosure. After research and discussion the branch declined to assume the great financial responsibility that the project would entail.

Failing to obtain a clubhouse, they opted for chairs. They purchased two dozen chairs in April, 1936, for use at Branch and Section meetings. By November 1937 they were tired of hauling them around and decided to hire City Parcel Delivery to deliver and return chairs. When some of the chairs needed repair in September 1938 they discovered that "four...chairs belonging to us have been misplaced."³ Where could those chairs be now?

"With war clouds gathering across the sea and peace propoganda rife in the United States—does neutrality legislation become our only hope?"⁴ This was written in 1937, but our Branch's commitment to promoting peace began much earlier. A resolution in favor of the "Substitution of Law for War" was adopted by the Branch in April 1914. And in 1924 AAUW's national organization was one of nine national women's organizations that organized the National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War. Their main goal was to find a bold program for the abolition of war. In 1928 one of our members, Miss Ruth West, was selected as a delegate from AAUW to the Third Conference on the Cause and Cure of War held in Washington DC.

The 1930's marched on and the Spokane Branch continued to be involved with the peace movement. In April 1932, Miss Ruth West drafted of a cable gram to be sent to Dr. Mary E. Woolley, national president of AAUW, expressing our confidence in her as a delegate to the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments. Dr. Woolley was appointed by President Hoover to this conference in Geneva. The Branch promoted a luncheon meeting in February 1937 featuring Dr. Aurelia Reinhardt (former president of AAUW) under the sponsorship of the Emergency Peace Campaign. And AAUW had a table at the 1938 appearance of Miss Josephine Schain, successor to Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt as chairman of the National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War. Then in January 1939, Miss Ruth West was again appointed as a delegate to the Fourteenth Conference on Cause and Cure of War.

As the world moved closer to war, members of the Branch became more and more involved in peace efforts. And as war arrived, Branch members would become involved in humanitarian projects made necessary by the war's destructive path.

1 *Branch Bulletin*, January, 1936

2 *Spokesman Review*, May 5, 1935

3 *Branch Bulletin*, October, 1938

4 *Branch Bulletin*, March, 1937



...And Then There Was War

Even before the bombs fell on Pearl Harbor, our members were engaged in war relief projects and what they termed “defense work.” In July of 1940 the board met in special session to consider two requests received from National. The first was the “War Relief Project of AAUW,” requesting aid for refugee University Women of Europe. The Board responded and appropriated \$36 to care for one refugee for 3 months.

The second dealt with a cable received from the British Federation of University Women asking AAUW to take care of their children for the duration of the war. This resulted in a nation-wide move for the placement of several hundred British children. Since National wanted an immediate response, a special summer meeting of the general membership was called in order to get a program under way as soon as possible. The day after this meeting, the Spokesman Review reported that our branch president, Marian Quackenbush, had already received a call from a Spokane couple offering to take a refugee child. By August 1940 at least 10 Spokane homes were ready to receive British refugee children. We don’t know if any children ever arrived.

1941 began with the branch gearing up to take a survey of members’ skills and abilities and what talent was available for the defense program, AAUW’s way of cooperating with the National Defense Boards. This proved to be valuable because by the spring of 1943 the branch was handling many requests from the federal government for women trained in chemistry, physics and allied subjects who might assist in war work.

The welfare of military members, and their families, was very important to the Branch. They gathered and sorted 15,000 books for Geiger Field to produce a “splendid library”.¹ Soldiers of the Fourth Infantry, formerly at Fort George Wright, were in Alaska in November, 1941. They were not forgotten that Christmas because the AAUW Creative Writing Section sponsored a book drive and sent the books north. The wives of servicemen residing at Garden Springs Terrace were not forgotten either. The AAUW Defense committee, in September 1942, began a program of tea and entertainment every other Friday. Quite an energetic schedule!

From 1940 onwards, everything the branch did had a defense theme, especially their programs. Frank Lavagetto of the Rockwood greenhouses addressed the February 6, 1943 meeting with the subject “Vegetable Gardens for Victory.” Where would an article about World War II be without the mention of the Victory Garden? Dr. Esther Caulkins Brunauer of AAUW National Headquarters addressed the members at a special tea in September 1941. She spoke of having a personal conversation with Chancellor Adolf Hitler shortly after he came to power in 1933. The Spokane Chronicle reported: “She described him as neither very responsive nor eloquent in casual conversation. He would not be singled out in a crowd.... ‘The contrast between der Fuehrer’s personal and crowd personalities is marked,’ Dr. Brunauer remarked.”²

This defense theme included anything from sewing circles to fashion shows to when you rode the bus. The Branch Bulletin of February 1942 asked members to “Bring your Red Cross knitting to Section and General Meetings. You can listen while your fingers fly!” The 1943 College Day program featured a style show with the theme “Readin’, Ritin’ and Rationin.” And “Let’s Cooperate” was the headline in the Branch Bulletin of November 1942 reporting that the War Transportation Committee had asked that members not use the buses between the hours of 7 and 10 am and between 3 and 7 pm, except in case of emergency. I guess car-pooling hadn’t been discovered yet.

Despite all this, Branch members remained optimistic. By March 1943 a Post-War Planning Section was already organized. As they had done throughout their history, the members were looking towards the future.

1. Spokesman Review, November 16, 1941

2. Spokane Chronicle, September 30, 1941



Civil Rights . . . Equal Rights . . . and the Birth of Book Sale

V.E. Day had come and gone, but the needs of the people of post-war Europe remained. In 1946, the Creative Writing Section sent a box of food and clothing to a group of university women in Rauma, Finland. As a result of that first contact, friendships began between the members of the two groups. Our group became acquainted with a war widow, Mrs. Kaisu Tiusanen, the head mistress of a girls' high school in Rauma who expressed a wish to do some further study in English. An application for an International Study Grant was made to AAUW national on her behalf by Branch President Nellie Owen and Ruth West. Before she knew it, Kaisu became, as she put it "a person of a fairy tale,"¹ finding herself at the University of Washington for a year.

The International Relations Section took the lead in Civil Rights when it passed a measure in April, 1944 "recommending that any qualified women be admitted to membership in AAUW regardless of color, race, or creed."² The Board wasted no time; a special Board meeting was called in May to recommend approval of this measure at the next general meeting in October. By February, 1945 the board decided to sponsor a lecture by Mr. Carey McWilliams, author of the 1943 book *Brothers Under the Skin*. This was realized on March 23, when he spoke on the subject, 'A Practical Program for the Solution of America's Race Problem.'³ This prompted more board action when it "recommend to the general membership 'that study be started immediately as to what can be done to promote Fair Employment Practices legislation in the next Washington legislature.'"⁴

Spokane Chronicle: "Equal Rights Bill Meets Opposition - University Women Protest Measure..."⁵ AAUW opposed to equal rights? Well, no. Opposed to an equal rights amendment? Well, technically, yes. At least to the one proposed in 1939. Our branch joined other delegates at the state convention in April to support the Association's opposition to "An equal rights...amendment proposed in congress..."⁶ The reason? "It provides mere mathematical equality...and gives women no equality assurance beyond minimums..."⁷ By April 1950 things were different. Our branch had Kathleen Taft, Status of Women Chairman, briefing the members on the issues involved in the Equal Rights Amendment. They also sponsored her in public discussion groups in April and May at the Public Library, "to help us clarify our thinking on this controversial matter."⁸

Our famous book sale, we've all heard about it. But did you know that in September of 1951 it was Hannah Joss who settled on a second-hand book sale to support Fellowships? By the October 6th meeting she was announcing that "...the Book Mart will be held at the Bon Marche on January 25-26."⁹ And by November she had about 200 books for the sale. Now that lady wasted no time! But this wasn't the first time that Branch enlisted the aid of books to raise money. During the luncheon meeting of February 1949, members were entertained by a Book Fair. Members brought prized books they were willing to sell. Two auctioneers dressed in fashions from the Gay Nineties, sold the books. The minutes reported that they were excellent and witty saleswomen. Ah, they netted only \$30 from the Book Fair; perhaps they were more witty than excellent?

Follow-ups for the curious: Remember the Historical Map of Washington from 1931? By January 1941 the Board wanted the maps gone and left the disposal of the maps up to the Map Chairman. By April all the remaining maps had been sold for \$100. The finale came in April 1943 when they gave away 300 explanatory pamphlets which were left after all the maps had been sold. We last heard about the folding chairs when four went missing in October 1938. "Who has the chairs?" was the word in October 1945. A reward was offered for information regarding a rumor that the broken chairs were in someone's basement waiting for priorities on metal parts to be lifted. We have closure on the maps, but will we ever discover the fate of the chairs?

1. *Branch Bulletin*, October, 1948

2. Special Board Meeting, May 26, 1944

3. Branch Meeting, March 3, 1945

4. Executive Board Meeting, March 30, 1945

5. April 24, 1939, *Spokane Chronicle*, "Equal Rights Bill Meets Opposition"

6. Ibid

7. Ibid

8. *Branch Bulletin*, April, 1950

9. *Branch Minutes*, October 6, 1951



College Day...ends, Book Sale...begins, And yet another Headquarters Building

The 1950s passed fairly uneventfully. There were no wars to win, Korea was passing unnoticed. The Branch went about its business; old projects ended and new ones began.

From the very beginning, the Branch was interested in promoting college attendance for high school girls. In May 1916 the Branch considered sponsoring a yearly tea for high school senior girls to encourage them in going to college. The first program in January 1917 consisted of music and talks followed by a simple tea at the University Club. By January 1924 the affair had become such a great success they served tea to about five hundred! The cost, however, was a different matter. After determining that each Branch member would have to be assessed \$1.00 to cover the expense of the tea for 1925, they abandoned the tea that year. But the program proved too important for Branch members to discard it completely, because in May 1925 they decided to substitute it with a "College Day." This eventually morphed into an all-day affair involving musical numbers, inspirational speeches by AAUW leaders, individual sessions with Deans of Women from northwest colleges, and the inevitable style show. A major event during the 30s and 40s, it was suspended in the fall of 1949. With college information now available in the schools, the project was discontinued the spring of 1950. It was revived briefly by the Recent Graduates Section who held a scaled down version from 1953 to 1956.

If you ask any of our present members who were around in the late 1950s about what they remember most about that time, they will invariably mention the campaign to build a new National Headquarters Building. This wasn't a popular subject with many members. You see, for the second time since the inception of the Branch, members were being asked to support the acquisition of a headquarters building. Back in October 1924 the membership approved \$1000 for the National Club House. National had a different idea and assessed us \$1918! Final payment was made in May of 1927. Now, in April of 1958, the membership was told of an upcoming Building Fund Campaign and by December 1958 the Branch was told it had to come up with \$3240! Pleas were made at Branch Meetings and in the Bulletin for members to donate. They even started calling the building the National Educational Center in an attempt to loosen the members' purse strings. But in May 1959, after nearly a year of appeals, the Branch had raised only \$528. I guess those purses were sewn shut.

Remember Hannah Joss' first Book Mart, January 25 and 26, 1952? Well, it netted a profit of \$273. After the first couple years the members had pretty much cleared out all their closets and garages of unwanted books. By the January 1954 Book Sale they knew that if they wanted a book sale the next year they would need a committee to collect books all year. The Branch asked members to put out the word to friends, family and acquaintances that they were in search of books, any books! They even advertised in the newspaper. The books continued to come in and the Book Sale continued through the 1950s with the 1959 book sale netting \$362.67. The fund-raiser was slowly growing.

1959: the 50th anniversary of the Spokane Branch. They kicked off their celebration in April when the Branch hosted the Washington State Division Convention and the North Pacific Regional Conference at the Davenport Hotel. 206 AAUW members from the five states in the North Pacific Region attended the Conference. The highlight of the event was a "gala banquet on Friday evening" with "dinner in the beautifully decorated Marie Antoinette Room and the reception in the Elizabethan Room of the Davenport."² In October the Branch had a special "Golden Anniversary luncheon...at the Spokane Hotel."³ 270 attended, a record! Toni Savalli, as Program Chairman, presented a "narration in verse depicting high points in the fifty-year history of the Spokane Branch."⁴ Now, a half-century later, we are reviewing the high points of our one-hundred year history.

1. *Branch Bulletin*, May, 1959

2. *Ibid.*

3. Meeting Minutes, October 3, 1959

4. *Ibid.*



Tanganyika, Rare Books, Thursdays, And the Controversial Name Tags

Sections, originally called Study Sections, have been an integral part of our Branch for a long time. In the same spirit of the program the Creative Writing Section was created in 1948 to assist Finnish University Women,¹ the Spokane Trouble Spots Section promoted a program to purchase books for third-world countries called Books for Understanding. Ten dollars was appropriated by the Board, in March 1962, and other funds were added by other Sections. By January 1963 the Trouble Spots Section feared the program would have to be discarded because they were unable to locate a recipient for the plan. Fortunately, by the Branch meeting on February 2, the group reported they had found a recipient, Rosary College, a secondary level girl's school, in Mwanza, Tanganyika.² The Section continued this project, sending dozens of books, until April 1966.

Meanwhile, in May, 1962 the Board wanted to develop a worthwhile project for the Branch. In the fall, the group appointed to investigate possible projects, presented their report: the project would be the treatment, evaluation, cataloging and display of a Rare Books Collection at the Public Library. Already part of the Fine Arts collection, these books had never been counted and were in boxes, cases, and shelves throughout the library. "Crowded conditions have made display impossible. But in the new library there'll be room to let Spokane see the unique collection."³ The Committee began work in November and worked until February 1963 when the Library moved to its new quarters. Work continued afterwards and by February 1964 the committee turned their focus to unpacking, sorting and listing books which had been stored in boxes for many years. A rare books open house was held on November 11, 1964 to acquaint Branch members with the work the Rare Books Committee was doing and by March 1965 the Committee had completed their project.

In May of 1963, the Board was asked to support working with the Spokane Public Library in a once-a-month Public Culture Program. The Board agreed and the collaboration resulted in a series of adult education programs they called "Thursday Night at the Library." "Opening Night" was October 3 with a program called Broadway '63 which featured selections from five Broadway musicals of the last season. After presenting two more programs in October, the original idea of presenting a program twice a month was possibly rethought. In December, the programs changed to once-a-month and continued until May of 1967 when Dr. Pellegrini of the University of Washington really made Shakespeare come to life in his lecture "An Hour With Shakespeare."

Name tags controversial? One wouldn't think so. It would seem necessary for a group that numbered close to 400 and often had more than 100 women attend their luncheons. A suggestion was made at the May 23, 1955 Board meeting to purchase permanent name tags to help members become acquainted. But, apparently a study was needed. It determined in September that name tags could be purchased at 3 to 10 cents apiece. Seemed fairly inexpensive, but... The idea came up again at the November 1963 Board meeting. The board was divided on the issue and it was suggested that a committee check into it or drop the matter. Apparently name tags were adopted because by the January 20, 1964 Board meeting it was decided that name tags were going to be made for the February luncheon and the April *Branch Bulletin* made a plea for those who had any spare plastic name tag holders to bring them to the Branch meeting. Controversy again reigned in January 1965 when a member wrote the Board asking name tags be discontinued and giving her reasons. Ok, no tags would be used for the February meeting and a committee of two was appointing to look into it. Much ado about nothing?

1. *Branch Newsletter*, March, 2009

2. Currently Tanzania

3. *Branch Bulletin*, November, 1962



The Three “E’s” of the ’70s – and more!

Ecology was a buzz word of the 1970s and Spokane Branch was very much involved in all that the term implies. From collaborating with the Boy Scouts on collecting returnable and recyclable bottles and aluminum cans, to selling Christmas cards on recycled paper, to scheduling an Ecology Fair as a Branch Meeting, the Branch was very committed to the ecological movement. And speaking of ecology: What do you think of when you think of Spokane in the 1970s? Well, Expo, of course! Our second E. Branch members were involved early on with making phone calls in support of the Expo '74 Bond issue. Although the Branch was supportive of Expo '74, they were also supportive of historic preservation. (Our Branch always seems to be ahead of the curve on hot issues.) The April 1972 *Branch Bulletin* reported that “At the March general meeting... a 2/3 majority voted to support the Spokane Fine Arts Council and the National Historic Railway Society in their efforts to prevent the demolition of the Union Pacific and Great Northern depots.” Anyway, it was a good try.

1972 was a big year for the women of Washington. In February 1972 the *Branch Bulletin* reported about a bill of “importance to all women”, SJR 106 and its House equivalent HJB 61. If the bill was passed, it would change the state constitution to read: ‘Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex or marital status.’ That’s right, our third E: Equal Rights Amendment. By August the bill had passed both houses and would be on the November ballot. Branch members were encouraged to become involved with a Speaker’s Bureau Clinic to train speakers to promote the Washington State Equal Rights Amendment. The Board went further by appointing a Status of Women Chairman who would work with the League of Women Voters and the YWCA to inform the public on the Equal Rights Amendment. November came and our state constitution was changed for the better, and AAUW had played a part in it.

Throughout its history, our Branch has promoted and collaborated on projects within our communities, be they local, state or national. The three Es, Ecology, Expo, and Equal Rights Amendment are examples of such projects. But the Branch also developed its own projects - some successful, some not so. One of those not-so’s was the Rock Music Institute. They wanted to develop a program aimed at adults, to assist them in “communicating with today’s young people...”¹ The *Bulletin* went on to say “To ignore popular music and to maintain an arrogant posture can only increase our alienation from youth.” Even though the “Champagne Rock” Branch meeting in November 1971, featuring four members of the EWSC Modern Music class, was a great success, the Board didn’t think Branch members were quite ready for a full-blown Institute. In January 1972 the Board voted not to sponsor a Rock Institute “because its controversial aspect might result in disunity among our membership.” Hmm, and the Equal Rights Amendment didn’t? (Yes, there were dissenters!)

A successful project of the branch was reestablished in the 1970s. In November of 1970, the *Spokane Branch Bulletin* reported that the Branch had awarded a \$500 scholarship to “Mrs. Cynthia Sargent, a 23 year old Indian-American² woman...” This was the culmination of work by the committee that President Betty Bender appointed to “look into and report on possible ways of spending the extra money earned from the January book sale, after the named grant funds were given to the Fellowship Fund.”³ This was the first time since 1936 that a local scholarship, unaffiliated with our national Association, was awarded by the Branch. Local scholarships took a backseat to Association Fellowships until 1970 when, as reported by the February *Bulletin*, the “Association... decided to recognize ‘Local support and local educational contributions with fellowship funds.’” Our Branch Scholarship program was up and running again!

1. *Branch Bulletin*; December, 1971

2. Native American

3. *Branch Bulletin*; April, 1971



1980s Big Bucks Projects and a New Neighbor

The end of the 1970s was marked by the International Women's Year 1977. A series of meetings was held throughout the nation, the purpose being to advance the rights of all women and carry policy suggestions to the National Women's Conference in Houston later that year. The Washington meeting, held in Ellensburg in July, was a news-making event. The Religious Right came out in droves, registering two thousand women at the last minute. Topic meetings on abortion and ERA were jammed to capacity and conflict reigned supreme. Deena Killgore and Sharon Millay attended and presented a program at the October branch meeting entitled: "International Women's Year: Sisterhood or Chaos?" The October *Branch Bulletin* quoted Deena as saying that being there was "...one of the most interesting experiences of my life!"

The summer of 1981 provided Spokane Branch with an AAUW neighbor. That June the State Board gave approval to form a new branch. A committee was formed, composed of members from each branch, which would "define the areas of separation and cooperation." The Spokane Valley Branch AAUW was thus born.

The Branch's ability to fund scholarships came from the annual Book Sale. Being front and center in branch activities, it was a terrific fund-raiser. Over the years it continued to produce results such as in 1985 when it netted nearly \$7500! That haul enabled the branch to award nine scholarships of \$750 each. Each year there were dozens of applications for the scholarships; there were 91 applicants in 1984 alone. Traditionally held between mid-January and late February, branch members apparently became tired of moving books in cold and snowy weather because, in 1987, the Book Sale moved to mid-October. Of course the Book Sale also funded branch projects and projects sponsored by various community groups.

A discussion led by Betty Barcus at the November 9, 1987 board meeting led to the establishment of the Math/Science Awards for local high school girls, to be funded by Book Sale money. She would choose five outstanding students who would be honored at the May 1988 branch meeting. The following year, recipients were each presented with a certificate and \$20. This program, eventually renamed High School Scholars to match the similar AAUW of Washington's program, continued until 2004. After receiving a request that year to assist a deserving girl with tuition to Girls' State, the board voted in November to permanently change the program the following year to provide aid to other girls wishing to attend that program.

Book Sale monies had long been used to support branch projects and projects sponsored by other community organizations. This changed the 1980s with the establishment of the Community Projects Fund. It all started at the September 8, 1986 board meeting. Esther Gibeault told the board that a fund should be started, financed by donations or bequests, with the interest generated being used for community projects. The board approved the idea and by the October 13 board meeting she reported that the planning committee had met and generated the idea to initiate a "Reading is Fundamental" program. This program would eventually be called Spo-Can-Read and involved presenting fiction books to disadvantaged 4th graders to read and keep.

On a seemingly unrelated subject, the February 1987 *Branch Bulletin* was reporting that the Branch had been asked by the Washington Centennial Commission 1989 to plan a special project to observe Washington State's Centennial. The project settled on was a book chronicling the lives of Spokane area women, past and present. To fund the project, it was decided to put on a presentation called "Centennial Reflections Through Fashion," which was on a loan to us from the Spokane Valley Branch. Scheduled for May 13, 1989, there was already a waiting list by the May 6 meeting. The show realized a profit of approximately \$1870, enough to print the centennial book, now called: *By the Falls – Women of Determination*. The book proved to be, as the March 1990 *Branch Bulletin* termed it, "a runaway best seller!" After two printings, the profits from the book were in the thousands. And the relationship to the Community Projects Fund? These profits helped fund it.



Workshops, Fund-Raising . . . and May We Mention Men?

At the Association's national convention in 1987, AAUW voted to change its 106-year membership policy of women only and admitted men for the first time. The Spokane Branch made note of this, but men didn't rush to join. It was learned in November 1990 that President George H.W. Bush and Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell were both AAUW members. Perhaps the Speaker of the House of Representatives Tom Foley should become a member? The board agreed. The front page of the March 1991 *Branch Bulletin* proclaimed that Speaker Foley "accepted with pleasure" membership in the branch. It took 18 years before the next man joined the branch. In 2009 Ralph Fishburn joined. There's an interesting connection between these two men. Ralph worked as a volunteer on many of Congressman Foley's campaigns. And in 2006, in his role as President of Laborers Local 238, Ralph met with Mr. Foley at a Spokane fund-raiser.

Through the 1990s and into the 2000s, the branch was involved in providing programs for the community. In the fall of 1993, Marquita Meyer, with the help of Debbie Willson, wrote, and received, a \$2,140 grant from the Educational Foundation to present a play by a multi-cultural touring company that presents original plays that inspires dialog on current pressing issues. The Growth And Prevention Theatre, or GAP Theatre, which is still in operation in 2009, performed the play "Do I Really Make A Difference" in Spokane on March 3, 1994. The play focused on recognizing differences and the development of compassion for others. The performance was held at the Met Theater and it was estimated that between 200 and 300 people attended. But the money wasn't all gone. With what was left, the branch was able to co-sponsor Peggy Orenstein, author of *Schoolgirls: Young Women, Self-esteem and the Confidence Gap*, for a book reading, discussion and book signing at Auntie's Book Store on October 27. In the fall of 2001, the branch sponsored a Transitions Conference for women considering returning to college. And in February 2003, the satellite program College Knowledge for Adults, which provided information about beginning or returning to college, was co-sponsored by the Spokane Branch.

The writing was on the wall by the November 1992 board meeting. That was when the Book Sale Committee recommended that the branch have only one more book sale. That last sale was held in October 1993 and by March of the next year the board voted to discontinue it. A Spokane fixture for over 40 years, the idea for a used book sale was brought back from the national convention by Neta Frazier in 1951. She appointed Hannah Joss to look into the feasibility of such a sale. She did more than that; she organized the first Book Sale in January 1952. With the demise of the Book Sale, another fund-raising project was necessary. In the fall of 1994 discussion began on this topic.

By October 1994 it was decided to commission an artist to create historical buildings of Spokane that could be marketed at various hotels and shops that sell souvenirs. By the end of 1994 a chairman had been appointed and a committee formed. The preparation of the historical buildings fund-raiser, eventually called "Specially Spokane", continued through 1995. The first building, the Clock Tower, went on sale in the fall. Eventually there were three more buildings issued, the Carousel, the Bloomsday Runners, and the Campbell House. This was a fairly successful fund-raiser, but the supply of buildings was greater than the demand. Like the Historical Map of Washington in the 1930s, the branch had a difficult time divesting itself of the supply of product. The branch dropped the price on the buildings several times, but the branch still had more than they could sell. After a few years of moving them and storing them, the last of the historical buildings were given to attendees at the 2007 State Convention held in Spokane.

The scholarship fund got a big boost in 1997 when the branch received a \$20,000 bequest. To ensure the continuation of the scholarship fund, the branch resumed fund-raising in 2001 when the Dollars for AAUW Scholars fund-raiser was developed. Also a successful fund-raiser, it combined a raffle of donated prizes from local merchants with a silent auction and a special luncheon.