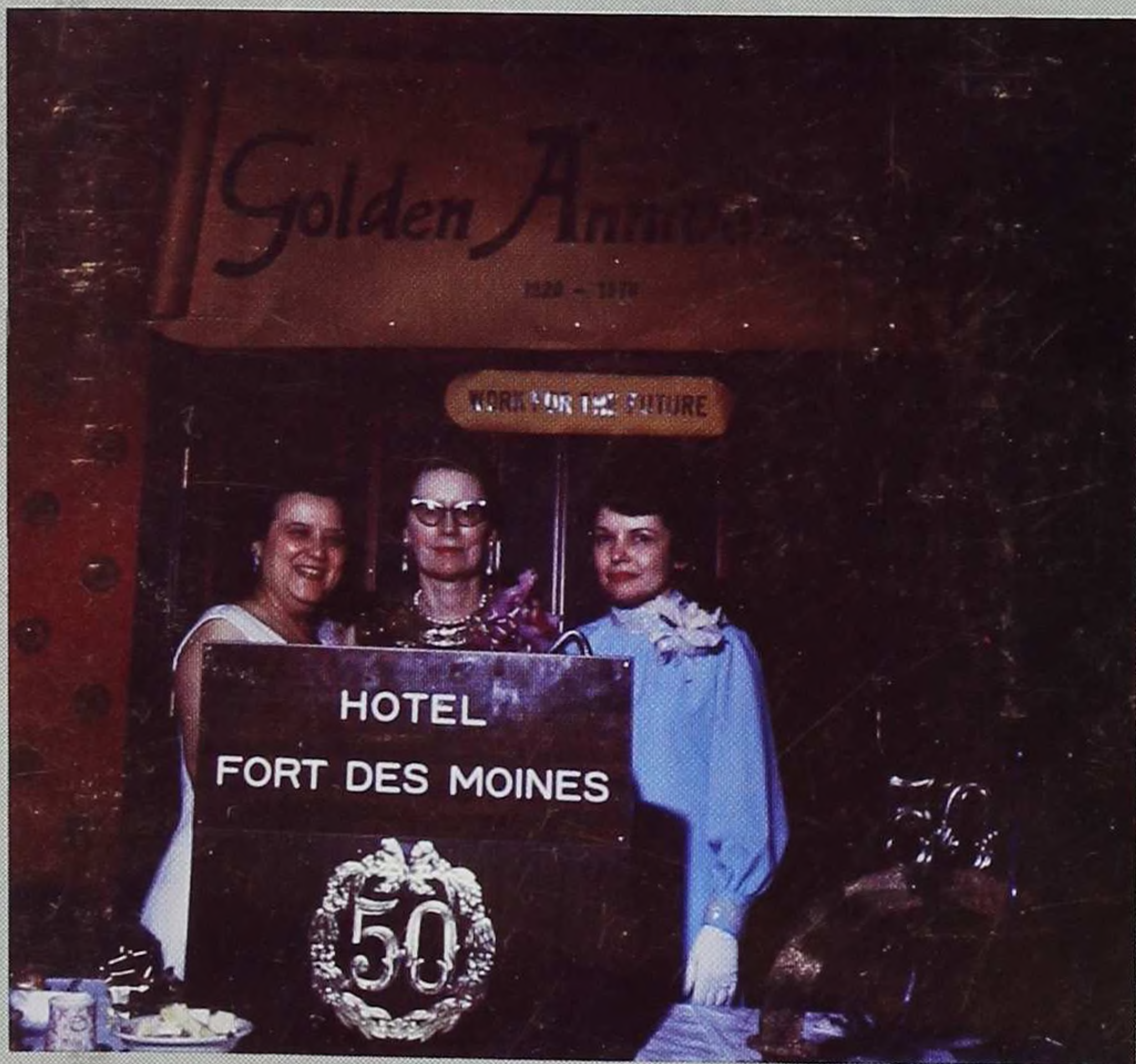


The PALIMPSEST



Golden Anniversary Convention, Des Moines, 1970
Osta Underwood, National representative at convention; (center) Ethel Cairns, outgoing president; (right) Marvell Harmel, incoming president, 1970-71.

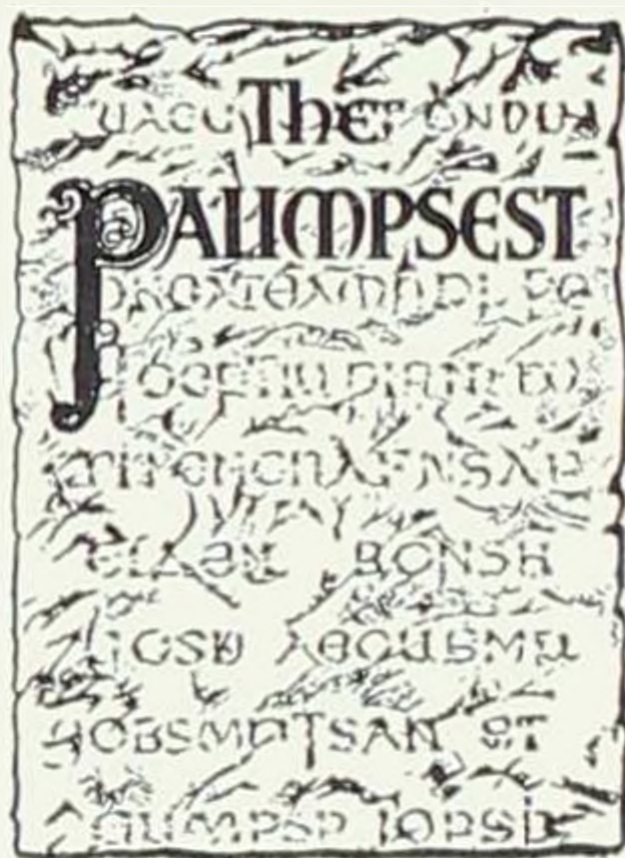
50 Years of the Iowa BPW

Published Monthly by

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Iowa City, Iowa

MARCH 1971



The Meaning of Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the record of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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Illustrations

Photographs used were assembled by Florence Falk, Essex, BPW co-ordinator for this issue honoring the Iowa Business and Professional Women. She also wrote the article on "District History."

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THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

VOL. LII

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The Iowa BPW—1919-1970

During its first fourteen years of development and growth, the Iowa Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs was too preoccupied with making history to think about writing it. It was not until 1933 that Mrs. Elizabeth Kenney of Waterloo, past state president, was appointed chairman of a committee to complete a history of the Iowa BPW during the year and see that copies were presented to each club. Mrs. Kenney fulfilled her assignment promptly, and at the Fifteenth Annual Convention of the Iowa Federation, held in Mason City in 1934, she presented the history for the years 1919 to 1934.

In her Prologue, Mrs. Kenney wrote: "The responsibility of a pioneer is tremendous. The way of a pioneer is rough. To be a pioneer requires a vision followed by a never-ending courage and faith." The Iowa pioneers were a small group of businesswomen from Waterloo, Fort Dodge, Cedar Falls, Des Moines, and Seymour who gathered at the Y.W.C.A. building in Des Moines,

May 31, 1919. Miss Florence King, Chicago, president of the Women's Association of the Chamber of Commerce of the U.S.A., addressed the group. She told of a proposed meeting to be held in St. Louis in July, where it was hoped that the foundation for a National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs could be worked out. Since Iowa wished to be eligible for formal representation, a tentative organization was formed with the following officers:

Miss Emma Wilson, Des Moines, president
Miss Ada Pence, Des Moines, vice president
Miss Florence Harsh, Des Moines, secretary
Miss Pearl Harnish, Des Moines, treasurer

A Board of Directors was also named, and the women present were urged to attend the St. Louis meeting. When the invitation came, four women from Iowa responded: Miss Wilson, Miss Lynn Malmquist, Sioux City; Mrs. W. D. Ives, Waterloo; and Miss Ruby N. Byers, Cedar Rapids. They returned filled with enthusiasm and the determination that the business and professional women of Iowa would do their part in this national organization of women. Mrs. Kenney continued in her Prologue:

The pioneers of our Iowa Federation were equipped with pickaxe and spade; the vision they carried home from St. Louis was a vision of growth and of friendship for our Iowa women. They came home with these tools ready to clear the way, and to build roads and bridges so that

you and I could follow. How discouraging it must have been then to them. How epoch-making it seems to us now. That they builded well, that they developed carefully, has resulted in an influence, a progress, a prestige which is ours because of their choice—their courage and their vision.

The First Annual Convention, repeatedly postponed "because of heavy snows, a fuel famine, and epidemics," was finally held April 5, 1920, at the Hotel Savery in Des Moines, with twelve accredited delegates representing seven clubs in Clinton, Cedar Rapids, Mason City, Des Moines, Boone, Waterloo, and Sioux City. A constitution was adopted. The first elected officers of the Iowa Federation were:

President—Mrs. W. D. Ives, Waterloo
Vice President—Mrs. Alice Slocum, Cedar Rapids
Corresponding Secretary—Lynn Malmquist, Sioux City
Recording Secretary—Miss Mayme Stanley, Boone
Treasurer—Miss Ethel D. Henry, Clinton

Throughout the 20's the Federation continued its growth. The Fourth Annual Convention, held in Mason City in May, 1923, marked an interesting milestone in its history. A motion was adopted that the Federation take immediate steps to incorporate and Miss Helena M. Mitchell of Davenport was named chairman of the committee which prepared the articles of incorporation and by-laws. Waterloo, site of the 1924 convention and home of the first club to complete its affiliation with State and National Federations, became

headquarters of the Iowa Federation. The articles of incorporation and by-laws, after adoption, were recorded in Black Hawk County, May 14, 1924. At this time there were twenty-one clubs with a membership of 1,253 women.

One of the more unusual conventions of the Iowa Federation was the one held in Des Moines in July, 1926, with Miss Frances E. Plath of Davenport presiding. The meeting adjourned after only one day and was followed immediately by the national convention, with Iowa club members as hostesses. A distinct honor was conferred upon the state by the election of Miss Plath as National Recording Secretary. Prior to this, she had had the distinction of being the first person to be twice elected to the Iowa Federation's highest office. Further honors came in 1931, when she was named to the Finance Committee of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, organized in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1930.

In 1928 the first National Business Women's Week, as outlined by the National Federation, was inaugurated in Iowa. The observance of this special week has continued to the present, often with proclamations issued by the Governor endorsing the contributions and goals of the BPW.

The years 1929-1930 marked great strides in organization and membership. Not only was Iowa's first district organization meeting held, but the Federation entered into a plan for regional

conferences to be convened in years when there were no national conventions. The North Central Region, comprised of Minnesota, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa, met in Gary, Indiana. Mrs. Rosa E. Cunningham of Des Moines was elected chairman of this first conference.

The year 1930 also saw the largest membership gain in the history of the Iowa Federation, thanks to the untiring efforts of Mrs. Elizabeth Kenney, State Membership Chairman. The year closed with a total membership of 2,453 women in forty-one clubs. The 1930 convention marked the end of a decade of progress toward the goal of "Better Business Women for a Better Business World."

Mrs. Kenney closed her history of Iowa Business and Professional Women's Clubs with a roster of the 50 clubs in the Federation. An Epilogue summed up the accomplishments:

The stage is set, the scenery arranged, the actors prompted and the rehearsals criticized; all the result of our early pioneers. The workers of our Federation are behind the scenes watching the play from the wings Our stage is not artificial, it is life itself, full of ideals for the future of our women. This setting is ours during the coming years, because of the vision and courage of our pioneer women and because of the splendid loyalty and cooperation of our members who year after year have done their share and more to develop and carry on for the business and professional women of tomorrow.

When Miss E. Persis Sheldon of Iowa City became a member-at-large of the Iowa BPW in

1928, the office of State Historian had not been established. Mrs. Kenney's appointment in 1933 was not formalized as a state office and it was not until 1937 that Miss Sheldon was unanimously elected State Historian for a period of five years. A former State Finance Chairman who had headed state nominating committees several times, Miss Sheldon was well versed in the organizational and functional aspects of the Iowa Federation.

Miss Sheldon's devotion to the ideals of the BPW and her loyalty to her country were demonstrated when she presented an American flag to the Federation at the Twentieth Annual Convention in Waterloo in 1939. The flag was accepted by President Helen G. Irwin on behalf of the Iowa Federation as a symbol of their loyalty as American citizens living in a democracy.

At the 1942 post-convention Board meeting, Miss Sheldon was appointed to another five-year term as Historian. She continued in this capacity three years beyond the expiration of her second term, finally resigning in 1950.

What were the factors influencing the Clubs in this period of their history? The economic plight of the country was of continuing concern. The keynote for 1934-1935 was "stability." The convention theme for 1935 was "Economic Power Through Right Thinking." The North Central Regional Conference theme was "Economic Security for All." Perhaps the exigencies of the de-

pression hardened the resolve of the women to stand firm for their beliefs. The resolutions adopted by the convention that year showed that BPW members had clarified their principles and were ready to state their goals unequivocally:

That we stand squarely against all discrimination based upon sex, and insist that aptitude, training and efficiency should be the qualifications by which business and professional women are measured.

That the principle of equal pay for equal work be maintained.

That we believe that women should participate in politics to the end that we may aid in the election to public office of men and women who will further those principles upon which good government is based.

National honors came to the Iowa Clubs. In 1937 Mrs. Cunningham was elected as First Vice President of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs. The Atlantic Club won both state and national first prizes for the best editorial in a 1936-1937 nationwide contest sponsored by the National Federation.

As early as the 1940 convention Dr. Lena M. Phillips of New York, President of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs and Honorary President of the National Federation, warned that "the United States is on the precipice of war, and there is little hope of our keeping out of it." She urged women to "cease being 'armchair crusaders,' stop wishful thinking and face the facts courageously."

The time foreseen by Dr. Phillips came all too soon. The District and Winter Board meetings of the Iowa Federation in February, 1942, were concerned almost exclusively with what part the Federation could play in the all-out war effort. Such topics as "civilian defense," "war budgets," and "national health" were pursued. Discussions were held on women's stake in the war and on the question of whether women would be drafted. The more forward-looking members were urged to consider whether women should sit at the peace conference; also to prepare for unemployment after the war.

The 1943 convention called itself the Twenty-fourth Annual Convention and War Conference of the Iowa Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. The Clubs set as their 1943-1944 goal the sale of over \$525,000 worth of War Bonds and Stamps. Midway in this effort, Mrs. Stella Barker, War Service Chairman, reported that the Federation had purchased enough bonds and stamps to have the Federation's name on an ambulance plane carrying help to battlefield wounded.

The Silver Anniversary of the Iowa Federation (1944) found Clubs turning to the part women were playing in various branches of the Armed Services. Emergency situations were anticipated in empowering the Executive Committee to act without the presence of the entire Board. The

February, 1945, meeting of the Executive Board was limited in attendance by a ruling of the United States Office of Defense Transportation. The Twenty-sixth Annual Convention (1945) had to be canceled because of this ruling. Thus the 1946 meeting became the Twenty-sixth Annual Convention, embodying the theme "Living and Working for the Peace Building Years."

In her Epilogue to *A History of the Iowa Federation*, E. Persis Sheldon wrote in 1946:

The problems of the post-war period are great and must be met with foresight and vision. The part that women are to play in these troubled times is of vital concern to us all. All of our past achievements and accomplishments, as a women's organization, should serve as an added incentive for our demonstrating what we can do to serve.

The emphasis of the post-war years became an international one. A resolution adopted by the 1947 convention read:

That each club, if possible, adopt a foreign club or family for this year, thereby fostering better international relations, and bring our clubs in closer contact with clubs of other countries. This is to be done through the medium of our National and International Federations.

Mrs. Stella Barker, Federation President, said, "We are vitally concerned with building a peaceful world within the Charter of the United Nations."

The 1948 convention made recommendations on "recognizing and attempting to alleviate distress

abroad and fostering better understanding between the different peoples of the world." Delegates were urged to contribute as much as possible to the "Appeal for Children," a project offering a chance to help needy children everywhere with food, clothing, and medical care.

As the BPW entered the 50's, one name stands out in bold relief—that of Miss Helen G. Irwin of Des Moines, Iowa's brightest star. Her name first appeared in the *History* in 1933 when she was appointed State Publicity Chairman. She was successively State Treasurer (1934), First Vice President (1936), and President of the Iowa Federation for two terms (1937-1939). After completing her terms as President she became State Legislation Chairman. During her tenure in this office, the Federation, through her efforts, became increasingly aware of the importance of sponsoring and working for legislation furthering their goals on state and national levels.

At the 1948 State Convention a signal honor was accorded Miss Irwin. The Federation President, Stella Barker, recommended "... because of her unremitting loyalty to us all, her very great ability in whatever higher office she may attain, because of her humble spirit and just because we have only our love and gratitude to lay at her feet, I recommend that Miss Helen G. Irwin be accorded the title of Honorary President of the Iowa Federation." The delegates also continued

their efforts to secure her election to national office.

Success crowned their efforts. In 1952 Miss Irwin was elected President of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs at its Convention in Boston. Mrs. Alice S. Warsaw, State Historian at the time, wrote:

The Iowa Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs has reason to believe that "Coming events cast their shadow before." Like a very pleasant and protective shadow, the personality and person of Helen Irwin has hovered over us for many years. . . . Her friendliness, her belief in the importance of the individual, her gracious, unaffected manner and sterling character were recognized beyond the limits of our state and so it is no wonder that at the Boston Convention, June 29-July 3, Helen was elected National President.

During her term as National President, Miss Irwin became known internationally for her work for business and professional women. Not only did she head a delegation of 148 American women attending the Sixth Congress of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women in Stockholm, Sweden, but she also made a trip to Germany as a guest of the German State. Here the West German Government awarded her the Commander's Cross of Merit in recognition of the Federation's work in the interest of German women.

Miss Irwin's business associates of the Equitable Life Insurance Company of Iowa honored her, devoting almost an entire issue of one of their

magazines, *Dividend*, to an article about "Equitable of Iowa's Cinderella Girl." The national publication of the BPW, *The Independent Woman* of December, 1953, summarized this article. Her term as National President was crowned when she presided at the National Convention in St. Louis in July, 1954. Some 100 Iowa members attended the meeting in St. Louis.

Work on committees of the National Federation, attendance at meetings of the International Federation in Berne and Paris, other trips abroad, as well as assignments to important boards and committees resulted in Equitable of Iowa's nomination of Helen Irwin as "World Citizen." In 1962, at the Convention of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women in Oslo, Norway, she was elected International President. Miss Irwin's three-year term was a distinguished one, marked by extensive travel in behalf of working women the world over. She presided at the International Congress held in 1965 in Washington, D.C. In her honor Iowa entertained 800 women at the Congress, a feat made possible through the three-year efforts of an International Expansion and Promotion Fund Committee, headed by Mrs. Helen Weinruch of Bettendorf. In the years since, Miss Irwin has continued as the Honorary President and valued adviser of the Iowa Clubs.

The activities of the Iowa Federation during

the last years of its first half century included the initiation of the Iowa Small Business Clinic. Mrs. Helen Vanderburg, called the "mother" of the Clinic, worked for a program providing information and "know how" on initiating and conducting a small business enterprise. Consultants came from the University of Iowa, Iowa State University, and Drake University, as well as from various organizations and small businesses in Iowa. So successful was this project that Iowa was able to help five neighboring states plan similar clinics. Another project was the annual sponsorship of Leadership Clinics.

The international interests of the Iowa BPW continued and broadened. A "Books for the Virgin Islands" project was successfully concluded with the donation of literally tons of books for use by the first and only college in the Islands. Iowa contributed liberally to the Minnie Maffett Chinese Nurses' Home Fund—the dedication of this Home was attended by Helen Irwin along with Dr. Maffett, for whom it was named. Prior to her state presidency, Alline Staveley represented the Federation on the Board of Directors of the Iowa Partners of the Alliance for Progress, when she visited Yucatan, Iowa's sister country in the Alliance.

Individual members represented Iowa with distinction in varied activities. Helen Vanderburg, former Iowa Federation President and President

of the National Federation of Press Women, was invited by the Belgian Government to join a group of leading newspaper publishers in a study of the European Common Market. Mrs. Enid Robinson of Hampton was one of four appointed by the State Department to represent consumers at a Tariff and Trade Conference held in Geneva, Switzerland. The first national convention of the American Associations for the United Nations was attended by a former Iowa Federation President, Orlean Schroeder. And Helen G. Irwin was instrumental in raising funds to enable a Nairobi student from East Africa to claim a BPW scholarship to Iowa Wesleyan College in Mount Pleasant. The significance of these activities was caught by a *Des Moines Register* editorial in May, 1960:

Three cheers and a hurrah for the Iowa Federation of Business and Professional Clubs, Inc. The Iowa women do not favor a "know nothing" stand on international affairs. . . . We are happy to report that they voted unanimously in favor of including a plank on foreign affairs in the organization's national program.

The Iowa Federation rounded out its Fifty Golden Years with 5,368 members in 91 clubs. In a transition from the Model T to the Space Age, the Federation grew from a modest beginning of seven clubs to its present number and from a parochial orientation to an international one.

HENRIETTA ZAGEL

District History

The tremendous amount of work involved in linking local clubs with the State Federation is done by District officers. In the club year, 1927-1928, the state was divided into four districts. This was done to assist the Membership Chairman in her organization work. Each District Chairman had charge of the membership work in her area, working under the supervision of the State Membership Chairman.

This was the beginning of the District work which was developed so well in the Iowa BPW. With the spreading Federation spirit, a big start was made for more successful state coverage through District cooperation.

In 1928-1929, in response to the "growing pains" of Federation expansion, it was decided to create nine Districts instead of four. This change was made in order to carry on membership work more efficiently. Each District had a chairman whose duty was to assist with membership work. This plan gave the State Membership Chairman nine assistants instead of four, resulting in much more intensive work in each District.

In 1929-1930 four new clubs were organized. With Federation work becoming increasingly

state-wide in scope, District Chairmen made plans for what was to be Iowa's first series of District meetings.

The first such District meeting was held October 8, 1929, in Ames with over two hundred guests representing six clubs in attendance. On October 15, Keokuk hosted a District meeting. A little later a most successful meeting, in charge of the State Membership Chairman, was held in District four. Between these District meetings and organizational work in the state, the Membership Chairman and her co-workers were kept very busy.

The state membership report of 1931 included plans for fall meetings to be held in each District under the supervision of the District Membership Chairman. The programs developed for these meetings were such that they brought clubs in the District closer together and provided them with a better knowledge of the aims, ideals, and programs fostered by the BPW organization. These meetings developed Federation inspiration, as well as helping to solve club problems at round table discussions.

In 1937 the Seventeenth Convention was held under the auspices of District seven. This was the beginning of an increasing assumption of responsibilities by the Districts within the Iowa Federation.

When the United States became engaged in an "All-Out" war effort, the District Directors' meet-

CHARTER MEMBERS, WATERLOO BPW CLUB



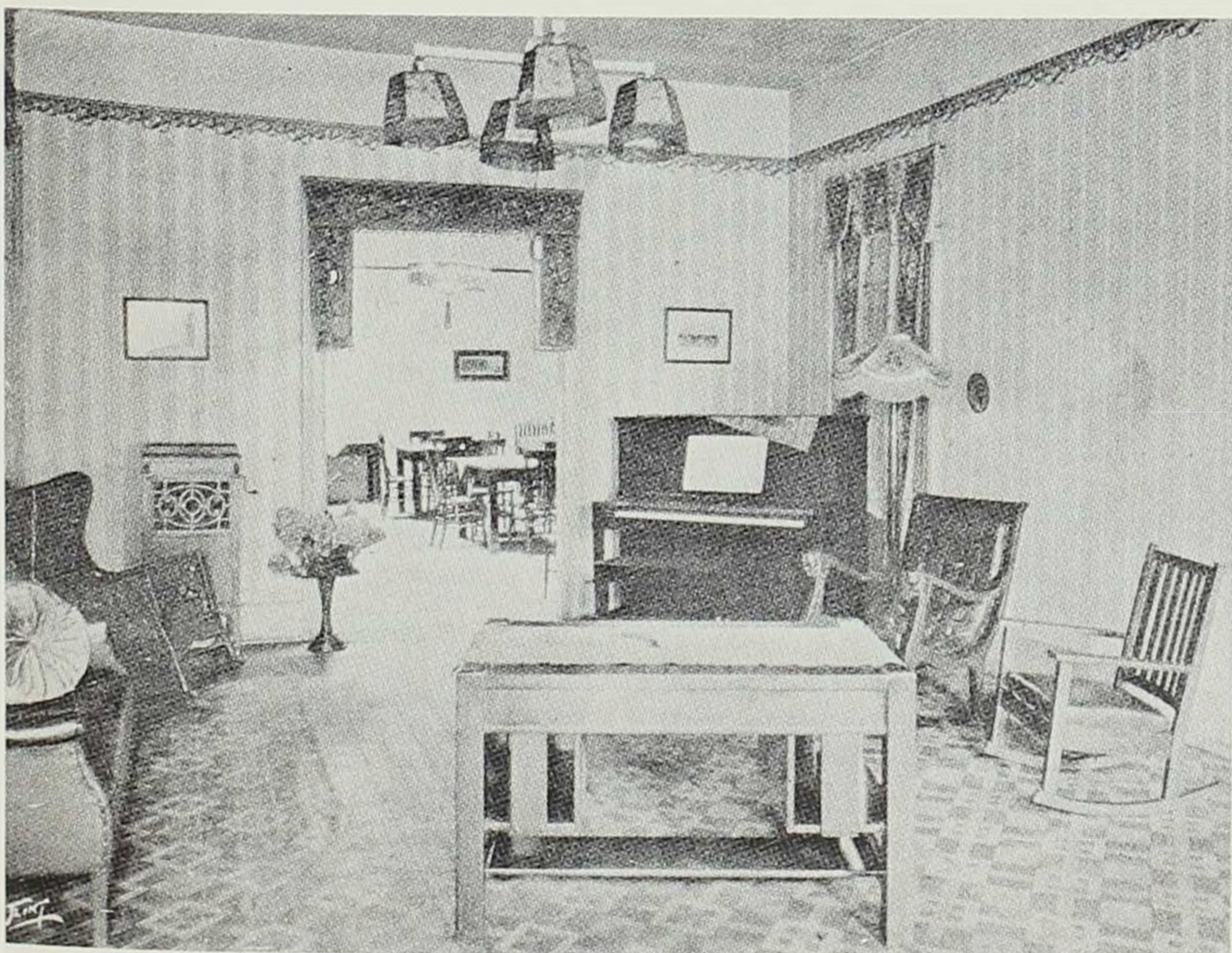
MAUDE HARMON



LILA MARCHAM



ALICE WYKOFF



The Waterloo BPW Club's first club home is pictured in 1920.

2:30 P.M.

Y W C A Parlor, May 31, 1919.

The Iowa Federation of Business and Professional Womens' Clubs was organized at a meeting held this afternoon at the Y W C A Business and professional women from Ft Dodge, Waterloo, Seymour, and Des Moines, were present. Miss Wilson, presiding. Miss Harsh, Secy pro tem. After a brief, but interesting and comprehensive outline of the purposes of this organization, by Miss Florence King of Chicago, who is president of the Woman's Association of Commerce of the U S A, a tentative organization for Iowa was formed with the following officers:

Miss Emma A Wilson, president; Miss Ada Pence, Vice prest;
Miss F A Harsh, Secretary; Miss Pearl Karnish, treasurer.
all of Des Moines.

State Board Members:

~~XX~~

Mrs G W Adams, Secy of Y W C A, Ft Dodge.
Mrs W G Ives, Waterloo, Iowa. Miss Ruth McGowan, Waterloo.
Mrs Lulu Blasier, Shenandoah, Iowa.
Dr Nelle Noble, Des Moines
~~XX~~
Mrs Ada B Talbott, Sioux City.
Mrs Emma Philleo, Cedar Falls

Miss King urged that as many of us as could possibly go, ought to attend the Convention in St Louis July 14/18 at which time it was probable the Woman's Assn. of Commerce would merge with the National Federation of Business and Professional W's Clubs, and at that meeting a National Constitution would be adopted, and that then the Iowa ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Organization could make By-Laws, and adopt a constitution in conformity with the National Constitution.

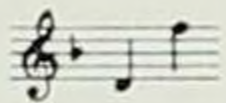
After an informal talk, enjoyed by all present, the meeting adjourned, as it was time for Miss King to make ready for her ret to Chicago that evening.

F. A. Harsh Secy

A piece of brown wrapping paper was used to record the minutes of a meeting held in Des Moines in 1919. From this meeting emerged the Iowa Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs. It was the first meeting ever held seeking to bring together the membership of Iowa's business and professional clubs for women.

The Golden Key

Words and Music by
Carrie Jacobs-Bond



Moderato mp

Voice I

Piano mf rall. a tempo p

found a Gold - en Key one day, Up - on the path I

trod; And it un - locked a Gold - en Door, The

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All rights reserved, including the right
of public performance for profit.

B. 245 c

When performing and programming this number on the air, kindly give credit to THE BOSTON MUSIC COMPANY

The Golden Key, with words and music by Carrie Jacobs-Bond, was dedicated to the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs.



IVES—1920-21



MITCHELL—1921-22



LILYERSTROM—1922-23



PATTIE—1923-24



PLATH—1924-26



VAN BUSKIRK—1926-27



KENNEY—1927-28



CUNNINGHAM—1928-29



HENDERSON—1929-30



McKEE—1930-31



NICHOLS—1931-32



RAYBURN—1932-33



WORTH—1933-35



MAYTAG—1935-36



YOUNG—1936-37



IRWIN—1937-39



WARSAW—1939-41



BEDELL—1941-42



SCOTT—1942-43



STENNER—1943-46



BARKER—1946-48



VANDEBURG—1948-50



JORDAN—1950-52



NORMAN—1952-54



SCHROEDER—1954-56



PIERSON—1956-58



QUINN—1958-60



WELLE—1960-62



JONES—1962-64



WEBB—1964-66



THADA—1966-67



STAVELEY—1967-68



HEITSMAN—68-69



CAIRNS—1969-70



The Iowa breakfast was one of the highlights of the National BPW Convention held in Cleveland, Ohio, in July of 1946.



The Shenandoah BPW Club staged a style show in the early 30's. Taking part in the production were, left to right: (back row) Gladys Howe, Estella Mattox, Jessie Young (past state president), Kathryn Ross, and Katherine (Ford) Remy. (Center row): Naomi (McMahill) Schneider, Dorothy Gamble, and Nellie Herrold. (Front row): Letha Nelson, Mozelle (Racine) Palmer, Esther (Blank) Welty, Marjorie Funk, Jennie Blackburn, Leila Jackson, and Hele Muntzner.



William J. Petersen, superintendent of the State Historical Society, is pictured as he accepts a gavel, part of the historic material turned over to the Society by the Iowa Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs. Making the presentation were Orlean Schroeder (center) and Ruth Webb, past presidents of the State group.



The 1969-70 officers of the Iowa BPW are pictured, (left to right): Marcia Traer, treasurer; Betty Wagner, second vice president; Irene Iverson, corresponding secretary; Ethel Cairns, president; Marie Smith, recording secretary; Marvell Harmel, first vice president; and Mildred Smith, third vice president.



EMBLEM BENEDICTION

This Emblem binds us all
In one great sisterhood
It binds us hear our conscience call
For a nobler womanhood.
God guide us when we wear
This Emblem o'er our heart
And keep us true and always fair
God bless us as we part.

CLUB OBJECTIVES

To elevate the standards for women in business and in the professions;

To promote the interests of business and professional women;

To bring about a spirit of cooperation among business and professional women of the United States;

To extend opportunities to business and professional women through education along lines of industrial, scientific and vocational activities.

ing of February 7, 1942, in Des Moines, was concerned with the part the Federation would play in the struggle. Suggestions were made and acted upon, emphasizing the problems and responsibilities arising from war work. Throughout the years District duties have increased. One of the more important facets in Federation work is the Spring District meeting to engender interest in the State Convention. Fall District meetings are well attended. At the Fall and Winter Board meetings District officers have well-planned agendas for the representatives from their clubs.

The District Chairman with her secretary-treasurer visits each of the clubs in her District sometime during the year. The chairman and her assistants report to the club, after which members hear from a member of the State Executive Board, featured speaker for such meetings.

In concluding this summary it can be said that the District organization has given a good account of itself. As we enter our new "future" we can count on the Districts for the cooperation needed from local clubs to represent well all women who are involved in the business and professional world.

FLORENCE FALK

The Thread of Legislation

It all happened in answer to a question!

The question: "What did we hope to accomplish?"

"For one thing, we would urge shoe manufacturers to make good-looking shoes for business wear, without high heels." This was the pronouncement at the organizational meeting of the Iowa Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs meeting in Des Moines on May 31, 1919.

Thus we began to lobby. It was a far cry from the ideals of today. Even though the women were frustrated, defeated in some attempts, they were successful in others. A golden thread of consistent, dynamic, and persistent legislative action is woven into the fifty-year history of the Club.

At the 1920 Convention a lively discussion and battle developed on the idea of nine-hour working days for women. Statistics were quoted proving women should have economic rights as well as political rights. At this convention a telegram was sent urging Iowa Congressman Burton E. Sweet to use his influence in obtaining consideration and passage of the Sheppard-Towner Maternity Bill.

At the Davenport convention delegates resolved

"that this body go on record as opposing special laws affecting the hours and wages of women which do not affect the hours and wages of men." The National Federation at this time urged, "Stand on your own feet and fight." Members of the Iowa Federation were lauded for their opposition to eight-hour day legislation which came before the 40th General Assembly. Legislative action by the National Federation brought the following endorsements: The Child Labor Amendment, the World Court, Federal Department of Education, Uniform Marriage and Divorce Bill, and the Vocational Education Act.

Following the "golden thread," legislative action was taken in 1926 on an amendment proposed for the Constitution of Iowa making women eligible to hold seats in the General Assembly. In this same year the Iowa Federation further reaffirmed its position of being opposed to matters of legislation and public policy which were discriminatory to women as to position, salary, and laws. A firm stand was made against discrimination based upon sex, insisting that aptitude, training, and efficiency should be the qualifications by which business and professional women would be measured. Later in the '20's, the BPW asserted that women should participate in politics to the end that they might aid in the election to public office of men and women who would further those principles upon which good government is based.

The Iowa Federation began to keep a watchful eye on legislation in the General Assembly affecting women. Adoption of a measure supporting aid to dependent children, premarital examinations, and other innovations, gave evidence of the active interest of women in new fields, not only in Iowa but the nation.

It was gratifying, in 1940, to have a member of the Iowa BPW (Virginia Bedell, Spirit Lake) appointed as the first woman to serve on the State Board of Parole. Later women were to serve in the General Assembly.

Then came the war! Iowa women were urged to continue support of the Equal Rights Amendment, to endorse the new school code, to take a more active interest in club members affiliating with the political party of their choice, and to show a more vigorous promotion of qualified women to public office. In 1946 the BPW Legislation Committee, following considerable study, brought to the attention of the convention the fact that discrimination against the employment of more mature women, without regard to mental and physical competence, deprived the country of the work potential of trained and experienced people. A recommendation was made that the Federation be given the responsibility of devising ways of educating the public to correct this situation.

During the silver anniversary year, the Iowa BPW legislative effort continued with success in

the area of probation policies and state adoption laws. Major emphasis was placed on a request for investigation of state institutions under the Board of Control and the Governor of Iowa was urged to appoint more women to state committees.

In the decade of the '60's the record showed consistency in working for legislation covering men and women, without discrimination and favoritism. A uniform retirement age for men and women was supported, as was pay for comparable work, and the same requirements for each under Civil Service.

Through the efforts of the Iowa Legislation Committees, the National Federation now supported this endorsement: "... implementing within the framework of the Constitution, policies that promote peace and strengthen this country, make the United Nations more effective, improve the Mutual Security programs and endorse essential Foreign Aid, Military and Mutual Trade agreements."

As a further result of intensive study and legislative effort a Governor's Status of Women Committee was named, and women became members of the Employment Practices Committee.

Iowa business and professional women have worked successfully for school reorganization, four-year terms for county officers, equitable legislative reapportionment of the General Assembly, area technical and vocational schools, regional

jails to house men and women, revision of divorce laws and child labor laws, equalization of salaries for men and women in education and the professions and, above all, support to local law enforcement officials and environmental concern.

Constantly the legislative thread has been woven into the fabric of these "golden years." The strong leadership of district and club Legislation Chairmen has responded to the needs facing the Federation. Truly it has been said that to leave footprints on the sands of time, one must wear work shoes.

This all began with shoes—and a question!

HELEN VANDERBURG

The Iowa Business Woman

"What's Past is Prologue." Those words written by the immortal Shakespeare many years ago continue to be appreciated today. Patrick Henry, famed pioneer American statesman, put it another way when he asserted, "I know of no way of judging the future but by reading the past," and the illustrious Thomas Jefferson said, "A morsel of genuine history is a thing so rare as to be always valuable."

So we endeavor to review briefly the history of the bulletin or magazine that has served as the official publication for the Iowa Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs for the past "fabulous fifty years!"

It all began when Helena M. Mitchell of Davenport started her regime as Iowa Federation president. She assigned her second vice president, Ethel D. Henry of Clinton, the task of establishing some sort of communication between the clubs in Iowa, then numbering thirteen. In November, 1921, with a borrowed typewriter as its mother, the *Bulletin* was born. Sometimes it had four pages—sometimes eight—according to the editor's time and the contribution of the clubs. Three or four issues appeared. Then came the *challenge*: "The

Bulletin will be what your club helps to make it. Let's all pull together now for a bit of pioneering in Iowa." It hasn't changed. After fifty years the editor's cry is still the same!

The first issues were mailed to clubs in Cedar Rapids, Fort Dodge, Mason City, Spencer, Marshalltown, Davenport, Boone, Keokuk, Des Moines, Sioux City, Waterloo, and Clinton; also copies went to the National magazine, the state president, and Carrie Bell of Des Moines, who was secretary of the Department of Women's Affairs of the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce. In a letter dated November 3, 1921, the latter wrote: "Best wishes for the new venture, a real task but a worthwhile one. I read it before my board of directors today. We are for the Business and Professional Women in every forward movement." The *Bulletin* became the parent of *The Iowa Business Woman*.

After the state bulletin was nicely launched in 1921 by Ethel Henry, little was done to follow up her efforts. Consequently, plans were made for a new state bulletin. Lydia M. Barrette then became the first editor of *The Iowa Business Woman* on a permanent basis, with Agnes Helbig as business manager. Both deserve great credit for the five issues that followed. The first one was financed by thirteen of the sixteen clubs who inserted business cards at \$5.00 per card. The other four issues were financed by advertising sold by local

clubs. Fort Dodge was the first club to sell a quarter page ad, while Marshalltown was first to report advertising sold for each of the five issues.

Early in 1924 it was decided to publish seven issues during the year and in September, 1924, *The Iowa Business Woman* began publication on a monthly basis, following the precedent of having the staff from the same town as the state president.

During 1925-1926 the IBW appeared four times. Considerable discussion was held as to the advisability of continuing its publication. Finally it was voted unanimously to continue with six issues a year.

The year, 1927-1928, saw *The Iowa Business Woman* published four times and, to use a quote, "each a finished magazine in every detail—each one of which we could be justly proud." An editorial in one issue that year received an award from the National Federation, which had offered a prize for the best editorial in a state magazine.

In 1928-1929 it was decided to issue the IBW on a smaller scale as a means of informing the membership of club news, committee activities, and other matters of interest. It was at this time that the by-laws were changed so that only the amount necessary to cover the cost of the magazine was to be set aside in the budget, rather than the fifty per cent heretofore used.

In 1933-1934 the state magazine, still newsy and to the point, was being published four times

a year. As time passed *The Iowa Business Woman* continued on an even keel—as even, that is, as any publication can when confronted with the usual run-of-the-mill obstacles such as deadlines, financial hurdles, and rising costs in both printing and mailing. Then (alas!) came zip codes!

The Iowa Business Woman today (1971) is still being published four times yearly—August, November, January and April. It is the sincere hope of the present editor that it fulfills the purpose for which it was established: that of being a means of communication among clubs in Iowa—not the thirteen that existed in 1921, but the ninety-one clubs that exist in the Iowa Federation today.

The Iowa Business Woman has always been a labor of love. No compensation has gone to any one editor, or to any other individual who may have spent time on its publication. It is hoped the material recorded in the state magazine, representing fifty years of growth and accomplishment meets the approval of those who have given the Iowa Federation a rich heritage of service.

DORIS REED

BPW In Retrospect

The range of activities and services engaged in by the Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Iowa is truly impressive. They have interpreted the Club objective: "To extend opportunities to business and professional women . . . along lines of industrial, scientific and vocational activities" in a community spirit. They have realized their opportunities through service.

Their civic activities have included everything from purchasing street signs to taking over and running municipal governments. They have exercised their ingenuity in a variety of fund-raising projects, almost as diverse as the individual clubs themselves. They have sponsored the securing and refurbishing of community centers, have helped with innumerable collections for Red Cross, Heart Funds, Cancer Funds, Easter Seal Funds, and other worthy causes. Cities and towns have benefited from their park and other beautification projects. Civic organizations sponsoring all-out community efforts such as centennial celebrations can take BPW cooperation almost for granted. Good relations between the business community and other segments of the population have been promoted by luncheons, coffees, and other meetings.

Deserving of special mention is the effort of the Clubs to preserve the historical heritage of their own communities. In addition to aiding local Historical Societies, several Clubs have engaged in special projects. The Grundy Center Club helped with the restoration of the Herbert Quick Schoolhouse; the Council Bluffs group assisted in the rehabilitation of the historic General Dodge Home; and the Corning Club erected a historical marker on Highway 34 commemorating the Icarian Colony. Local cultural and traditional observances such as Decorah's Nordic Fest and Dubuque's "river activities" have had the enthusiastic participation of the BPW. The Corydon Club's Walden Park Restoration project combined historic and environmental preservation—an effort which garnered national recognition for this group.

Many young people in Iowa have had reason for special gratitude to the BPW for scholarships, loans, and other educational aids. The unique "Partnership With Youth" science exhibit sponsored by the Burlington Club, the Tri-State Art show in Rock Rapids, and the career seminars for high school girls held annually in Manchester are all BPW projects encouraging youth toward worthy educational and vocational goals.

The history of the activities of Iowa BPW Clubs over the years illustrates their ability to "swing with the times." During the Great Depression of the thirties the Boone Club operated a

weekly Women's Exchange enabling women of the community to convert low-priced raw food products to cash, also providing seeds to families unable to buy them. Maquoketa maintained a Community Kitchen. Other Clubs provided clothing and shoes for children of needy families, as well as cash gifts to keep promising high school students in school. During World War II the BPW was active in War Bond drives, aided the USO and Red Cross in their work, and went all out in scrap drives. These and similar activities were almost standard procedure in the Iowa Clubs. Immediately after the War there was a veritable outpouring of money, clothing, food, and medicines for overseas relief.

The humanitarian emphasis of the Clubs was not limited to times of depression or war. Many community hospitals have received substantial help from the BPW. Flood relief, work with the Red Cross Bloodmobile, aid to mental health projects, assistance to the Head Start Program, contributions to enhance the opportunities of retarded children, service to residents of nursing and retirement homes—these and many other altruistic endeavors are typical of the Iowa Club woman's effort to help her fellow human beings.

How can these admirable achievements be best characterized? Each Club, without expectation of special recognition or fanfare, has enriched its own community to such an extent that that place

would be immeasurably the poorer, had the BPW never been organized there.

The emblem of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs contains symbols for Light, Health, Peace, Achievement, Victory, Blessing of Work, and Benediction of Love. It can be said that all these attributes are not mere words—they have lived and functioned in the record of the Iowa Clubs.

HENRIETTA ZAGEL

*State Presidents, Iowa Federation of
Business and Professional Women's Clubs*

| | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| 1919 | Miss Emma Wilson, Des Moines |
| 1920-1921 | Mrs. W. D. Ives, Waterloo |
| 1921-1922 | Helena Mitchell, Davenport |
| 1922-1923 | Mary Lilyerstrom, Keokuk |
| 1923-1924 | Martha Pattie, Mason City |
| 1924-1926 | Frances E. Plath, Davenport |
| 1926-1927 | Lillian Van Buskirk, Des Moines |
| 1927-1928 | Mrs. Elizabeth Kenney, Waterloo |
| 1928-1929 | Mrs. Rosa C. Cunningham, Des Moines |
| 1929-1930 | Elizabeth Henderson, Waterloo |
| 1930-1931 | Dorothy McKee, Hampton |
| 1931-1932 | Bess Nichols, Waterloo |
| 1932-1933 | Mina Rayburn, Council Bluffs |
| 1933-1935 | Mrs. Goldie Worth, Centerville |
| 1935-1936 | Blanche Maytag, Newton |
| 1936-1937 | Mrs. Jessie Young, Shenandoah |
| 1937-1939 | Helen G. Irwin, Des Moines |
| 1939-1941 | Mrs. Alice S. Warsaw, Waterloo |
| 1941-1942 | Mrs. Virginia Bedell, Spirit Lake |
| 1942-1943 | Eva B. Scott, Mason City |
| 1943-1946 | Miss Gertrude Stenner, Cedar Rapids |
| 1946-1948 | Mrs. Stella Barker, Des Moines |
| 1948-1950 | Mrs. Helen Vanderburg, Shell Rock |
| 1950-1952 | Dr. Lydia Jordan, Davenport |
| 1952-1954 | Mrs. Vera Norman, Sioux City |
| 1954-1956 | Orlean C. Schroeder, Davenport |
| 1956-1958 | Miss Martha Pierson, Red Oak |
| 1958-1960 | Miss Beverly Quinn, Waterloo |
| 1960-1962 | Miss Ardell Welle, Newton |
| 1962-1964 | Mrs. Marian Jones, Malvern |
| 1964-1966 | Mrs. Ruth Webb, Muscatine |
| 1966-1967 | Miss Lillian Thada, Fairfield |
| 1967-1968 | Miss Aline Staveley, Charles City |
| 1968-1969 | Thelma Heitsman, Corning |
| 1969-1970 | Miss Ethel Cairns, Marshalltown |
| 1970- | Mrs. Marvell Harmel, Tipton |

Annual Conventions of Iowa BPW Clubs

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|------|----------------|------|------|------------------------|
| Organization Meeting | 1919 | Des Moines | 26th | 1945 | Not held due to WW II. |
| 1st | 1920 | Des Moines | 26th | 1946 | Council Bluffs |
| 2nd | 1921 | Cedar Rapids | 27th | 1947 | Burlington |
| 3rd | 1922 | Davenport | 28th | 1948 | Spirit Lake |
| 4th | 1923 | Mason City | 29th | 1949 | Waterloo |
| 5th | 1924 | Waterloo | 30th | 1950 | Cedar Rapids |
| 6th | 1925 | Dubuque | 31st | 1951 | Des Moines |
| *7th | 1926 | Des Moines | 32nd | 1952 | Des Moines |
| 8th | 1927 | Fort Dodge | 33rd | 1953 | Fort Dodge |
| 9th | 1928 | Keokuk | 34th | 1954 | Des Moines |
| 10th | 1929 | Council Bluffs | 35th | 1955 | Sioux City |
| 11th | 1930 | Des Moines | 36th | 1956 | Davenport |
| 12th | 1931 | Waterloo | 37th | 1957 | Cedar Rapids |
| 13th | 1932 | Davenport | 38th | 1958 | Waterloo |
| 14th | 1933 | Sioux City | 39th | 1959 | Des Moines |
| 15th | 1934 | Mason City | 40th | 1960 | Des Moines |
| 16th | 1935 | Des Moines | 41st | 1961 | Des Moines |
| 17th | 1936 | Council Bluffs | 42nd | 1962 | Des Moines |
| 18th | 1937 | Ottumwa | 43rd | 1963 | Arnolds Park |
| 19th | 1938 | Fort Dodge | 44th | 1964 | Davenport |
| 20th | 1939 | Waterloo | 45th | 1965 | Cedar Rapids |
| 21st | 1940 | Davenport | 46th | 1966 | Des Moines |
| 22nd | 1941 | Des Moines | 47th | 1967 | Des Moines |
| 23rd | 1942 | Sioux City | 48th | 1968 | Des Moines |
| 24th | 1943 | Mason City | 49th | 1969 | Des Moines |
| 25th | 1944 | Des Moines | 50th | 1970 | Des Moines |

* Held one day meeting, then joined National Convention session, also held in Des Moines

| | <i>Year Chartered</i> | <i>State President</i> | <i>Other State Officers</i> | <i>Scholarship</i> | <i>Civic</i> | <i>Educational</i> | <i>War Activities</i> |
|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Albia | 1935 | | | • | • | | |
| Algona | 1952 | | | | • | | |
| Ames | 1921 | | • | | • | | |
| Anamosa | 1931 | | | | • | | |
| Atlantic | 1935 | | | • | • | | |
| Audubon | 1948 | | | | • | | |
| Bedford | 1945 | | | | • | | |
| Bloomfield | 1929 | | | | • | | |
| Boone | 1919 | | • | | • | | |
| Burlington | 1930 | | | • | • | • | |
| Cedar Falls | 1945 | | • | | • | • | • |
| Cedar Rapids | 1919 | • | • | | • | • | |
| Centerville | 1929 | • | | | • | • | |
| Chariton | 1941 | | • | | • | | • |
| Charles City | 1951 | • | • | | • | • | |
| Cherokee | 1955 | | • | | • | | |
| Clarinda | 1937 | | | • | • | | • |
| Clinton | 1919 | | • | | • | | • |
| Corning | 1954 | • | • | | • | | |
| Corydon | 1942 | | | | • | | |
| Council Bluffs | 1922 | • | • | | • | • | |
| Creston | 1927 | | • | • | • | • | • |
| Davenport | 1921 | • | • | | • | • | • |
| Decorah | 1924 | | • | | • | • | |
| Des Moines | 1927 | • | | | • | | • |
| Dubuque | 1921 | • | • | | • | | |
| Durant | 1959 | | | | • | | |
| Eagle Grove | 1948 | | | | • | • | • |
| Eldora | 1934 | | • | • | • | | |
| Elkader | 1954 | | | | • | • | |
| Emmetsburg | 1954 | | | • | • | | |
| Fairfield | 1928 | • | • | • | • | • | |
| Fort Dodge | 1921 | | • | • | • | | |
| Fort Madison | 1923 | | • | | • | • | |
| Glenwood | 1964 | | | | • | | |
| Grinnell | 1964 | | | | • | • | |
| Grundy Center | 1929 | | | | • | • | |
| Hampton | 1956 | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| Humboldt | 1926 | | • | | • | • | |
| Independence | 1929 | | • | | • | • | |
| Indianola | 1947 | | | • | • | | |
| Iowa City | 1932 | | • | | • | • | • |
| Iowa Falls | 1936 | | • | • | • | | |
| Iowa Great Lakes | 1959 | | | | • | • | |
| Jefferson | 1925 | | | • | • | | |
| Keokuk | 1924 | • | • | | • | • | |

| | <i>Year Chartered</i> | <i>State President</i> | <i>Other State Officers</i> | <i>Scholarship</i> | <i>Civic</i> | <i>Educational</i> | <i>War Activities</i> |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Keosauqua | 1931 | | • | | • | • | |
| Knoxville | 1940 | | | | • | • | • |
| LaPorte City | 1948 | | | | • | | |
| Le Mars | 1935 | | • | • | • | | • |
| Leon | 1935 | | | | • | | |
| Malvern | 1953 | • | • | | • | | |
| Manchester | 1948 | | • | • | • | • | |
| Maquoketa | 1932 | | | | • | • | • |
| Marshalltown | 1920 | • | • | | • | | |
| Mason City | 1921 | • | • | • | • | • | |
| Missouri Valley | 1925 | | | • | • | • | |
| Monticello | 1933 | | • | | • | • | |
| Mount Ayr | 1947 | | | | • | | |
| Mount Pleasant | 1931 | | • | | • | • | • |
| Muscatine | 1930 | • | | • | • | | |
| New Hampton | 1931 | | | | • | • | |
| Newton | 1932 | • | • | | • | • | • |
| Oelwein | 1948 | | | | • | | |
| Ogden | 1965 | | | | • | | |
| Onawa | 1940 | | • | | • | • | • |
| Orange City-Alton | 1955 | | | | • | • | |
| Osceola | 1928 | | | | • | | |
| Oskaloosa | 1950 | | | | • | • | |
| Ottumwa | 1935 | | | | • | • | • |
| Perry | 1953 | | • | | • | | |
| Postville | 1958 | | | | • | | |
| Red Oak | 1947 | • | • | | • | • | |
| Rock Rapids | 1942 | | | | • | • | |
| Rockwell City | 1924 | | | | • | • | |
| Sheldon | 1941 | | | | • | • | • |
| Shell Rock | 1947 | • | | | • | • | |
| Shenandoah | 1928 | • | • | • | • | • | |
| Sibley | 1942 | | | • | | • | |
| Sioux City | 1919 | • | • | | • | • | |
| Spencer | 1937 | | • | | • | • | • |
| Spirit Lake | 1935 | • | • | | • | • | |
| Storm Lake | 1942 | | | • | • | • | • |
| Tama | 1952 | | | | • | | |
| Tipton | 1954 | • | • | | • | | |
| Toledo | 1949 | | | | • | | |
| Washington | 1965 | | | | • | | |
| Waterloo | 1920 | • | | | • | • | |
| Webster City | 1930 | | • | • | • | | • |
| West Union | 1931 | | | | • | • | |
| Wyoming | 1969 | | | | • | | |



Past state presidents are, left to right: (seated) Thelma Heitsman, Virginia Bedell, Vera Norman Pedersen, Helen Vanderburg, Eva Scott, Alice Warsaw; (standing): Lillian Thada, Marian Jones, Ardelle Welle, Dr. Lydia Jordan, Stella Barker, Martha Pierson, Ruth Webb, and Alline Staveley.



They served the Iowa BPW, left to right: (seated) Lena Beck, stenotypist; Alice Warsaw, past state president and historian; E. Persis Sheldon, state historian for 10 years; (standing): Orlean Schroeder, past state president and historian; Alline Staveley, past state president and past editor, *IBW*; Doris Reed, editor, *The Iowa Business Woman*; and Ruth Webb, past state president and historian.