

Batesville Branch

The first large project of the Batesville branch was a Historic Homes Tour in the spring of 1972. Morrow Hall, the oldest private college building in the state and four 19th century homes were opened and light refreshments were served at another home. The affair was very well received and attendance included visitors from various parts of Arkansas as well as local residents. Profits from the tour were sent to the AAUW Fellowship Fund for a Fellowship in the name of Virginia Kirk.

1973 study groups included Law for Layman, Gourmet Cooking, Books, and Collecting. Each group met once a week for four weeks in February. Sessions were open to the public. The events were well attended by AAUW and townspeople. Also in 1973 a Easter Parade Fashion Show benefit was held for Fellowship funds.

In 1974 there were Homes Tour - historic and modern homes. There was a benefit for fellowship funds.

Officers for 1974-75 were: president, Frances Williams; vice president for program, Susie Blair; vice president for membership, Kate Cooke; secretary, Verna Peterson; treasurer, Sharon Edmondson. Program topics included: Women in the United States; ERA; Waste Disposal - Local and General; TV Survey of Local and National Channel Programs.

New officers for 1975-76 were: vice president for program, Jane Fagg; treasurer, Brenda Conde. Program topics included: Economic Facts of Life; How to Save Money on Food; How to Save Money on Clothes; How to Cope with "My" Car; Improvement of Economic Education in our Schools; Important Women in the United States-Historical. Projects in April included spring plant show, lecture by a horticulturist, and a luncheon at Arkansas College. Money from these projects went to fellowships.

The Batesville branch of AAUW was organized on October 8, 1971. Officers were: president, Peggy Wygle; vice president for program, Ruth Martin; vice president for membership, Frances Williams; secretary, Doris Jones; treasurer, Edna Stokes. Area representatives were: community, Velva Huddleston; cultural interests, Diane Tebbetts; education, Beverly Pilgrim; international relations, Nita Cross. Committee chairmen were: fellowship, Virginia Kirk; legislative, Jane Fagg; topics, Aline Mobley; historian, Jimmy Sue Coats; publicity, Martha Shirrell; social, Kate Cooke. Charter members include: Mrs. I. Nels Barnett, Mrs. Charles E. Casteel, Mrs. William E. Coats; Mrs. Sam Cooke, Mrs. Robert H. Cross, Mrs. Daniel W. Fagg, Jr., Mrs. Charles E. Frey, Mrs. Ruth E. Fulbright, Mrs. W. C. Huddleston, Mrs. W. Hadley Jones, Mrs. Elmer Kirk, Mrs. Charles E. Marable, Miss Ruth Martin, Mrs. John E. Mays, Mrs. Freeman K. Mobley, Mrs. Edward N. Mosley, Mrs. Ellis G. Mosley, Miss Margaret A. Parker, Mrs. Vincent F. Peterson, Mrs. O. W. Petway, Mrs. Harry L. Phillips, Miss Thelma A. Pickens, Dr. Beverly J. Pilgrim, Mrs. James A. Pittman, Mrs. John Purtle, Mrs. Stanley R. Reed, Mrs. Jim G. Shirrell, Mrs. Lennie P. Smith, Miss Edna F. Stokes, Mrs. V. A. Sydenstricker, Mrs. Terrell L. Tebbetts, Mrs. Earl Tripp, Mrs. E. Franklin Williams, Mrs. R. W. Wygle.

Bentonville Branch

Bentonville is an antebellum town, the county seat of Benton County, in the northwest corner of Arkansas. For many years it was a farming community producing peaches and apples, fine cattle and poultry; however, in the last eleven years tourism has increased with the development of the retirement and vacation community of Bella Vista, just to the north of Bentonville. Bentonville is also the home of Wal Mart. The coming of this and other industries has brought our population to about 7,000. We are justly proud of our public school system which was the first school system in Arkansas to become fully accredited, the kindergarten through twelfth grades, by the North Central Association (1975).

The Bentonville Branch of the AAUW was organized in May, 1973, the only new branch organized in Arkansas during that year. The members were from Bentonville, Bella Vista, and Gravette, and had formerly been members of the Rogers, Arkansas Branch. Officers of the new Bentonville Branch were Agnes Williams, president; Hazel Skaggs, first vice president; Margaret Sherman, second vice president; Ester Maberry, treasurer; and Barbara Wylie, secretary.

Other charter members were Jessie Baker, Ruth Blythe, Susan Douglas, Kathryn Eldridge, Frances Hayden, Vivian Jefferson, Vera Killingsworth, Lois Murphy, Doris O'Hair, Sue Reehm, Cleta Robison, Beulah Shinpaugh, Lynn Walters, and Peggy White.

Topics studied during the first year were "Woman: Searching for Self" and "Dynamic Learning: Releasing Human Potential."

From the initial nineteen members, the group has now grown to thirty-nine which is more than 100% since we began.

During the brief time we have been a separate branch, we have had many excellent speakers. The most distinguished was Clayton Little, State Senator (dem.) who resides in Bentonville. He spoke to us about women's rights in relation to the laws of Arkansas.

Several members have rendered valuable service in our community in the last three years. Mrs. Margaret Sherman, our second vice president, has served as the president of the Village Art Club at Bella Vista, for the calendar year 1975. Mrs. Hazel Skaggs was chosen to collect data concerning counseling and guidance services offered by schools, churches, and other agencies in Benton County. This survey was conducted in each county of our state. Mrs. Marguerite Grace, our current president, was for a time engaged in teaching reading and related skills to Vietnamese refugees at the camp at Ft. Smith.

The Bentonville Branch voted to give a designated amount to the scholarship fund as a memorial each time a member lost a close family member. To date nine have been given in memory of the following: Beulah Shinpaugh's husband, Margarite Grace's mother, Elwanda Crow's mother, Cleta Robison's sister, Virginia Roop's mother, Hazel Skaggs' husband, Sue Reehm's father, Kathryn Eldridge's husband, and Lucille Belnap's husband.

Due to the pressure of work, health problems, caring for aged parents, losing family members, we have been unable to complete the proposed Handbook of Educational Opportunities which was begun as an outgrowth of our study of "Dynamic Learning: Releasing Human Potential." We are hopeful that we may yet finish it.

One of our members, Mrs. Mary Wigger, is currently serving with her husband, Rev. Harry Wigger, on the Leeward Island of Antigua. Rev. Wigger is teaching in a seminary and pastoring a church. When they return next summer, Mrs. Wigger will no doubt have many experiences to share with our branch.

Three members of the Bentonville branch have been in the news this year. President of the branch, Mrs. Marguerite Grace, attended the International Women's Year Conference at Mexico City last summer and was chosen to be a lay person delegate to the Tribuna Conference. Mrs. Virginia Roop, first vice president and program development chairman, participated recently in the Scholastic International Tour to Eastern Europe. A study was made of the past and present culture of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Hungary. Mrs. Hazel Skaggs, branch member, led a discussion group of the Northwest Arkansas Reading Council in November. The topic was "What You Always Wanted to Know about Reading and were Afraid to Ask."

Officers for 1975-76 are: president, Mrs. Marguerite Grace; first vice president, Mrs. Virginia Roop; second vice president, Mrs. Margaret Sherman; secretary, Mrs. Barbara Wylie; and treasurer, Mrs. Clea Robison.

Blytheville Branch

The Blytheville branch was chartered in the late summer of 1970 with twenty-six members. Mary (Mrs. Thomas) Adams, who was instrumental in its organization, was elected the first president.

Interest aroused by the first study topic "Our Beleagured Earth" led to Earth Day observances, the formation of a speaker's bureau to acquaint the community with pollution problems, a newspaper recycling project, and a community-wide solid waste recycling project. Realizing the city's solid waste disposal system was in violation of Arkansas laws, members met with city officials to discuss possible solutions. Sponsored by the branch, the county, and the city, Mary Gay (Mrs. Paul) Shipley attended the National Conference on Solid Waste in Sacramento, California, and, as a recipient of an AAUW travelship, the Domestic Issues Conference in Washington, DC. Information acquired at the conferences was presented to community leaders and influenced the selection by the city of a system using steam produced by waste disposal to operate a local industry. The system was fully operational in 1975.

The branch, along with the Blytheville Council on Human Relations, in 1973 received a \$73,402 grant from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to sponsor Project SCORE (Students and Civic Organizations for the Revitalization of Education) designed to encourage more involvement in the affairs of the school district by the parents of students and to provide field trips for elementary school students.

Joining with sixteen other local organizations in 1974, the branch successfully sought and secured the passage of a bond issue to finance the construction of a new public library. Members of the branch were honored when the branch was asked to host the library open house in April 1976. The branch also supported and worked for the passage of another bond issue to establish the Mississippi County Community College, which opened its doors in 1975.

The branch raises money for the annual Educational Foundations Programs contributions through used book sales. The Mary Anders Adams Named Fellowship was established with the 1975 contribution.

Regular projects of the group include "Meet-the-Candidates" open meetings before municipal elections and annual sponsorship of a booth at the Northeast Arkansas District Fair. Special projects have included tours of archaeological dig sites, serving as hostesses for College Night for Counseling for area high school seniors, and sponsorship of an art exhibit featuring the works of students from the Norris School of Art.

Study groups have included Great Decisions, gourmet cooking, conversational Spanish, and arts and crafts, which evolved into the Blytheville Arts and Crafts Council.

High on the list of honors bestowed on branch members was the appointment of Mary Adams to the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women. Mrs. Adams served the division as AAUW state endowment chairman for Arkansas and as a topic chairman. Diana (Mrs. Charles) Weidman served as secretary of the Arkansas Division, 1972-74, and Jacqui (Mrs. Thomas) Smith was appointed division community area representative, 1975-77. Dr. Helen (Mrs. King) Nunn attended the 1975 AAUW sponsored United Nations Conference in New York.

Presidents of the Blytheville branch have been Mary (Mrs. Thomas) Adams, 1970-72, Jacqui (Mrs. Thomas) Smith, 1972-74, and Mylinda Erwin, 1974-76.

Camden Branch

Camden branch sponsors a book booth each year at the Barn Sale. Money is used for scholarships. Each year we begin with a coffee for prospective members and end each year with a salad social. This year's program concentration has been following a historical theme in honor of the bicentennial. We have studied local points of historical importance in Camden.

Officers for 1966-67: president, Mrs. Bob Copeland; first vice president, Mrs. C. A. Cawthon; second vice president, Mrs. Scotty Clifton; secretary, Mrs. H. P. Hesterly; treasurer, Mrs. W. A. Graves, Jr. Officers for 1967-68: president, Mrs. Robert McCary; first vice president, Mary Louise Cook; second vice president, Mrs. Parker Stevens; secretary, Mrs. Glen Gillespie; treasurer, Mrs. B. V. Bragg.

Officers for 1968-69: president, Mrs. Robert McCary; first vice president, Mrs. C. A. Cawthon; second vice president, Mrs. Scotty Clifton; secretary, Mrs. Glen Gillespie; treasurer, Mrs. B. V. Bragg. Officers for 1971-72: president, Mrs. Searcy Harrell; first vice president, Miss Bonda Sue Deere; second vice president, Mrs. Parker Stevens; treasurer, Mrs. B. V. Bragg. Officers for 1973-74: president, Beverly Watkins; first vice president, Pauline Howard; second vice president, Ginger Harrell; secretary, Nancy Plunkett; treasurer, Mrs. B. V. Bragg.

Officers for 1974-75: president, Barbara Treat; vice president, Jo Ann Newcomb, secretary, Nancy Plunkett; treasurer, Mrs. B. V. Bragg. Officers for 1975-76: president, Jo Ann Newcomb; vice president, Diane Hendrick; secretary, Susan Faulkner; treasurer, Mrs. B. V. Bragg.

Clarksville Branch

Founded in May of 1932, the Clarksville branch is now 44 years old. Membership has averaged about 25 within the past ten-year period, although currently only 20 members are paid up and active.

The branch was represented at state workshops in 1973 in Little Rock. Several members attended the 1974 workshop in Russellville and one member made both the state convention in Arkadelphia and the Hot Springs workshop in 1975.

Programs include two meetings each year concerned with the recommended study topics, presented by members or their invited guests. Local women leaders in educational or civic affairs have presented their stories and reported their activities to the group. Foreign students from the College of the Ozarks are invited at least once a year to show native clothing, describe native customs and ideas, and present programs of their own choosing relating to their countries.

The Bicentennial project for 1976 has been the publication of articles appearing at intervals in the weekly Johnson County GRAPHIC, dealing with "Outstanding Women - Then and Now" -- biographical sketches of county women from the past, as well as present times.

Graduating women from the College of the Ozarks (happily accreditation of this institution for AAUW membership was achieved in 1965) have been given memberships in the local branch, at the suggestion of Mrs. Cindy Chesser in 1972. Our first gift membership recipient, Mrs. Georgia Bean, has become a most loyal and active member. Unfortunately other selectees have not matched up to her. But we shall keep on trying!

Gifts to the College of the Ozarks, especially to the Thomas Latham Smith fund, have been made each year since 1973, in the amount of \$25.00. We expect this gift to be increased in 1976. Fellowship Fund contributions to the Arkansas Division have averaged \$1.00 per member since 1972 or earlier.

Presidents in the last 10-year period have been: Mrs. Frank Cunningham, 1967-69. She has since moved to Pryor, OK. Mrs. Bill Hayes, of Hartman, 1969-71; Mrs. James Robert Fontaine, 1971-73; Mrs. John Lars Hamerson, 1973 to January 1975, when she moved with her preacher husband to Great Bend, Kansas; Mrs. James Leflar served as interim president for six months, until replaced in July 1975 by Mrs. Marvin Kettelhut.

Conway Branch

The Conway branch grew to its largest membership during this decade under the innovative and dedicated leadership of its presidents and board officers. Serving as president during these years were Mrs. Tommy Smith, 1967-69; Mrs. Fay Howard, 1969-71; Mrs. Patrick Murray, 1971-73; Mrs. Loren Guffey, 1973-75; Mrs. Robert Adcock, 1975-76.

Conway saw many of its branch leaders go on to make contributions at the Division level. They included Dr. Jewell Moore as Division first vice president, 1967-69, and Division president, 1969-71. Serving with her on the Division Board were Miss Eloise Rhode, corresponding secretary, Mrs. N. P. Murray, public information, and Mrs. Henry Wachtendorf, historian. Following a successful membership drive in the Conway branch, Mrs. E. G. Standefer was elected Division second vice president in 1973. The beginning of the 1975-77 biennium saw Mrs. Mary Hasty serving as state chairman of the "20th Century: Deciding Now" study topic and Mrs. Virginia Bonds as corporate member relations chairman.

Several Conway branch members were selected to serve on state boards and in state agencies. Dr. Sue Thompson attended the Governor's Conference on Education and Dr. Mary Kay Sands served on the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women. Mrs. Helen Groth was a member of the Governor's Task Force of Children and Youth. Mrs. Fay Howard was appointed as the first woman and black member of the State Board of Higher Education. Miss Frances Mix was appointed to the State Selective Service Board.

In 1970, the branch gave its first Named Grant Fellowship of \$500.00 honoring Dr. Maude Carmichael, first president of the branch, and started a tradition of honoring at least one branch member each year in this way. Subsequent Fellowships were given in the names of Miss Myrtle Charles, 1971; Dr. Ada Jane Harvey and Miss Constance Mitchell, 1972; Miss Ethel Millar, 1973; Dr. Mary K. Sands, 1974; Dr. Eva Burkett, Miss Verna Chrisler and Miss Mary Hileman in 1975; Miss Ophelia Fisher and Mrs. Margie Harrod, 1976.

Political action increased during this decade. In 1967-68 telegrams were sent to Representative Mills and Senator Fulbright requesting support of the anti-poverty bills and the Human Rights Bill. Petitions were circulated to initiate an act lowering the voting age to 18 on the ballot. Members also surveyed the community for support to put the question of voting machines before the electorate. They also petitioned the City for a traffic light to protect school children crossing at a dangerous intersection. A public forum was sponsored on the need for revision of the State Constitution.

In 1968-69 emphasis on governmental affairs continued focusing on Governor Rockefeller's tax program, Constitutional amendments to permit public kindergartens, to lower the voting age to 18, and to call a constitutional convention, and resolutions for improved state health and educational services through a tax increase and revision of the abortion laws.

In 1969-70 the branch's legislative committee met with the Attorney General for a ruling on the refusal of the County Quorum Court to purchase voting machines approved by the public election the preceding November. The branch supported a ten mill increase in school millage.

In 1970-71 legislative activity was directed toward passage of the proposed Arkansas Constitution, forming a speaker's bureau on the document, and support was given to the proposal for a state library building, although both measures failed. Branch members continued support for the Child Care Facilities Act. County inaction necessitated reactivation of Faulkner County Committee for Voting Machines which obtained a lawyer to begin court action against county officials, eventually leading to the State Supreme Court. During this year the branch also supported creation of Buffalo River National Park and Dr. Jewell Moore testified in its support in Washington, DC.

1971-72 saw the branch soliciting position statements from candidates for the school board, local and county positions prior to the elections. In 1972-73, voting machines finally having been provided for some precincts, the branch sponsored a voter education booth at the Faulkner County Fair to teach voters the mechanics of using the machines and laws concerning voting procedure. The branch also supported free textbooks for public high schools and the funding of public kindergarten. Members worked, unsuccessfully, for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. Branch members also lobbied against the split of the Fifth Judicial District. The controversial bill passed but was vetoed by Governor Bumpers.

In 1974-75 the branch again wrote legislators and newspapers in support of the Equal Rights Amendment and endorsed statewide judicial redistricting.

In 1971-73, as an outgrowth of the "Politics of Public Education" study group, monies were collected for free book distribution as part of the "Reading is Fundamental" project, which was continued by Mrs. Delano Small, as education chairman in 1973-75. In 1971 the branch started a Saturday children's library, located in a vacated elementary school building. Upon the death of Mrs. Ben Lever, the library was named the Lever Library. It continues to serve primarily black children who live within walking distance of the building, which now also houses public kindergarten classes.

In 1972 an active study group, "We the People," fostered interest in facilities for juvenile offenders and began work which ultimately resulted in the funding of a juvenile probation project in June of 1973. The Faulkner County Youth Services Agency was established and its Board of Directors continued to have the support of AAUW members. Also in 1972 Mrs. Robert Shoemaker directed a community production of "Amahl and the Night Visitors," which was made possible by an Arts and Humanities grant applied for by the branch in conjunction with the Orpheus Club. This joint venture launched the now thriving and successful Conway Community Arts Association. A cultural events calendar initiated by the branch has become a regular feature of the local daily newspaper.

The 1973-75 study topic, "Woman: Searching for Self", generated much branch interest and resulted in the use in elementary schools of resource people to break sex-role stereotyping in career choice. Mrs. Patrick Murray became coordinator of a Volunteers in Public Schools program involving interested branch members and a local PTA. Several study group members requested and helped to develop an Assertiveness Training course in cooperation with the Department of Psychology and Counseling at the University of Central Arkansas.

In 1973 a new committee, KIT (for Keep In Touch), was formed to provide communication with shut-in members, send cards and provide information, and to establish memorial gifts to honor deceased members.

Crossett Branch

The Crossett branch of the American Association of University Women was formed in 1949. Minutes of the first meeting are not accessible but what went on is stamped on the minds of those who were present. The reason AAUW members can remember so vividly about the organization was because of two women who had recently moved to Crossett. One of these women was Mrs. M. W. Bates - Virginia as her friends knew her. Virginia had been a member of AAUW before moving to Crossett and could not refrain from speaking of her disappointment of Crossett not having a branch.

In making friends, she met Grace Matthews who had just come to Crossett from Jonesboro as a teacher in the Crossett Public Schools. They had something in common, both had been members before coming and both loved AAUW. So in the early part of 1949, Virginia and Grace "talked AAUW" with each other and other Crossett women. Finally, some time in January or February an organizational meeting was held.

Beginning with the second meeting, the history of the Crossett branch is therefore recorded....

In the fall and winter of 1965-66, emphasis was placed on learning about Federal Aid to Education. Vaskell Carter, Crossett mayor, was invited to speak to the group. He used for his subject "The Role of the Government in the Anti-Poverty Program."

Mrs. Normie Johnson was asked to give information on the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. She gave an excellent talk on the participation of the Department of HEW and the Office of Economic Opportunity in the fight against poverty.

Study continued through the winter on an individual basis. On January 13, 1966, Benny Albritton, Hamburg Elementary School Principal and Program Director for Operation Headstart, was invited to speak to the group. He also presented the problems facing poverty stricken children and the growing necessity for public kindergarten.

November 9, 1967 - Mrs. Jim Lide gave a report on the Governor's Council which she and Mrs. Vaskell Carter attended.

November 9, 1967 - Mrs. Charles Robbins read a letter from Keathley Scisson asking for donations for a patio for the Youth Center. The secretary read a recommendation of the board that members donate through the AAUW.

December 14, 1976 - Mrs. Ralph Arnold gave a report on "World Problems in a Changing Society." She gave information from the book The Year 2000.

A letter was received from the Lake Village branch inviting the Crossett branch to attend their Spring Luncheon on Saturday, March 6, 1966, at which time Mrs. Winthrop Rockefeller would be the guest speaker.

At the December meeting on December 13, 1968, Mrs. Jerry Mcnear moved that members make a contribution to the branch treasury during December and January to help defray the cost of the \$30.00 measles vaccine contribution.

On March 13, 1969, Irene Pucket, instructor at University of Arkansas at Monticello, who was on the Governor's Council, talked to the group on the new structure of AAUW.

Keeping in mind "Education" one of the areas of interest in AAUW, a Special Program Committee was appointed. The committee was composed of Mrs. John Wishart, Mrs. Vaskell Carter and Mrs. Kenneth Jackson. This committee planned a Book Fair for the big project of the year - 1969-70.

Soon the entire membership was involved in the execution of the plans. Committees were set up. Books began to come - beautiful new books, interesting best sellers, rare and unusual books for display during the first week of November 1969.

The fair was held four days and one night in November. Books were secured from a news agency in Little Rock on consignment with the branch receiving a percentage of the total sales. Old books that were donated were sold, and a group of rare and unusual books were on display. There was good publicity, and children were encouraged to attend. The fair was held in the Paul Sullins Library (downstairs) from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. each day.

For four days children of Crossett filed down the steps to the basement of the library eager to look, to browse, to buy their favorite books.

The treasurer's report on December 10, 1970, showed a balance of \$365.81.

The Crossett branch donated \$25 to the Recreation Commission and \$10.00 to the Health Center Auxiliary. Members also contributed volunteer services in setting up both facilities.

The January meeting which was to be held January 11, 1973, was canceled because of the ice storm.

In November 1973 at the home of Mrs. Jeff Mason, a new project was introduced, an Arts and Crafts Fair. After much discussion, a motion was made and seconded to set up a committee to study the Arts and Crafts Fair idea as a money making project in the spring. The group voted unanimously for this project.

At the December meeting, Mrs. Jerry Crow agreed to act as chairman of the fair. Mrs. Mason agreed to act as co-chairman. The date and place was set for April 6 at the First United Methodist Church. Soon all the members were filled with enthusiasm over the prospects of the coming event. Letters kept coming from neighboring towns for a space to "exhibit their wares."

At a later meeting Mrs. Bill Runyan reported that the fair was an overwhelming success. There were seventy-two spaces rented and each space was filled with arts and crafts of every kind - you name'em AAUW had'em.

At the April meeting (1974) Mrs. Runyan read a request from the Delta Counseling and Guidance Center that AAUW donate whatever was possible for them to contribute to buy essentials for the office in Crossett. Again keeping in mind one of AAUW's center of interests - Community Problems, the group voted to donate twenty dollars.

At the September meeting, September 12, 1974, in the home of Mrs. W. W. Hines, the branch celebrated its 25th Anniversary with a Silver Anniversary Tea. There were forty members and guests present.

The president, Mrs. Bill Runyan, welcomed the members, prospective members and guests. She introduced the guest speakers, Mrs. Sue Frueauff, Division president, and Mrs. Bernice Smith, a former division president. Mrs. Frueauff told the group what AAUW meant to her and Mrs. Smith spoke on Fellowships.

Past presidents include: 1965-67, Mrs. Kenneth Jackson; 1967-69, Mrs. C. E. Robbins; 1969-71, Mrs. W. W. Hines; 1971-73, Mrs. Joe Bridgforth; 1973-75, Mrs. Bill Runyan, Jr.; and 1975-77, Mrs. Ralph Arnold.

Fayetteville Branch

Presidents during the last decade for the Fayetteville branch have been: 1965-67, Mrs. R. C. (Lucy) Wray; 1967-69, Mrs. P. L. (Ella) Blackshire; 1969-71, Mrs. Dwight (Elise) Isley; 1972-73, Mrs. Wm. E. (Helen) Sohl; 1973-75, Mrs. O. O. (Doris) Milton; and 1975, Mrs. L. W. (Wanda) Stephens.

Study groups of the branch during the 1966-76 decade included antiques and history, art appreciation, botany, community, community problems, consumer problems, creative arts, current books, dynamic learning, ecology, economic facts of life, global interdependence, great books and world outlook, great decisions, media, music listening, twenty-first century, and world problems. Usually the study groups met once a month, heard programs and discussed the topic. Several of the groups presented branch programs.

The Community Problems study group informed themselves and helped inform others of the work and needs of juvenile court probation, the Economic Opportunity Agency, Headstart, after school programs, the school implementing public kindergartens, Salvation Army, American Red Cross, community planning, public health, United Community Services, recycling program, and community mental health centers.

The Fayetteville branch supported and worked for an amendment to the Arkansas Constitution to make public kindergartens possible. We also supported local implementation of public kindergartens, including an increase in school tax millage.

State licensing for day care centers was supported, as was the Equal Rights Amendment, and many other local, state, and national issues relating to the interests of AAUW.



Topics implemented by the branch were, in 1966-67, The Law and the Citizen, Education, and Revolution of Modern China; in 1967-69, Testing Values in a Changing Society and Society's Reflection in the Arts; in 1969-71, The Academic Community, American Foreign Policy, This Beleaguered Earth, and Human Use of Urban Space; in 1971-73, We The People, Crisis in Public Education, A Dollar's Worth, and This Beleaguered Earth; in 1973-74, Dynamic Learning and Global Interdependence; in 1974-75, Global Interdependence and Media; in 1975-76, Economic Facts of Life and Twenty-First Century.

Money was raised for the AAUW Educational Foundation by book sales, flea markets, plant sales, benefit bridge games, selling Christmas banquet table decorations made by members, and by individual contributions. A \$500 donation was given in honor of Mary Joyce McGoodwin in 1975 and another \$500 in honor of Wilma C. Sacks, MD in 1976. The latter gift was applied to the Helen Coover Endowment for Research and Projects.

Fort Smith Branch

In 1966 a continued effort by the Fort Smith branch was being made to aid the Headstart program that was started on June 28, 1965. This was a community action program for children of limited opportunity. As a follow-up, the branch chose to study the topic--EDUCATION: AN ANTIDOTE TO POVERTY. An interest developed in a summer enrichment program and in 1967-68, our branch designed and initiated this program in coordination with the local art center. French, art, and science were offered to 6 to 12-year olds. This enrichment program was continued in 1968-69 with the theater arts class being included. A total enrollment of 144 children resulted in this summer enrichment program at the art center.

AAUW's legislative group worked again on initiating voting machines.

Fort Smith branch members worked many hours helping to support the new proposed Fort Smith Public Library in 1967. On July 17, 1967, the Fort Smith branch served as the hostess to the AAUW State Division Workshop. In October 1967, President Margaret McDonald was appointed by Governor Rockefeller as one of six women in the state of Arkansas to the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women. Bernice Kizer was also appointed to this commission.

March 1968. From the Arkansas State Division Bulletin: Mrs. Marie Hanna of Fort Smith appeared on the slate of the nominating committee for recording secretary.

Summer 1969. Cecil Holman taught remedial reading at the Cass Job Corps Center, Project 100.

September 1969. From the newsletter of Penny Clarke. "Since we are always looking for new painless (?) methods of increasing Branch contributions to the Fellowship Fund, your local board has approved the establishment of an AAUW Boutique."

Programs 1968-69. Special interests of AAUW members was the "dilemma" of drop-outs. Some newspaper headlines for AAUW branch programs were "City Administrator, Jack Shelley finds Self on 'Firing Line' After Talk on Urban Problems"; "AAUW Hears Counselor"; "Educator Claims Students No Different In This Day"; AAUW to Hear Dr. Nini on Attitudes of Students Today." The members were very active in community action affairs. A clean-up, fix-up program was started. Old houses were torn down and families relocated. Members worked to help families in counseling and supplying furniture. This was not an urban renewal but a local effort.

AAUW member, Mrs. Thomas Gallaher was given the Golden Deeds Award in 1969.

The Fort Smith branch goes on record as favoring the proposed millage increase for Westark Junior College on October 21, 1970. Also the members attended a public rally sponsored by the League of Women Voters.

On January 20, 1971, Mrs. Ella Falk presented a branch study on Fort Smith Cultural Affairs.

On March 23, 1974, Mrs. Fred Frueauff, AAUW State President, was the speaker at our spring luncheon. Her subject was "Women in Arkansas."

On October 1974, a special panel discussion on "Stop the World; I Want to Get On," was presented by Dr. Annette Landrum, Mrs. Myron Rappeport, and Mrs. Carolyn Pollan. The program topic being studied was WOMAN--SEARCHING FOR SELF.

Most of the programs in branch meetings for 1975-76 are being given by members instead of using guest speakers. In January 1976, members made actual monthly budgets on the study topic, ON LIVING WITH LESS.

In the ten year period, Fort Smith AAUW has had several study groups. The Living Theater Group and the Book Group has survived the ups and downs of study groups and they are just as strong and vital in '76 as they were in '66. Ann Sims and Rae Speer are the leaders of these groups.

The following is a listing of branch presidents from 1966 to 1976: 1966, Mrs. R. W. (Mildred) Townsend; 1967-68, Mrs. H. P. (Margaret) McDonald; 1968-69, Mrs. Dan E. (Marie) Hanna; 1969-71, Mrs. Francisco (Gloria) Muci; 1971-73, Mrs. Donald (Carolyn) Peer; 1973-75, Mrs. Lee (Alma) Measeles; and 1975-76, Mrs. R. W. (Mildred) Townsend.

Harrison Branch

Harrison was established in 1876 as the seat of Boone County, which was established in 1869. A Captain Henry Fick requested a Union Colonel M. LaRue Harrison to survey and plat the town of Harrison and it is from this gentleman that the town got its name. Colonel Harrison soon left the area and Captain Fick stayed and founded the town of Harrison. Harrison is now a growing city with several industries as well as a farming community. A new community college, Northwest Arkansas Community College, has recently been established. Its enrollment is twice what was expected. Harrison also has the Twin Lakes Vocational Technical School, which is an asset to the community. The population is 8,876.

The Harrison branch of AAUW was organized by Mrs. Ernest M. Archer at the Public Library on Saturday, November 2, 1946, with 13 members. The first officers were Miss Virginia Kirby, president; Miss Mary Coffman, vice president; Mrs. Ernest Times, secretary; and Mrs. R. H. Wagstaff, treasurer.

Although organized in 1946, the Harrison branch did not become active until 1947, and by the spring of 1948 it had 20 members.

The branch has always been interested in the field of art. In 1949 it brought the Arkansas Artists exhibit of water colors to Harrison and displayed it in all the schools. Later that year the branch sponsored an art class, with an instructor from the University of Arkansas. Then it sponsored an exhibit of the work created.

Over the years the branch has continued with exhibits, at one time showing the French "Merci Album," a collection of art and letters from French school children. To insure each child of art supplies, the branch provided them for the city and county schools. When the drive was on for the Fine Arts Center, the branch organized a committee to raise the money and received a commendation from the Center for its art program.

In 1952, the branch sponsored a play using local talent for the characters involved. This was a money making venture, but also provided entertainment for the community.

Career days at the high school were first sponsored by the Harrison branch in 1956. Later came the sponsoring of spelling contests. Since 1953, the branch has given a college scholarship each year to a senior high school girl. Thinking that there should be an enlarged scholarship program, the branch took the leadership in establishing a community one. The group helped finance an exchange student from Germany.

Legislation, local, state, and federal, which concerned the improvement of education, has been actively sponsored by the branch. In 1949 the group successfully sponsored a woman for the school board. In 1964 a member of AAUW was elected to the Harrison City Council. On the state level the support of the voting machine amendment in 1962 and of the voter registration amendment in 1964 came from AAUW.

Harrison has hosted two workshops: one in 1960 and another in 1965. The branch has participated in Fellowships and completed its quota for the Building Fund. It helped organize the Berryville branch. Mrs. Artie Adair served the division as second vice president in 1963-65. Miss Helen Price won the \$100 award for the travelship to Seattle National Convention in 1975. Only one person could be selected in Arkansas.

Membership grew from 13 in 1946 to approximately 30 in 1953. We now have only 16 members for the year 1975-76.

Our continuing emphasis has been on the Scholarship Program and an old book sale was held in the spring of 1975 to raise money for this project. Also, a White Elephant Sale is held each year to help raise money for this project.

Presidents have been Mrs. Wallace Nickels, 1946-47; Mrs. John A. Powers, 1947-49; Mrs. Ulys Jackson, 1949-50; Mrs. E. R. Tims, 1950-51; Miss Eileen Briscoe, 1951-52; Miss Helen Price, 1952-53; Miss Ruth Meredith, 1953-54; Miss Clara Usrey, 1954-56; Mrs. Henry Kirby, 1956-57; Mrs. W. H. McCutcheon, 1957-58; Miss Jacquelyn Coffman, 1958-60; Mrs. Artie Adair, 1960-62; Mrs. R. J. Cook, 1962-64; Mrs. Richard Brown, 1964-66; Mrs. D. G. Griffiths, 1966-68; Mrs. Dale Price, 1968-70; Mrs. Earl Rife, 1970-72; Mrs. Floyd Rogers, 1972-74; and Miss Clara Usrey, 1974-76.

Hot Springs Branch

This decade began appropriately with the presidency of Marie Jackson for the biennium, 1965-67. The study topic concerned the Chinese Revolution, and study groups met regularly the first year to learn more of a nation long holding much of mystery and fascination for the Western World. In this year, Margaret Martin and Mattie Collier became members, the first two black women to join the Hot Springs branch.

Regina Johns (Now Mrs. J. N. Laidler) served as president for the biennium 1967-69. The branch was represented at both 1967 and 1969 national conventions. The branch served as hostess for the 1967 conference of the Southwest Central Region and some of the region's neighboring states, Ruth Jane Stuck, Jonesboro, being the regional vice president and chairman of the conference. In 1969, Hot Springs was hostess also to the Arkansas State Division convention. In that year, the branch contributed to the special fund raised by the national organization as the Corretta King Award presented for the first time at the national convention.

Charlcie Vos (now deceased), who had been secretary for the Arkansas State Division at one time and who in 1973-75 was to become the State's first Centennial Fund Chairman, served as president, 1969-71. Mrs. Vos, long concerned that many eligible young women in Hot Springs did not join because they found the branch's Saturday luncheon meetings inconvenient, worked all through the biennium to find a solution, and it was because of Charlcie's efforts that the permanent study group, meeting in evenings and pursuing topics of their own selection while still a part of the Hot Springs branch, came into being, a most important part of the branch since that time.

The branch, organized in 1923, celebrated its 50th anniversary during the biennium 1971-73. Hilda Leigh, president, felt that with two charter members, Marnette Chesnutt, charter president, and Bernice Mendel, still active and with the study group now meeting regularly, emphasis should be put upon membership, the consequent rise in membership of 50%. Mindful also of the national convention's vote in 1971 to raise by 1982 a Centennial Fund contribution to the Educational Foundation Program of \$10 million, the branch voted for 1972-73 a \$500 named gift to EFP honoring Mrs. Chesnutt. This raised the per capita for that year to \$7.00, high to date.

Supportive of educational and cultural programs locally, the branch felt it desirable to offer a small scholarship fund when the new Garland County Community College opened its doors in 1973. Also during this biennium of Juanita Ball's presidency, a branch member, Judy Johnson applied for and received a grant from the Project Renew program.

1975-76 will long be remembered in branch history. On April 9-11, 1976, the Southwest Central Region held its 25th meeting celebrating its 50th anniversary in the same room of the Arlington Hotel where it was organized in April 1926. With Miss Ruth Johnston, president, the branch was honored to serve as hostess. Marie Jackson, a past state president also, in whose honor the branch will give a \$500 named gift to EFP this year, was general chairman while our charter president, Mrs. Chesnutt, was named honorary chairman of the Conference. All 50-year branches and 50-year members were honored, and Mary Hudgins, Hot Springs and Arkansas historian, who joined immediately upon graduation in 1926, became our third life member. Mary is a past president and a dedicated worker all through the years.

Thus, the decade. Hot Springs branch can claim from these years an increased awareness of world problems particularly those of greatest concern to women and a growing willingness to become involved in the search for understanding and better ways to meet the problems. For this, we are proud to belong to AAUW.

Jonesboro Branch

The Jonesboro branch of the American Association of University Women was organized on the campus of Arkansas State College in 1934. From its beginning it has given and continues to give special emphasis to problems affecting education, government, living conditions, and human rights.

The Headstart program which was organized in Northeast Arkansas by the Jonesboro branch over a decade ago, has expanded its program to include the Follow Through program, kindergartens, and day care centers. The branch also sponsored education for parents of these children. One man learned to read and write in a one-to-one program at the noon hour. Each year the branch sponsors a Christmas party for all of the Headstart children, providing refreshments, toys, and mittens and caps, knitted by members. Special credit for mittens is given to a former member, Lillian Turner, now living in Colorado, who knits and sends over 150 pairs of mittens each year.

Continued awareness and interest in education prompted the branch to give its attention in the year 1968-69 to the school transportation of children who lived long distances from the school they were required to attend. Individual members aided in the actual transportation until, through pressure from the group, the school board arranged busing to better meet the needs of these children. A more recent activity of the branch has been the help extended the Vietnamese families settled in Jonesboro. Books and tapes were furnished to aid in the teaching of English, household goods and other necessities were contributed by members. Members volunteered their services in the one-to-one language program arranged for these children and their parents at one of the public schools.

"The Human Use of Urban Space" was the topic chosen by the members for the 1969-71 biennium. One of the projects undertaken was "The Profiles of Our Town." As a result of this study, action was taken to improve conditions where badly needed. Pressure was brought on the City Council to help clean up our city's worst area. With the cooperation of the city fathers, a clean-up program was established. In this infested area, roaches and rats were eliminated; houses were burned by some of the owners, who had been collecting rent from them for years. The Jonesboro branch was responsible for relocating and helping to rehabilitate one family.

The program for 1967-69 biennium was "Society's Reflection in Arts." Under the leadership of Brenda Heringer, Cultural Arts Representative, the fields of music, art, drama, and architecture were explored. Several projects have developed out of the Arts Program. Ruby Haynes, now branch Cultural Arts Representative, is successfully helping to plan and supervise three art workshops: two for children; and one for adults and children. Vietnamese refugees were encouraged and did attend two of these workshops. Also, Ruby and Brenda, who is serving her second term as Division Cultural Arts Representative, planned and carried out with the Bicentennial Fine Arts Council, a project for artists in the community to paint pictures of very old homes, buildings and sites in northeast Arkansas. A showing of seventy-five paintings was given at the Jonesboro and Craighead County Library during Library Week, April 1976.

Brenda presented to the Division for approval and sponsorship the following proposal by the Conway branch, already approved by the Jonesboro branch.

"That AAUW set up a project, following the plans of the late Adrain Brewer, H. Louis Freund and other artists of the state, that would result in a series of murals, depicting the history of Arkansas, be placed on the walls of the rotunda of the state capitol and perhaps later in other state owned buildings, that these be planned and executed by Arkansas artists."

She had gained the support of artists in the Colleges and Universities in Arkansas and of the Arkansas Arts Center Director and that of the Humanities Program. They met June 11 in the Rotunda of the Capitol Building to help plan this breath-taking affair. Leaving the Capitol, the group accompanied Brenda to the Division board meeting, then in session in the AEA Building. After their presentation of the project, the board voted unanimously to sponsor the painting project using branch community interest. This will be a Division Bicentennial Project into the 21st century.

The Jonesboro branch has a good record in its contribution to the Fellowships Program leading the state in 1968, and running fifth per capita in the nation. Three \$500 named grants have been given to honor: a former member, Clarissa Delano, now deceased; Ruth Jane Stuck; and Cyd Frier Hiyari, daughter of Margaret Stuck Frier and granddaughter of Ruth Jane Stuck. Cyd was an English language teacher in Amman, Jordan and had just begun teaching music in the American Community School there before her untimely death.

For several years, a small study group from our branch has been meeting on Wednesday each week at the Holiday Inn for lunch and a round table discussion of current significant problems. Great Decisions is automatic in Februarys, as is the AAUW Journal at any time, but especially the May Journal each year. One book chosen by the group for study, The Crime of Punishment by Dr. Meninger turned the group toward a protest of the death penalty. Letters were sent to members of a state government committee which was to report its findings on the death penalty re-instatement to the Legislature. The only answer came to us from the one woman on the committee. The legislature reinstated the death penalty and it has not yet been challenged.

Interested in the fate of impoverished children around the world, the Jonesboro branch each year sells on consignment up to \$1500 worth of UNICEF cards, books, toys and other gifts. The branch is interested in maintaining a continuing United Nations Center in Jonesboro where United Nations and UNICEF consignment articles and information will be always available.