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A  
BRIEF HISTORY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY ARTS WOMEN'S CLUB  
1929 - 1974

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Compiled and Written  
by  
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by  
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## Introduction

This short history of the University Arts Women's Club was compiled and written at the request of the University Historian, Professor Robin Harris. Information based on this material will be used in the forthcoming 2-volume publication, A History of the University of Toronto, marking the University's sesquicentennial year.

In 1973 Marjorie Sweet, UAWC President, commissioned the writing of this history. Helen P.B. Smith graciously undertook this most time consuming task and completed work on the project in the spring of 1974. Assisting Mrs. Smith was an Advisory Committee including Mrs. W.H.T. Baillie, Mrs. G.S. Brett and Mrs. D.A. MacRae.

Because of its unusual interest, publication of this booklet was authorized by action of the UAWC executive in January, 1975. It was felt that this written account does more than document the origin and structure of the organization. It defines, as well, something of the spirit of the club: a spirit whose intangible benefits have been experienced by hundreds of women for over most of the last half century.

Olive Kenny  
President

Phyllis Holladay  
Publications

## I. The Early Years...

It was March 20, 1929. Lady Falconer, wife of Sir Robert Falconer, President of the University of Toronto, had called a small meeting at her home, Argyle House. The subject under consideration was to be the "formation of a club for wives of Professors and members of staff not affiliated with any college, faculty or special department."<sup>1</sup> Lady Falconer said later that "the main purpose was to be that of mutual acquaintance which would be just as profitable to older members as to younger." Mmes. Bensley (Biology), Dymond (Zoology) and Sifton (Botany) were present at this meeting. The first order of business was the appointment of a committee to decide on the name and the activities of the club. That first committee consisted of Mmes. Chant, Buchanan, Lash Miller, Jackson and Satterly who, on May 9, 1929, decided by ballot that the club should be called the University Arts Women's Club. Annual dues were fixed at one dollar and Mrs. Bensley was asked to be the first President. Lady Falconer assumed the Honorary Presidency.

The first executive meeting was held on October 9, 1929 with the organization of Department Representatives and the formation of three committees: "Program, Refreshments and A Committee to Welcome Strangers." The club's first meeting, in the form of a tea "particularly for new members," was held in late October at the Graduate House "by kind permission of Dr. Ford" with Lady Falconer

and Mrs. Chant (representing Mrs. Bensley) in the receiving line.

Speaking to a meeting of the club in 1932, Dean DeLury recalled the early days of the University when, "the only social function was the conversazione held each year and entertainment of students in the homes of faculty." Wives' organizations had existed for some years in the colleges, and the University College Thursday Teas<sup>2</sup> included students, faculty and their wives. But, as Mrs. G.S. Brett notes,<sup>3</sup> there was no organization per se for the wives of Arts and Science staff or women staff members.

Lady Falconer's hope for this group is expressed in Article II of the UAWC Constitution.<sup>4</sup> This object has never been revised.

"The object shall be to promote friendly relations among the members of the Club, with the particular aim of providing a nucleus of interest for members who are new to the University."

She also hoped that the Arts Wives group, so-called apparently because science, in those palmy days, was considered an art, would form part of a larger club to include as members all faculty wives of the University of Toronto. It is noted that in the Forties there was a suggestion that the UAWC might become a Town and Gown association but this did not materialize.

In April of 1932 the Faculty Wives Association was formed with Lady Falconer as President. At the outset one large function was held each year to entertain all wives and women staff, but as the University grew in size, it became difficult to find a suitable meeting place and members willing to undertake the responsibility of such a function. The Faculty Wives Association was formally dissolved in 1959. Their silver tea urn and tray were bequeathed to the UAWC and in 1973 Mrs. D.R.G. Owen, their Treasurer, was authorized to donate the \$90.41 in their treasury to the University Settlement. Mrs. M.St.A. Woodside's account of this organization is appended.<sup>5</sup>

Some of the older members of the UAWC consider this club the successor to the lively Thursday Teas but not until 1937-38 was Thursday chosen as the official meeting date. Policy has since ranged between the last Thursday of the month and the fourth Thursday which is the present policy. But, it is, like all things in the club, a moveable feast.

The University College staff wives were invited to join the UAWC in 1933 as associate members with all privileges except voting and in 1962 administration wives were included. The associate membership category was eliminated from the Constitution in 1969 and membership in the club was opened to the wives or women staff members of any University of Toronto college or faculty upon application to the executive.

## II. Moving Tents and Ports of Call...

From the earliest days a permanent dwelling has been an unrealized dream. One could say that the unchanging motto of the club might well be expressed in the line of the following (altered) hymn.

"...and (monthly) pitch my  
moving tent  
a (month's) march nearer home."

Our moving tent was pitched on a variety of very welcome sites. In the Thirties Father McGarrity invited the club to meet at Newman Hall, 44 Hoskin Avenue, until it was damaged by fire. Later meeting places included the Graduate Houses on Devonshire Place and 87 St. George Street (whose caretakers rejoiced in the names of Payne and Pickle), 79 St. George Street (kindness of University College), old Wymilwood (later Falconer Hall), St. Hilda's College, the Botany Building and the Household Science Building.

Meetings were held, too, in the Art Gallery and Museum, combined with tours and lectures. Spring luncheons were planned in exotic foreign restaurants and church parish halls.

It was Mrs. Bensley, whose husband had been a staff member since 1905, who became intensely interested in forming a Women's Building Committee to plan a permanent women's building for staff and wives not affiliated with any college. This committee was established in 1938 and included the wives of the Chancellor,

President and Vice-President of the University, the Deans of Women and the representatives of various women's committees. The UAWC was represented steadily by Mrs. Marjorie Shaw<sup>6</sup> and Mrs. G.F. Duff, with the club President an ex-officio member. Monetary contributions from the UAWC were donated periodically to the Women's Building Fund and on May 12, 1949, a resolution, moved by Mrs. B. Wilkinson, was passed by the club stating that "when the Women's Athletic Building is completed, a room should be included for meetings of the University Arts Women's Club." In 1952, old Wymilwood on Queen's Park Crescent, served a temporary purpose as a women's building and the club, through the kindness of Miss Zerada Slack, was made very welcome there. This halcyon state continued until 1960 when the long awaited opening of the women's athletic facility--the Benson Building--took place. The club was allowed the use of the Lounge from 1960-62 but it then was advised reluctantly that the needs of the students precluded the UAWC holding any meetings there.

Dean Innis of University College, a UAWC past President, and later Dean Grant, allowed the club to use the comfortable facilities of the Women's Union until 1967-68 when the tent was again gathered up. Since 1969 four meetings a year have been held in the Parish Hall of St. Thomas Church on Huron Street, generously subsidized by the Dean of Arts and Science, A.D. Allen succeeded by R.A. Greene.

Dances in Hart House and the Faculty Club, wine and cheese parties in the foyer of Sidney Smith Hall and University College, Museum and Art Gallery meetings still continue. In fact, the Arts and Science Faculty Ball first held in 1970 had precedence in the club's early dashing days, when in 1932 and the years following an Evening Reception was held at Newman House and husbands and women staff members joined the wives for the reception itself, supper, dancing and twelve tables of bridge.

### III. Speaking of Traditions...

Mrs. Cody, whose husband was made President in 1932, continued Lady Falconer's interest and generous hospitality to the club. From 1934 until Dr. Cody's retirement in 1945, she entertained the UAWC members at least once a year in her home. Falconer Hall lent itself pleasantly to the Christmas meeting and party of the club, but when this was no longer available, Mrs. C.T. Bissell, whose husband became President in 1958, welcomed us charmingly for the Christmas meeting to 93 Highland Avenue, the new official President's house. Mrs. J.R. Evans has continued this tradition since 1973. In speaking of traditions, perhaps the strongest in the club, to which it steadily clings, is the singing of Christmas carols at this party. In the Thirties and Forties Mrs. Malcolm Wallace played the piano and Mrs. E.H. Craigie led the

singing. This has continued into the Sixties and to the present with Mrs. J. Polanyi as pianist and Mrs. J.J. Rae as choirmistress. Mrs. J.R. Evans has led the singing since 1973. Mrs. Wallace prepared the original carol sheets. These were supplemented by Mrs. Shore in 1951. Those members present at the Christmas Parties of 1973 and 1974 enjoyed the use of a bright and lovely new Carol Booklet.<sup>7</sup>

### IV. Changing Times Echo the Past...

Early membership in the club (1930-31) numbered 125 with "39 guests" from University College. The club's membership in 1972-73 stood at about 210. Mrs. MacRae noted in 1969, "...though the size of the University continues to grow, the paid-up memberships remain at a constant and the average of 75, turning out for general meetings, is that of the average of 40 years ago."

Interest groups were first discussed in 1940-41, under the Presidency of Mrs. Bott, but were dropped in the war years. Mrs. D.B. DeLury reinstated them in 1962-63 and they have flourished for 11 years. These small groups provide recreation and promote friendship amongst old and new members who for various reasons do not necessarily attend the four or five regular afternoon or evening meetings with a formal program.

The groups, as they now stand, include Reading, Play Reading, Investment, Outings, Art, French and German Conversation, Bridge and Crafts. New groups

can be formed at any time. Cooking and Music and Gardening emerge periodically. In 1969-70 a group of wives in the Annex with young children and similar interests met regularly at Bloor United Church with their children for relaxation and discussion under the chairmanship of Mrs. D.A. Stager. This group is now under the direction of the YWCA and no longer is affiliated with the UAWC. It is serving a real need in this particular community.

#### V. Friendship and Good Works...

In 1954 the club celebrated its 25th Anniversary. Mrs. Goudge, President, in welcoming members to the first meeting, noted that the purpose of the club was "simply friendship." This certainly echoes Lady Falconer's original intention in setting up such a group. The UAWC was never intended to be a service organization as such. Nevertheless, from its beginnings until the end of the second war, friendship and good works co-existed. These, of course, were the years of the Depression and the pre-Umbrella Social Service period.

Within the University, interest and activities in making new members feel welcome and at home were the moving spirit of the club. Already mention has been made of the contributions of the UAWC to the Women's Building Committee and Fund. Outside the University, from 1934 to the late Forties, working meetings were held in which tags were strung and bundled for the Blind Tag Day. Indeed, discussion of the 1934 Constitution took place over

stringing and bundling and often an outside speaker attended. In the Thirties layettes were made for the City Welfare Department and in 1947-51 clothing donations were sent to the Good Neighbor Club supporting elderly and indigent men.

A close association has always been maintained with the University Settlement which was founded in 1912 and entirely supported by the University of Toronto until 1918, when it was taken over by the Federation of Community Services. The 1933 Settlement "Christmas Shower" of useful garments, baby clothing and layettes was continued into the Fifties. Settlement monetary donations are always given at the UAWC Christmas Party and periodic appeals for clothing and other items are made at general meetings.

In 1957-58 a UAWC committee under the chairmanship of Mrs. G.S. Vickers concerned itself with securing satisfactory housing aid for junior staff members. The report of this committee, based on questionnaires circulated throughout the club and investigation of housing aid at other North American Universities, resulted in a Act by the Board of Governors in October of 1958, granting loans of up to \$5,000 to any interested new junior faculty members to assist in financing the purchase of a house.

From 1940-45 the club, in accordance with University policy, devoted itself to war work. "Very simple" teas were planned. It should be noted that in 1939-40 a member donated money for

the year's tea expenses so that all club monies could be used for war contributions. Mrs. Cody organized a central executive to co-ordinate war work activities. Included were all University women's organizations and students. The UAWC created the Women's War Service Committee as its part of this organization. Six-hundred members registered in December, 1939 to sew for the Red Cross every Friday from 10 to 4 in the Household Science Building. Many English 'war guests'--mothers and children--were welcomed to Toronto. In 1940 the 'mothers from British Universities' were invited to attend the regular club meetings. The club contributed generously to the Save the Children Fund in 1945-46 and Christmas parcels were sent to England in the immediate post-war years.

#### VI. Programs Reflect the Times...

It is natural that, in such a club as this, the speakers at general meetings will reflect the tenor of the times. In the Thirties club members spoke on their travels and entertained the group with music and song. "At Homes" for new members were held as were formal receptions and dances. Outside speakers included welfare workers and political figures. During the war years, the actual war work consumed the energies of the members and the social meetings often revolved around a cup of tea and conversation.

It is pleasant to record that in March of 1940 a lively debate on the

subject, "Will the Novel Gone with the Wind Live," took place with equally spirited and often unrestrained discussion from the floor. The Minutes record demurely, "The ladies on the affirmative side won."

In 1943-44 a most successful Antiques and Heirlooms exhibit was organized displaying items owned by members. This, together with the vivid memories of an Hobbies and Interests display, first held in the Thirties, inspired the planning of a similar exhibition in 1954 which was most successful in its own right.

Throughout the years husbands have regularly been pressed into service as speakers and in October of 1972 we welcomed the first woman Chancellor of the University, Mrs. Pauline McGibbon, as a member speaker. In the Fifties and early Sixties outside speakers came occasionally but the emphasis was placed on talks by our own members. In the late Sixties and early Seventies concern with current topics became primary and the year's programs were arranged using themes such as "Know Your University" and "Women in the Community" with speakers drawn from the University, the city and the province.

#### VII. Getting the Word Out...

Time was when the penny post-card meant just that and members were notified faithfully of each meeting although they seldom replied to the attached R.S.V.P.'s. In 1963 a monthly Newsletter was sent to



all paid-up members. This was later reduced to an autumn and spring mailing. In 1968-69 a printed program for the year was mailed to the entire membership of 800. This practice has continued to the present time with a certain discreet pruning of the membership lists. The fees remained at one dollar until 1964, were raised to two dollars from 1964-70, were raised to three dollars from 1970-74 and, with reluctance, were raised to five dollars in April of 1974.

The 1929-30 executive of four with approximately fifteen Department Representatives has now increased to fifteen with twelve Interest Group Convenors and twenty-two Department Representatives.

New members are still entertained at Area Coffee Parties. These were begun in 1962-63 after the tradition of the "At Homes" in the Thirties, with other club members in the neighborhood present. In 1968 a Brochure for New Members, compiled by the executive, with information about the University, the city and the UAWC was duplicated by the kindness of Dean Allen's secretaries and sent out early in September. This service has continued to the present time. In September of 1968 Mrs. MacRae, the President, entertained the new staff members, their wives/husbands and the UAWC executive and their husbands at an evening party at the Observatory House. Dean Allen, in September of 1969 hosted a Wine and Cheese party for new staff, their wives/husbands, Department Chairmen and wives and the UAWC executive

and their husbands. This continued in the Sidney Smith foyer until 1972. In 1972 and 1973 the UAWC executive welcomed new members and their spouses at smaller September gatherings.

#### VIII. Contents of the Moving Tent...

In its 45 years of existence, the club has acquired various possessions which it periodically humps on its back and, hopefully, deposits under its latest moving tent. In 1953-54 a copper tea (coffee) urn was purchased through members' donations, suitably engraved and "made available to all University groups using Falconer Hall." In 1954-55 two 3-branch silver candelabra were added. At the 1954 Silver Anniversary Luncheon in Falconer Hall, a gavel, the gift of the past Presidents, was presented to the incoming President, Mrs. Heard, by Mrs. G.S. Brett. The Faculty Wives tea urn and tray are now roosting with the UAWC urn and in April of 1970 the executive gave a silver rose bowl to the club. At present all these are housed in a locked cupboard in St. Thomas' Parish Hall and are fully insured. Linen table cloths have appeared and melted away like "snow wreaths in thaw jean." In addition, we possess Minute Books dating from 1929 to the present time with the exception of the Executive Minutes from January-October of 1941, which are missing, plus the President's Record, dating from 1953, and a leather-bound book with President's signatures. Convenor's files are passed on to their successors each year.

## IX. The Purpose Maintained...

In April of 1969 the club celebrated its Fortieth Anniversary at a gala dinner in the Great Hall of Hart House. At that time gratitude to the vision of the founders of the club was expressed, on our behalf, by our distinguished member speakers. They were: Mrs. E.H. Craigie, Dr. Helen Hogg, Mrs. M. St. A. Woodside and Mrs. G.S. Brett. They expressed "sentiments to which every Bosom returned an Echo." We do indeed have cause to be grateful to our friends and benefactors: for the interest and active aid of the successive Deans of Arts and Science in the Sixties and Seventies--Bladen, Allen and Greene--and to all the loyal members who, in our years of existence, have watched the club change with the changing times and yet, thanks to their efforts, keep its integrity and maintain its central purpose--friendship.

## Footnotes and Appendix

### Footnotes

1. University Arts Women's Club Minute Books, 1929-1974. All information and quotations following, with the exception of obvious literary quotes, has been taken from the UAWC Minute Books and will not be cited hereafter.
2. Wittily recalled by Mrs. W.H.T. Baillie on page 18.
3. See page 22 for further details.
4. University Arts Women's Club Constitution, 1934; revisions in 1953, 1964, 1969.
5. See page 25 for further details.
6. It is of interest to note that the Marjorie Shaw Memorial Fund was started in May, 1961 under the presidency of Mrs. G.S. Vickers. Mrs. B. Wilkinson convened the committee, with Mmes. G.S. Brett, D.C. Williams, Mrs. Vickers (ex-officio) and Mmes. Buchanan and Stagg of Hispanic Studies as members. The fund, in excess of \$300, was closed in March, 1963. The monies were used to purchase a shuffleboard court for the Home for the Aged, Illahee Lodge (under the Neighborhood Workers Association). (Memorandum to Mrs. S.G. Clark from Mrs. D.B. DeLury, 1963.)
7. The new Carol Booklet was the result of the work of an ad hoc committee which included: Sue Polanyi, Eva Scherk--carol selection; Phyllis Holladay--typing and indexing; Marjorie Sweet--co-ordination and collating; Kae Hull, Mary Rooney, M. Hoogendyk--cover design and reproduction.

Presidents  
of the  
University Arts Women's Club

1929-1975

1929-30 Mrs. B.A. Bensley

1930-31 Mrs. Lash Miller

1931-32 Mrs. G.S. Brett

1932-33 Mrs. R.D. Thomson

1933-34 Mrs. W.H. Parks

1934-35 Mrs. M.A. Buchanan

1935-36 Mrs. E.M. Walker

1936-37 Mrs. J. Satterly

1937-38 Mrs. J.M. Shaw

1938-39 Mrs. W. Moore

1939-40 Mrs. A.G. Huntsman

1940-41 Mrs. E.A. Bott

1941-42 Mrs. W.P.M. Kennedy

1942-43 Mrs. G.W. Brown

1943-44 Mrs. E.H. Craigie

1944-45 Mrs. G.H. Duff

1945-46 Mrs. H.I. Innis

1946-47 Mrs. T.F. McIlwraith

1947-48 Mrs. J.W. McArthur

1948-49 Mrs. P.H. Brieger

1949-50 Mrs. E. Goggio

1950-51 Mrs. K.S. Bernhardt

1951-52 Mrs. H.S.M. Coxeter

1952-53 Mrs. D.S. Ainslie

1953-54 Mrs. T.A. Goudge

1954-55 Mrs. J.F. Heard

1955-56 Mrs. M. St. A. Woodside

1956-57 Mrs. B. Wilkinson

1957-58 Mrs. J.H. Parker

1958-59 Mrs. C.R. Myers

1959-60 Mrs. G. Langford

1960-61 Mrs. W.A.C. Dobson

1961-62 Mrs. G.S. Vickers

1962-63 Mrs. D.B. DeLury

1963-64 Mrs. S.G. Clark

1964-65 Mrs. C.E. Atwood

1965-66 Mrs. V.B. Meen

1966-67 Mrs. D.J. LeRoy

1967-68 Mrs. A.J. Arrowood

1968-69 Mrs. D.A. MacRae

1969-70 Mrs. R.M. Smith

1970-71 Mrs. P.G. Rooney

1971-72 Mrs. H.G. Skilling

1972-73 Mrs. P. Scherk

1973-74 Mrs. R.F.G. Sweet

1974-75 Mrs. L.M. Kenny

Reminiscences  
of the  
University Arts Women's Club  
by  
Edith M. Baillie

On arriving in Toronto in the autumn of 1919, I was invited to attend the Thursday Teas given by the ladies of University College. I can't remember where these teas started but when they moved to a room under the University College Library this caused their end. Professors and students were both welcome to the teas, but after the move, large quantities of students came down from above, refused offers of meeting professors, lifted plates of sandwiches and cake to the fireplace and had a nice time with their backs to their hostesses. After a month or so, the hostesses more or less went on strike and refused to bring any more food. It was decided to discontinue the teas.

As I understood it at the time, the University Arts Women's Club was their successor. When Lady Falconer invented the club the requirements for membership were a bit vague, but it seemed that any wife whose husband had an A for Arts after his name in the University Directory was eligible. University College women were also invited but at first 'took umbrage' about something and did not become members until later.

I was a regular attender at the Thursday Teas and the UAWC as coming to Toronto and not knowing a soul in Canada, life was rather lonely. At these meetings (especially the teas which were only tea and talk) I met a lot of women,

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newly arrived like myself, whom I have known well all my life in Toronto.

I think I have held several jobs in the UAWC at different times. I remember best being Social Convenor in a year when the tea was made in a different place each month. It was no sinecure. The worst meeting was held in the Old Settlement on Grange Road. I was not allowed to use the staff kitchen (which, ironically, had been fitted up by the UAWC quite recently) but had to boil kettles on the gas ring in the Children's Library, carrying an enormous teapot back and forth over a milling crowd of little heads. At the annual nominating meeting choosing the executive, someone said casually to me, "and you will take the Social (or Tea) Convenorship again?" With most unsporting haste, I cried loudly, "O, no!" They found someone else.

I expect most things I remember are in the Minute Books. One tea urn was bought from the Toronto Women's Music Club when they got too big to serve tea. This occurred during Mrs. Ainslie's presidency. The urn was copper but was silvered by the UAWC.

Some interesting programs I remember were two Hobby Shows and an Antique Show as well as many interesting lectures from members' husbands and others. The War Time Committee of the Red Cross did a great deal of work. I joined for a small while but, being an incompetent sewer, was reduced to sewing on Red Cross label. One day, sad to say, on going back for my gloves,

I found a perfectionist picking off my labels and putting them on straight. I left for another field of war work. There was also another Committee which found homes for overseas children, giving them safe homes during the years of war.

I have always been surprised that more women have not taken advantage of membership in the club. It has always been both a pleasure and an advantage to me.

The first interest groups were begun in the presidency of Mrs. Bott. She was assisted in this by Mrs. N.S. Chant. Being fully occupied at the time, I was unable to join a group and don't remember how they fared. They were formed again, under the presidency of Mrs. DeLury, and I feel that they have supplied a long-felt want to many women.

The atmosphere of the club has always been most cheerful and the executive most hard working and anxious to carry on the old traditions of friendliness and hospitality.

## University Arts Women's Club

by

Marion E. Brett

(A talk delivered to a meeting of the club under the presidency of Mrs. V.B. Meen.)

When Mrs. Meen asked me if I would tell something of the beginnings of our Association, my first reaction was to suggest that somebody else would do it much better but then I realized, as some of you may have discovered already, that one doesn't say "no" to Mrs. Meen--it isn't the done thing! Perhaps in going back to the time of beginning (so far away that it almost seems like the beginning of time) it is of some advantage to choose the Oldest Inhabitant as narrator!

These are not lecture notes, just reminders--as I am badly out of practice. I should really be upset if I forgot a comma or lost a semi-colon, but I promise not to forget the full-stop!

I remembered some advice that Lady Churchill gave to Mr. Eisenhower. "If you want to be impressive in making a speech, put on a large pair of black-rimmed spectacles and shake them at the audience and if you have notes, don't be ashamed of them--shake those in their faces, too! It really is very simple to be impressive."

I am going back just a little earlier than the date of our first meeting in March of 1929, to an afternoon when the young

wife of a new member of staff said to me, "I have been here a whole year now and I have no connection with the University whatever, or any friends there; I should never know that I have anything to do with it!" That was the picture then and for those of us who had built up a wide circle of friends over the years, it became our purpose and ideal to share the warmth of those friendships.

From a small committee we grew to a larger one and then to a full-fledged association having, among other distinctions, the power to write cheques in our own name. From the start we were divided into four different working committees, the members of which were chosen alphabetically. This method worked extremely well, but it sometimes fell to the part of a frightened new member to be put on one of these committees. "O! I could not possibly--I don't know anyone!" A little persuasion followed and at the end of the academic year I think there was not one who didn't express her appreciation of what it had meant to her in making friends and feeling as if she were really a vital part of things.

We devised a plan of monthly meetings, made interesting by varied adventures in the fields of the arts and sciences, specializing then, as now, on making friends with recent members who, with new and diverse outlooks, brought so much to our circle. There were bright ideas all along the way. Perhaps the most brilliant of all flowered in an evening party given up

to a Hobby Show. I think it was the gayest and most lively of all our gatherings and the one particularly where we all so easily made friends on every side as we admired sculpture, pottery, paintings, Parisian gowns and New York millinery--and to me (I being no knitter), most wonderful of all--a pair of socks! I asked the perpetrator admiringly, "Did you really make those yourself?" We were friends for life!

We have always had one drawback as compared with the colleges and faculties. We have no home. The result has been that we have had to move from place to place, always grateful, as now, to any organization that would take us in.

Of course, back in '29, we were so comparatively small in numbers that everything went smoothly, not to say casually. Our book of words (so to speak) was a guide rather than a control--a very happy state of affairs! But as our numbers increased, some one suggested that we ought to have a Constitution! Then wrestling in spirit really began. I should know as I was Chairman of the Constitution Committee. We survived--just! In fact, we have even survived, and flourish, under a Second Constitution. I am not quite certain if it represents a revolution or a reformation. Anyway, its chief function is to illuminate policy-making. I doubt if even our President knows how many committees there are now.

Half way through our career there

arose a beautiful dream--a Women's Building--with restaurant, the latter fulfilling the function defined in the 18th century as "an edifice dedicated to the restoration of consumed energy." We worked hard for it, collected money and always sent a representative to the Building Committee to help with the many problems. Alas! When the Women's Building opened, there was no open door for us. The dream had faded and the money, too. Friends from the United States, in visiting us, often tell of the wonderful Faculty Wives' Associations they have there, filling a useful place in the University background, based, each one, on a fine building.

University of Toronto  
Faculty Wives Association

1932-59

by

Eleanor Woodside

The University of Toronto Faculty Wives Association is distinct from the University of Toronto Faculty of Arts Wives Association, with which it is often confused. As the name of the latter is now University Arts Women's Club, the confusion no longer exists, but then, neither does the former any longer exist.

The U of T Faculty Wives Association stopped meeting in 1959 or 1960 by mutual consent, as an unnecessary group now that most faculties and colleges were large enough to have Associations of their own for wives and women faculty. The final wind-up was in 1973, when Mrs. Derwyn Owen, treasurer, after canvassing the 1960 members for permission, sent the remnant of the bank account (\$90.41) to the University Settlement.

Both the U of T Faculty Wives Association (1932) and the U of T Faculty of Arts Wives Association (1929) were founded, I believe, by Lady Falconer, who saw that as the University grew it would be harder for wives of new members of staff to become acquainted with other wives of members of staff who could help them find friends in the University community. The Faculty Wives Association consisted of the wives of the President and Chancellor and the wife of the head of every college and



and faculty in the U of T. In the case of Nursing, Food Sciences and Library Science it was the head herself who was a member. At that time there were about twenty-two members. It met at the call of the President's wife to decide on the time and place and form of the party for newcomers to the campus. Each faculty head's wife was responsible for the list of wives from her faculty who should be invited. Mine, first as wife of the Dean of Arts and Science and then as wife of the Principal of University College, were both long and unwieldy.

In Harriet Smith's time we also had a considerable sum of money to dispose of which entailed long discussions. We finally purchased a silver coffee urn, with our name inscribed on it, for use at University functions.

The parties for new wives took several forms. There were afternoon teas, dessert and coffee after lunch, or morning coffee parties, but by 1959, when it was held in Wymilwood, there were more hostesses than guests, so it was decided to discontinue them and have new members' parties (given by) the individual faculties and colleges.