

THE
OTTAWA UNIVERSITY
WOMEN'S CLUB

IN CELEBRATION OF FIFTY YEARS

A brief history
with attached accounts on selected subjects

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INTRODUCTION

What credentials do I bring to the task of compiling a historical account of the Ottawa University Women's Club? Two answers: 1) my desire, stemming from love for this University where I completed a major in history; and, 2) my membership, which I count a privilege, from 1941 until 1986 with Honorary status since that time. I am the wife of a retired professor who also was Dean of the College for nineteen years, and I was a staff member in alumni/development/public relations for twenty-five years. Further, my incentive grew from several occasions on which I presented programs on the history which stimulated other long-time members to offer vignettes from their own experiences and newer ones to ask questions or give comments.

Each member through all the fifty years has made her own contribution to the Club. My memories are stirred and verified by the minutes, reports, clippings, yearbooks, and other records. But just as it was impossible to include in the records all the significant transactions, it is impossible to recount all my recollections of actions and events which compose the history and create the rich heritage of the Club.

As a new member, I was bewildered by the excited and enthusiastic deliberations at meetings on a number of subjects which I thought should have been decided long before. I willingly entered into discussions and expressed opinions, revealing my meager experience. Little did I realize that these organizers still were having "birth pangs," and I was being privileged to participate in shaping the development of the "Faculty Wives." Soon I was elected president, to preside instead of comment, and while I imagined that a long line had preceded me, I was the fifth in that line. My term was quite eventful starting with including the women of the faculty in the membership which necessitated more discussions and decisions on a suitable name, meeting places, time, content of programs, projects, and even about purposes.

Each year the purposes seemed more clearly focused and the programs were mentally or culturally stimulating. The Christian ethic prevailed. Moral support was extended to students, faculty and friends. Purposes and the Ottawa "spirit" were strengthened by the concerns and considerations because, regardless of the decisions, everyone worked in harmony. Members of the faculty came and went, but stability came from a core of loyal and dedicated individuals remained many years and some stayed even after retirement!

Fifty years of concern for students, each other, and for the role of the college are some indication of what the next fifty will bring forth! Thanks is given to God for his continuing showers of blessings upon the endeavors of the OUWC and the University of which it is a part.

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The OTTAWA UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S CLUB

In Recognition of Fifty Years of Service

When Mrs. Andrew B. Martin invited the wives of the faculty members to gather at her home on May 10, 1939, they doubtless were aware of her purpose. During the afternoon the nine women present elected officers, set dues, deferred the appointment of a Flower Committee, appointed a committee to confer with the Business Manager about cupboards in the kitchen at Taub Jones Hall, arranged to hold a social event for freshman and new women the next fall, and called themselves "Faculty Wives Club." This Club was born, not with a silver spoon, but with a Punch Bowl!

Where and when this property was acquired is uncertain, but for many years the Bowl was a major item of business at "Faculty Wives" meetings. It served at campus social events and at many weddings and parties over the city, apparently the only punch bowl in existence. It was loaned, with cups, for a fee to "outside" groups. Both a service and an enterprise, organization was required. Mother (Maude) Goll, advantageously, came along with the Punch Bowl. Already she had been responsible for its storage, lending, and the collection of usage fees. Since membership dues and Punch Bowl rentals generally covered all the incidental expenses as well as flowers and cards during that decade, the rentals could be considered the first fund-raising project with Mother Goll as chairman. The Club certainly was a committee-of-the-whole.

Twice the Punch Bowl was damaged and each time a another one was secured to continue the service. Cups were purchased at 25¢ each using the income to increase the original two dozen to about one hundred cups. Borrowers paid for breakage. Simple but strict rules. And the stories of the receptions, parties, showers, and weddings, where it stood (yes, it had a foot-piece) prominently amid flowers and other elegant appointments, would fill a most interesting book. To the Bowl and cups were added (using the 25¢ charges) a lace tablecloth, matching mint and nut dishes, candalabra, and two serving plates. All were transferred to the University Union (now Mowbray Union) after this new facility became the center of campus life and boasted a Director.

The annual Tea for freshmen and new women in early fall was planned with care. Faculty homes alternated with campus facilities as settings for the afternoon reception-type events with Emily Post as authority. The guests were advised by the Dean of Women to wear hats, gloves, hose and heels. The hostesses usually elected to wear long dresses. No hats, even with street-length dresses to distinguish the "girls" from the faculty women and wives. Gloves, considered fashionable, were really a boon for sticky palms in hot, humid weather and no air-conditioning. A formal reception line greeted the guests — Dean of Women, wife of the University President, Dean's wife, President of the Club, and sometimes others. Some of the guests and hostesses were uncomfortable with this formality, but it has been remembered by many as a highlight of college life. The genuine interest expressed to the new women by the hostesses

was a source of many lasting student-faculty relationships. This annual event survived with slight deviation for thirty-some years. With increased enrollment in mid-60s, about 150 young women attended the 1965 Tea and more than 125 attended the next year. Then the desire for a more relaxed atmosphere prevailed, and a variety of interesting formats were tried over several years, with moderate success. When the New Student Orientation program for students incorporated a schedule of suppers for small groups in faculty homes, efforts were channeled into this new plan. Considering the fact that this fall occasion truly became a tradition in the Women's Club, it is remarkable that guides for the Tea escaped the many revisions of the Constitution and By-Laws.

Four times the qualifications for membership were redefined to include: first, women members of the faculty; next, full-time secretarial and support staff; then, by the revised Constitution, all women who are affiliated with (employed by) the University or whose husbands are so affiliated; and finally, honorary membership which had been established early (for Mrs. R. H. Ritchie and soon for Mrs. W. A. Elliott, both of whom had received several of the 25¢ plants) was extended not only to members with retired status from the University but also to wives of Trustees of the University.

President Martin spoke to the group more than once, recognizing the role of wives in the effectiveness and attitudes of faculty and staff. Then, when the faculty women became a part of the group, with an understanding of the changes in program and procedures that would occur, he reaffirmed the role of the wives and also emphasized the importance of the total membership to the life of the college, providing opportunities for fellowship in a Christian environment and developing a unity in purpose and spirit. These ideals have endured and have continued to be strengthened by many discussions regarding all facets of activity.

From recorded discussions and the resulting decisions in regard to the Punch Bowl and the Teas, a wide variety of opinions and backgrounds among the women is very evident. Gems become polished by continued rubbing against abrasives and each other which explains how OU Women's Club came to be the jewel it appears to be. Even selecting a name became a matter for discussion, research, and reporting, and it was changed three times from the original "Faculty Wives." "Otyokwa," a Pottawatomie word meaning Ottawa woman, was cumbersome and not readily recognized in the society columns, or even on campus. After only two years "Faculty Women" was adopted. Then the present name was selected and included in the first Constitution, 1948.

Especially in decisions concerning finances, many compromises were effected and new tactics tried with varying results. Contributions (\$5 to \$10) as a Club were made during the "War Years" to the Red Cross, Winter General Hospital, and for the "boys overseas." The PTA Milk Fund and the Ottawa Community Chest also received small gifts. In light of the financial struggles of many students, this largesse was re-directed toward the personal needs of two women students. In establishing the Scholarship Fund, a gamut of ideas and opinions came into full play. Again, this diversity developed new strength to which the success of the

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Fund is witness. The first recipient was Mildred Patterson in the spring semester of 1954. Over the intervening 35 years, including her award of \$50, 116 scholarships have been given totaling \$16,350. An interesting observation derived from the lengthy deliberations in regard to revising the Constitution to incorporate the procedures and criteria, the controversies were about criteria "to pick the very best girl" for the investment. Once undertaken, annual awards have been made without interruption. Always recipients have been selected from lists provided by the Financial Aid Office, and always the recipients have been young women who represent the ideals of Ottawa and have reflected this upon the University and the Women's Club. The controversies were needless but they attest to the importance which was attached to the awards, and to feelings of pride in the chosen students.

Different sources for funding the scholarships included raising membership dues, trying and then resisting any fund-raising project, but finally a trial chili supper at Elliott Hall proved profitable and five more followed. By then the project idea was set, but turned to Bazaars held before Christmas in the Union, five years with great success. The idea of supplying baked goods on order of parents for their students was proving popular even during the year of the last Bazaar. A pleasing service to parents and students, and one which offers flexibility to the donors of the goodies, this project has provided excellent income to the scholarship fund for a dozen years.

All organizations develop traditions, and Ottawa University at her seventy-fifth milestone had gathered many, and the Club was not long in adopting some of those as well as starting others. It had long been traditional for the faculty families to have an outdoor, picnic-type breakfast on the lawn at the Country Club in early May. Scrambled eggs, rolls, coffee, children romping, everyone visiting with someone and enjoying Kansas spring. Nothing elaborate but it was special. When a new setting had to be secured and the interest lagged, the women took the initiative and continued the event at Mears Park, east of Ottawa, or on the Women's Residence Hall patio. From this traditional breakfast, without interruption, the Saturday Morning Brunch setting was one of the larger homes and now is a highlight of the year with OU's gracious First Lady as hostess. Traditions survive if they have positive impact and provide benefits -- so true of the "spring breakfasts!"

Also traditional is the special welcome given to new members at the opening of each academic year. First, the officers were hostesses for luncheons at the homes of members. With evolution, the occasions became evening potlucks and then salad suppers, always including opportunity for visiting to make or renew friendships. The First Baptist Church Elliott Hall and the facility at the Westminster Presbyterian Church have been favorite locations in late years.

For many years, actually most of the years of the Commons (between being The Gymnasium and the Women's Physical Education Building), the small dining room upstairs known as the Sheldon Room was used for the Spring Dinner. A dress occasion, always the tables were decorated with beautiful spring flowers, sometimes with silver appointments, and always

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a fine menu for the served dinner and a special program. Spring Dinners also were arranged at several restaurants before yielding to spring bus trips with luncheons. At the time of this writing, on spring "work days" willing hands (and backs) have helped with clean-up, weeding and pruning on the grounds, followed by luncheon together at the Union.

Continuing some of the pre-organization traditions, at appropriate times the meetings became baby or bridal showers. Before Kleenex, showers of dainty handkerchiefs gave individual remembrances to departing friends. Gradually, this tradition took the form of a "club gift." Originally, club gifts of baby cups (\$1.50) and then feeding spoons (\$1) were presented in addition to the showers, and often a gift or flowers were taken to the new mother in the hospital. These were hand-delivered -- how else in those post-depression, pre-war years? Many of the new, young faculty members were starting new families as well as careers and the newborn arrived at the rate of two or three each year, and at least twice twins received more than usual attention. Understandably, this population growth declined and in late years most of the new mothers have been among the "Distaffers." These on-campus support-staff members make appropriate presentations at the regular monthly luncheon meetings which they hold in addition to OU Women's Club meetings.

The concern of years with the Punch Bowl now brings forth a smile and wonderment at how important something so trivial could appear. Yet the Punch Bowl of itself was a service, and the earnings provided ways to express and provide care. The concerns of last year (and next) are about Care Packages, of themselves services, and the earnings provide scholarships, certainly expressions of care. History spins a continuous thread and gives a deep appreciation for the heritage from the past, and greater promises for the future.

"THE PUNCH BOWL"

On May 10, 1939, nine wives of members of the University faculty met at the home of the wife of the president, Marjorie Martin, by invitation. Already they were aware of their common bonds in the Ottawa "spirit", had joined in University social events, given showers for newborn or brides in faculty families, and had responded to each others needs in times of family illnesses or sorrow. Now they were ready to organize. They adopted the name "Faculty Wives Club," and elected Mrs. Martin to be the first president. They elected a secretary-treasurer, appointed a Flower (Courtesy) Committee, and set dues at 5¢ per meeting. The thirteen Charter Members included two faculty members whose husbands also were faculty members; wives of the college physician, Dr. F. A. Trump, and of the college Chaplain, Dr. W. A. Elliott who also was the First Baptist Church pastor; the housemothers of Charlton Cottage and of Ward Manor; and a faculty member's mother. (That year the enrollment was little more than 300 students; Administration, Staff, and Faculty numbered twenty-eight; tuition for the year was \$150 and a month's board and room at any University operated house was \$20-\$22.)

The unspoken, unwritten purposes of the new "Faculty Wives Club" are revealed through discussions and actions and then emerge in the first Constitution: promote friendship among the members; encourage and assist students; and give service to the campus community.

Or was that their reason for organizing? This story could begin, "Once upon a time thirteen women organized a new Club in order to care for their big, beautiful, crystal (glass?) "Punch Bowl." Anyway, it obviously was their major concern. How and when this bowl came to be their property is not known. At the first meeting, President Marjorie appointed a committee to speak to Robert Bundy, Business Manager, about improving the cupboards in the kitchen of Tany Jones Hall and wisely included the housemother at Charlton Cottage. It had befallen her lot to count the cups after each return and store them with the Bowl at the Cottage although Tany Jones Recital Hall was the site of many of the Punch Bowl events. Swaddled in an old blanket, its edge rested on the rim of the bushel-basket in which it was kept. It might be said that "Mother Goll came with the Punch Bowl," but her position, experience, and ever ready willingness were assests of value to the Club.

The Punch Bowl, seemingly the only one in all of Ottawa, was in great demand. At the time the story began, the Bowl and three dozen matching cups could be rented for 25¢ by "outside" groups and without charge for any University related function. Over the first year, this income provided for another dozen cups, at a cost of 25¢ each, and each member paid for a cup. Breakage was covered by users. The second year the income was used for a large silver ladle and the payment of \$1 which was accepted as in full by the Business office for the 1940-41 Yearbook.

Minutes were filled with details about cupboards, adding or replacing crystal cups, the purchase of a lace tablecloth, and several raises in the rental fee for non-University use. Frequently, members helped in

counting and wrapping the cups. In 1947, eight years later, Mother Goll reported that she had purchased enough cups to bring the total to 100 by using \$3.00 from the fund. And then an accident -- the bowl cracked! It was quickly replaced. The charge to outside groups was increased to \$1.00 and for the first time student groups were asked to pay -- 50¢. Faculty still had privileges. The Bowl belonged to their women! Again, more towels for the kitchen!

The completion of the Women's Residence Hall (now Martin Hall) in 1948 created new needs and regulations. Many social events and meetings using the Punch Bowl now were scheduled in the lounge, the show-piece of the campus. Another "tea towel shower," for the new kitchen, of course. The enrollments and faculty increased, and the ladies endeavored always to do and give of their best for students and colleagues. Mother Goll retired, and her marriage in August, 1949, to Fred Stockford who was retired as superintendent of buildings and grounds is a delightful story. When in 1953 the second Punch Bowl cracked (use of "dry ice" which gave a veil of mist over the punch, much in vogue), a large Fostoria piece with a stand replaced it. Rental was increased to \$2 for outside groups providing for the purchase of candelabra and nut dishes in the same pattern. The University purchased nine dozen glass salad plates. Two large glass serving plates were added using the proceeds from a special Golden Anniversary Reunion Class breakfast served by two of the members.

One acquisition calls for another! With plates and cups, forks and spoons were needed. The members collected General Mills - Betty Crocker coupons by hundreds and the University purchased nine dozen of each. The complete service was kept at the Women's Residence Hall when not being used elsewhere.

Perhaps the Punch Bowl and its accompanying accessories were not all that gave purpose to the Women's Club, but the on-going project had demanded much attention and effort. Almost unnoticed, non-University borrowing ceased. Church groups had obtained bowls and a downtown gift shop would lend a punch-set for showers and celebrations, a thoughtful act in public relations.

Gradually, after the University Union became the center of campus life, the Bowl and the cups, the plates and the silver, the candelabra and serving pieces, and the chrome service were gathered together there. The Club, in 1964, gave a silver coffee pot and tea pot to complete the gift of two silver trays and candelabra from the Women's Educational Society in recognition of the role of the Union in social life. While this was the "end of the era," the Bowl, the table pieces, and the new facility have been enjoyed throughout the years.

This tale should evoke a genuine feeling of appreciation for the significant heritage left by friends - men and women - who loved the students and the college -- facilities and program. With "The Punch Bowl," utilitarian, elegant, of little actual value, the women created a heritage of gracious service for pleasurable events and social growth, as much a part of higher education as any discipline.

CHOOSING AN APPROPRIATE NAME

While the first minutes (May, 1939) use the name "Faculty Wives," that fall a research committee was appointed to bring suggestions of an Indian name for the Club. Suggestions were discussed but none seemed to have sufficient appeal for the group. The original thirteen had been increased by including two house-mothers, the mother of a faculty member, and the wife of the pastor of the First Baptist Church.

In September, 1943, the membership was opened to include all women in University positions as well as "wives," thus creating an immediate need for a new name. In October, the name "Oteyokway" was adopted by slight margin over "University Woman's Club" and "Campus Dames." The name was reported to be Mohawk, interpreted as "a group banded together in a single fellowship," and pronounced Ot-e-yo'kwah. Later it was reported to be in the Potawatomi dialect, to translate as "Ottawa Woman," and to be pronounced O-tah'wah-quah.

Difficulty with pronunciation coupled with the feeling that it carried insufficient identity for the organization were two leading factors in reviving the quest for an adequately descriptive name. In March, 1945, the name "Faculty Women" (against "Campus Dames") was adopted.

In 1948 the new (and first written) Constitution established the name "Ottawa University Women's Club," which has been proudly retained.

YEARBOOKS

At a time when not all established organizations prepared advance schedules of programs and activities, "Faculty Wives" recognized that readily available information about planned events was an asset in the accomplishment of the purposes and aims of any organization. The first "Yearbook," 1940-41, typed by Business Office personnel was charged at \$1.50. However, no funds in the treasury, the \$1 balance in the Punch Bowl fund was accepted as payment-in-full! In the first year (1939-40) the Club met monthly in homes with the hostess and her assisting hostesses responsible for light refreshments as well as a program to be presented by either a member or outside talent.

Yearbooks were prepared each year after that, but apparently none of the early ones are extant with the exception of 1944-45 (cost, \$1.66). Those that followed were typed by members of the Program Committee (using manual typewriters) making additional carbon copies each time to supply enough books for the membership, increased to nearly thirty. The Yearbooks from 1948-49 are on file with only one or two missing. The new "Constitution and By-Laws" appeared in the 1949-50 Yearbook. This practice continued until 1980 when members were urged to retain a copy for reference to reduce the size and, therefore, the cost of 100 or more needed books. Beginning in the mid-1950s, the pages were collated and stapled by members. From 1948 the services of the Mimeograph Office were used and then those of the Print Shop when it became established.

History is concerned with economic levels as well as with fashions, war and politics. Approximately one hundred Books were budgeted at \$45 in 1969-70, and the same number (without the Constitution and By-Laws) were budgeted at \$90 in 1980. The \$1.66 of 1939 seems insignificant!

As a matter of pride, attractive books with interesting covers and accurate information have provided a good tool for carrying forward the purposes of the OU Women's Club.

DUES

A summary of the increases in annual dues is a commentary on the steady economic escalation. The desire to assist students as weighed against family budgets frequently gave rise to discussions on "ways and means" for accomplishing those goals.

In 1939, when dues were set at 25¢ per semester, the treasury was already in the red by 65¢. A appropriate plant could be purchased for 25¢ and suitable cards were 5¢ each. However, after several assessments for special gifts, the ladies raised dues to \$1 in 1948, payable by semesters if desired. On occasion, individuals would contribute for some purpose, but dues were not raised again until November, 1950, when amendments to the By-Laws set the dues at \$2.00 with refreshments to be paid from the treasury. In 1954, again by amending the By-Laws, dues were raised to \$4.00 to fund a scholarship. In the spring of 1968, with a revision of the Constitution and By-Laws, dues were set at \$5 where they remain. The membership had steadfastly rejected projects for financing the scholarship, but the time came! The 1968 Chili Supper was a great success. Projects through the years have dramatically increased the funds for scholarship awards.

EVENTS FOR NEW WOMEN STUDENTS

Miss Minnie Maude Macauley, as Dean of Women the "social chairman" for the campus, had sent a suggestion for two annual events which the new club could host -- a silver tea in the fall for mothers of students and a spring tea for senior girls. The number of mothers in the local area was insufficient for such an event and Mary Trump, wife of the University physician, would continue her delightful spring teas for senior women. However, the idea of a social event for women resulted in inviting faculty women to join in a fall tea for all new women students. Expense for the October, 1939, tea at Charlton Cottage was \$3.69. (Dues were established at 50¢ per year, and members were assessed 50¢ to cover Tea expenses.)

In 1940, the minutes note the tea was to be "as nice as possible - as little expense." By vote of the members, the receiving line at the home of the President was to include the wife of the president and two club officers, and the hostesses were to wear long dresses, meaning dinner dresses or formals with jackets. In the fall of 1941, Velma Reiff was hostess to 13 members and 39 guests and the expense for this elegant event was \$23.79. Tauby Jones Hall served as the site for five years; Mrs. Martin, Mrs. Trump, and Mrs. Bowers served during the next five years, although in September, 1948, the Tea was held in the new Women's Residence Hall. From 1952 through 1962 the Teas continued in much the same format and were a highlight in the fall student activities. Decorated cup-cakes or cake, nuts and mints were served using silver and the best dishes available with beautiful table decorations. Always hot tea (some-times spiced) accompanied although the women had a punch bowl which makes another interesting story. The guests were advised by the Dean of Women to wear "heels", gloves, and hats. While many of the "girls" were uncomfortable with this formality which was intended to prepare them for social life in coming years, comments from alumni have indicated that the Teas made a favorable impression and were anticipated events in campus orientation. Incidentally, guides for this "traditional" function were never included in the Constitution, but necessitated discussion and a vote each year. Probably this is the only oversight in the many revisions which seemed necessary because the document was too specific leaving little flexibility in many ways.

With increases in the entering classes and the availability of the new University Union, Teas were held in the Green-Gold Room through 1967. Then with changing times, -- hats were out, afternoon teas were no longer "in things," the membership of the club had increased along with enrollment -- different formats were tried in an effort to fulfill the accepted purpose of meeting the new women and helping them feel welcome at OU. In 1968 and 1969, small groups were invited to homes and dress was not dictated but response was not increased. The next two Teas were held in the new Brown Hall with modest success. Again to Martin Hall for a very informal Sunday Sundae Party in 1972 followed by a Pre-church Brunch and a "Birthday Party" mixing students and women at tables by Birthday months.

The emphasis of giving all students a friendly welcome and helping hand remains a priority, without benefit of Teas or other social events.