

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

October 18, 1950

Organization of the BPWC

It was on October 17, 1930 when more than a score of women from the business world of Monterey and the Peninsula met at the Custom House to form a preliminary organization of the National Federation of the Business and Professional Women's Club, Inc.

Five members of the San Jose BPWC came over to assist in the organization plans for the local club. Mrs. Maude Empey, a former president of the sponsoring club, then state vice president and later president of the state club, acted as chairman-hostess. Mattie Joy of the San Jose State College, Eleanor Helwig, a public accountant; Florence Stahl, San Jose Junior College faculty member, and Dr. Helen Shelley, all of San Jose, accompanied Mrs. Empey.

At that first meeting held in the Old Custom House were Mrs. Margaret Richardson, credit manager of Holman's Department Store; Mrs. Selma Roberts of the Credit Exchange; Mrs. Una Woods, Holman's; Marjorie Weeks, Credit Exchange; Muriel Black, social editor of the Monterey Peninsula Herald.

Mrs. Robert Gottlieb, Herald office manager; Miss Marjorie Brown, Pacific States; Blanche Sweeney of Pacific Grove; Ann Jensen, Monterey Grammar School; Pearl Lindquist, Pacific Gas and Electric Company; Edna McKinlay, nurse; Helen E. Carr, nurse; Marion Lingohr, stenographer; Mrs. Elizabeth McCoy, California Mutual Building and Loan; Harriett Haughton nurse, El Adobe Hospital; Miss Emma Waldvogel, studio.

Of this group, Muriel Black left Monterey for Honolulu where she married and is still living there according to last reports; Mrs. Gottlieb resides in Monterey, no longer a business woman; Mrs. Margaret Richardson is associated with her husband in a furniture store in Monterey; Edna McKinlay is residing in Kent, Washington, keeping in touch with the Peninsula and her friends through the Herald; Harriett Haughton also left Monterey for Honolulu; and Miss Emma Waldvogel returned to her home in Switzerland where she married and passed away a few years ago.

At that first meeting twenty years ago, Mrs. Empey related to the prospective members present that the ambition of the national organization was to have "at least a high school education for every business girl."

She declared then that the Business and Professional Women's Club was the largest organization of business and professional women in the United States, that it was international in scope, non-sectarian, self-supporting, self-governing, with club groups in all states in the Union, Hawaiian Islands and Alaska. The national club was formed in St. Louis, Mo., in 1919. Two members of the local club – Dr. Una Cary and the late Miss Helen Davis, were present at that meeting and have often told of their impressions of that very important meeting of women from all over the United States.

On Saturday, Nov. 1, 1930, the organization of the Monterey Peninsula club was completed in the office of the mayor of Monterey, Dr. J.P. Sandholdt, in the Professional Building, then known as the Spazier building. Mrs. Empey and Miss Stahl of the San Jose club returned to assist the local women. At that meeting there were 30 women and as they arrived one by one, the room became so crowded that those in charge moved the gathering to the office of City Manager Randol Dorton in the same building. It was decided to leave the charter open until January 1 and receive the state charter at a February meeting in Santa Cruz. The group present also voted to hold a business meeting on the second Thursday and a social meeting on the Third Thursday evening in each month. Mrs. Edna McKinlay was chosen to be in charge of the first dinner meeting on November 13.

Miss Betty McCoy of Holman's, Pacific Grove, formerly of Walla Walla, Wash., was elected the first temporary chairman.

In the informal talk which Miss Florence Stahl of San Jose gave that evening she said: "Women have learned to work together, play together, disagree and still be good friends."

At this meeting were Charlotte Kaiser, Christine Raynsford, Elizabeth McCoy, Una Hood, Ruth Craig, Edith Bartlett, Edythe Dungan, Angeline Heiderick, Ora P. Parchman, Edna McKinlay, Robert Gottlieb, Betty McVay, Bee Baker, Misses Lillias Carroll of Pebble Beach, Josephine Brucia, Wilma Voss, Edith Steiner, Edith Bartlett, Emma Waldvogel, Martha Brouhardt, Eloise Thomas, Lillian Dale, Helen Carr, Harriett Baker, Mabel Hoffman, Anne Norwood, Edith Carter, Rena J Willey, Harriett Haughton, Marian Lingohr and Muriel Black.

Mrs. McCoy and her husband now live in Salinas; Mrs. Parchman was a Holman employee; Betty MvVay had the beauty parlor at Holman's; Edith Bartlett lives in Carmel; Marjorie Weeks and her husband sold the Credit Exchange to C.W. Irwin; Charlotte Kaiser was a nurse; Bee Baker had a gift shop on Alvarado Street; Lillias Carroll was in real estate; Josephine Brucia is now Mrs. Robert Garrett; Wilma Voss is at Holman's; Edith Steiner lives in San Jose; Martha Brouhardt is retired and living in Monterey; Harriett Baker is librarian at the Monterey High School; Mabel Hoffman retired from teaching; Anne Norwood, now Mrs. Robert Peterson, high school teacher; Edith Carter, First National Bank; Rena J. Willey, retired as assistant postmaster Pacific Grove. Mrs. Edythe Dungan, Angeline Heidrick, Emma Waldvogel and Ella Thomas have passed away.

Christine Raynsford is still an active club member and private stenographer for Carmel Martin, attorney; Ruth Craig is at W.T. Lee Printing Company. We wish we could report on any members we have left out, but our sources cannot report upon their whereabouts.

(More tomorrow)