

AAUW-AUBURN: CONNECTING A VIBRANT PAST & FUTURE

This article is the second in a series about the early days of AAUW-Auburn.

As reported in the Auburn Journal on November 4, 1948, Mrs. Lois Nelson, called for a meeting to organize a local chapter of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in Auburn, California. The meeting would take place at Placer College on November 16, 1948. The article noted that about 40 women expressed interest in joining.

A preliminary meeting was held on the afternoon of November 16, 1948, with the California AAUW president, vice president, and Auburnites Mrs. Elma Clark Young, Mrs. Harold Chastain, Mrs. Bob Lawrence, and Mrs. Katherine Lee. The organizing meeting was held in the evening, where all eligible women were invited to attend. At that time it was reported that sixty women had applied for membership.

According to charter member Ginna Akers, "Things were changing now that the war was over. We weren't counting coupons and rolling bandages anymore. We were focused on promoting education for young girls and women - and continuing our own education." "In the early days, a major activity was organizing an Art show," remembers Sue Dings, lifetime member.



Sue Dings & Ginna Akers

University Women Meet

Forty college and university graduates from Auburn met Tuesday evening at Placer College for the purpose of organizing a local branch of the American Association of University Women. Mrs. Lois Nelson was elected temporary chairman. She introduced Mrs. Forester Rand Smith of Palo Alto, California state president, and Mrs. E. Ransome Fox of Burlingame, first vice president and membership chairman of the state organization.

These ladies described the activities and requirements for membership in this sixty-year old, national women's organization of over 100,000 members. There are sixty-five local branches in California with 12,000 members. Nearby groups are those in Grass Valley, Tahoe, Placerville, and Sacramento.

Through its membership requirements the American Association of University Women expresses its concern for high standards in women's education. Any woman is eligible to A.A.U.W. membership who holds an approved degree from any of over three hundred and fifty colleges and universities meeting these standards.

These institutional requirements are: 1. High academic standards (must be on the approved list of the Association of American Universities); 2. adequate provision for women students; 3. Recognition of women in administration and on faculties; 4. Intellectual freedom for teaching and administrative staffs. These are national rules and are not subject to local interpretation. Thus membership qualification is based on institutional attainments, not on the merits of the individual woman.

Activities of local chapters are

determined by its membership, but usually represent the arts, social studies, education, international relations, legislative matters, status of women, motion pictures and radio, the press, and recent graduates.

A nominating committee was elected, composed of the following: Mrs. Harold E. Chastain, Mrs. J. B. Francis, Miss Louise Langenbach, Miss Mildred Estus, and Mrs. Elma L. Clark Young, chairman.

A constitution and by-laws committee was appointed as follows: Mrs. Bob Robinson, Mrs. M. B. Cheek, Mrs. Bruce Denison, and Mrs. Howard Lee, chairman.

A committee to investigate dues is composed of Mrs. Frances L. Latimer, Mrs. J. B. Francis, and Mrs. Robert Lawrence, chairman. Mrs. Latimer was appointed temporary parliamentarian.

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, 7th of December, at 7:30 at Placer College. Over sixty women from the Auburn area have already applied for membership and any other woman interested in joining is urged to contact any of the ladies named above. Copies of the eligible schools and detailed membership policy may be consulted in the College Library, or with Mrs. Nelson.

The basis of associate membership will be determined by the constitution and by-laws to be adopted in December. The date for closing charter memberships also will be determined then. Any one applying prior to this date will be assured such benefits. Former members from other clubs may join the Auburn group upon payment of a two dollar reinstatement fee and without payment of back dues. Local dues will be determined by the constitution but will be nominal.

Auburn Journal, November 18, 1948, Section 1, p 5