

*The Story*

*Of the*

*Faculty Women's Club*

*By*  
*Sheila Petersen*

The Story of the Faculty Women's Club

Written by Sheila Petersen

With research assistance from

Muriel Affleck

Dorothy Alderman

Dorothy Ayer

Jean Bellow

Esther Kreisel

Research Resources

F.W.C. Minutes and tapes, located in the  
University of Alberta Archives, and the author's memory.

April, 1984

Reset and typed into a Macintosh computer April, 2009 on the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Club

# Faculty To Hold Tea On Saturday

As president of the Faculty Women's Club of the University of Alberta, Mrs. H. Grayson-Smith will receive guests when the club entertains at tea in the faculty lounge of the Student's Union building on Saturday afternoon from 3 to 5 o'clock. Receiving guests with Mrs. Grayson-Smith will be Mrs. Andrew Stewart, Mrs. C. M. Maclead and Mrs. H. R. Thornton. Invited to pour tea are Mrs. R. W. Collins, Mrs. E. H. Morrison, Mrs. E. H. A. Macdonald, Mrs. G. B. Sanford, Mrs. L. W. McElroy, Mrs. H. A. McGregory, Mrs. F. V. McHardy, Mrs. J. A. McKeague, Mrs. H. J. McLachlin, Mrs. W. C. MacKenzie, Mrs. L. E. MacLennan, Mrs. R. N. McManus, Mrs. A. McMurchy, Mrs. A. H. Mallet, Mrs. A. M. Mardiros, Mrs. Martin, Mrs. N. Melnyk, Mrs. Michalyszyn, Mrs. R. B. Moller, Mrs. C. H. Moore, Mrs. Morton, Mrs. L. Moser, Mrs. Mowat, Mrs. G. E. Myer, Mrs. C. W. Nash and Mrs. S. Mrs. E. S. Keeping, Mrs. Thompson and Mrs. Ower.

In honor of students who are receiving degrees and diplomas at the special convocation of the University of Alberta Saturday afternoon, the Faculty Women's club is entertaining at tea in the university cafeteria from 4:00 until 6:00 p.m. Decorative effects will be carried out in yellow and bronze, with an array of chrysanthemums used on the tables, and tall yellow tapers in silver candelabra completing the effect. Dr. Robert Newton, university president, and Mrs. Newton, will receive the guests. Pouring tea will be Mrs. G. Fred McNally, Mrs. John Macdonald, Mrs. R. D. Sinclair, Mrs. A. J. Cook, Mrs. R. M. Hardy, Mrs. H. T. Sparsh, Mrs. M. J. Huston, and

## Arranged

The University Faculty Women's club will entertain at its autumn tea on Saturday from 3 until 5:30 p.m. in the common room of the Arts building. Mrs. Frank Ford and Mrs. Robert Newton will receive the guests with Mrs. F. A. Wyatt, president of the club. Invited to pour tea are Mrs. J. Ower, Mrs. John Macdonald, Miss Mabel Patrick and Mrs. A. E. Ottewell. Arrangements are in charge of Mrs. H. R. Thornton, assisted by Mrs. E. Sonet, Mrs. E. W. S. Kane and the following members of the executive: Mrs. John Allan, Miss Mary Faunt, Mrs. A. C. McGugan, Mrs. F. J. Newson, Mrs. E. Stansfield and Mrs. G. B. Taylor.

# The Story

## Mrs. M. Lazerte Named President

Mrs. Robert Newton was elected honorary president and Mrs. M. E. Lazerte president of the University Faculty Women's club when executive committee held its regular meeting at the home of past president, Mrs. R. D. Sinclair. Other committee members Mrs. H. E. Rawlinson, secretary, Miss Madeline McMrs. E. H. Strickland, Mrs. Reymes-King, Mrs. W. F. Calhoun, Mrs. W. D. McDougall, Mrs. R. M. Hardy, Mrs. A. T. McLean, Mrs. G. M. Huckell, Mrs. J. J. Ower, Mrs. E. J. Thompson and Mrs. L. E. Tyner.

## Faculty Club Opens Formal Tea

Saturday last the Faculty Women's club of the university attracted more than 100 guests to the commons room in the Arts building. They were welcomed by Mrs. Robert Newton, wife of the president of the university, and Mrs. Frank

## Faculty Club Arranges Tea

Plans were made for a new members' tea, Oct. 25 when the executive of the Faculty Women's Club met at the home of Mrs. H. R. Thornton, past president. Mrs. Andrew Stewart, wife of the president, is honorary president of the club and Mrs. H. R. Thornton is president.

# Faculty Women's Club

Mary Faunt, Mrs. E. Stansfield and Mrs. G. B. Taylor. Autumn shaded chrysanthemums decorated the tea table.

Mrs. G. R. Davidson, Miss Culla, Miss E. Greig, Miss F. Marshall, Miss L. Wilson, Miss Keeping and Mrs. D. G. McQueen, Mrs. J. A. Forbes, Mrs. M. R. Murray, Mrs. E. S. Davis, Mrs. J. J. Ower, Mrs. H. R. Thornton, Mrs. E. Sonet, Mrs. E. W. S. Kane, Mrs. John Allan, Mrs. A. C. McGugan, Mrs. F. J. Newson, Mrs. E. Stansfield and Mrs. G. B. Taylor.

Mrs. Huckell, Mrs. Tyner, Miss McCulla will convene the regular autumn tea to be held in the basca lounge on Saturday afternoon, Oct. 25. Mrs. Lazerte and Mrs. Dougall are in charge of the convocation tea.

FRANK FORD, wife of Mr. Justice Ford, chancellor of the University of Alberta, will receive with Mrs. Robert Newton, wife of the president of the University Faculty Women's club tea Saturday afternoon from 3:00 to 5:30 p.m. in the common room of the arts building. Pouring tea will be Mrs. J. Ower, Mrs. John Macdonald, Mrs. A. E. Ottewell, and Mrs. A. R. Thornton. Assisted by Mrs. E. S. Kane, Mrs. W. S. Kane, and Mrs. J. Newson, Mrs. A. C. McGugan, Mrs. F. J. Newson, Mrs. E. Stansfield, Mrs. G. B. Taylor, and Mrs. G. B. Taylor.



FACULTY CLUB TEA -- Mrs. William Rowan and Miss Mabel Patrick, pictured from left, were guests of honor at the university Faculty Women's Club tea in the Wauneita Lounge Saturday afternoon. Mrs. Rowan's husband, Dr. Rowan, soon will retire as head of

the department of zoology and Miss Patrick is retiring as head of the department of household economics. Mrs. Andrew Stewart, third from left and Mrs. Wilbur Bowker, right, club president, received at tea with Mrs. Rowan and Miss Patrick.—Photo by Goertz Studios.

In honor of Mrs. A. Stewart, the Faculty Women's club entertained at tea in the lounge Saturday afternoon. Mrs. Stewart recently and present Mrs. Stewart are leaving the university to reside in the department of the club. Mrs. Rowan, Mrs. G. B. Taylor, Mrs. E. Stansfield, Mrs. H. R. Thornton, Mrs. E. Sonet, Mrs. E. W. S. Kane, Mrs. John Allan, Mrs. A. C. McGugan, Mrs. F. J. Newson, Mrs. E. Stansfield and Mrs. G. B. Taylor.

## THE STORY OF THE FACULTY WOMEN'S CLUB

It all started in November 1933, with Dr. Wallace, the president of the University, and his wife, feeling that there was a need for faculty wives to get to know each other socially. Also, it was felt that the women faculty members would probably enjoy some social gatherings too, as they were not included in the Faculty Club since it was "The Men's Faculty Club."

Mrs. Wallace and the deans' wives were hostesses at a tea in Athabasca Hall, to which wives of full-time staff members of the Faculty of the University of Alberta, and women staff members were invited. Mrs. Wallace explained the purpose of the gathering was to consider the advisability of forming a permanent social club. A committee was appointed to look into this and report back on December 13, 1933. The committee did its homework and brought back the following suggestions, which became the constitution of the club.

1. Suggested names - Faculty League, U of A Women's Teas, Campus Club, College Teas, University Teas, Faculty Women's Club.
2. Object of the Club - It was to be purely social with not less than four meetings each academic year, to be held in October, November, February, and March.
3. Officers - A. Mrs. A. C. Rutherford, Honorary President

B. Mrs. Wallace, Ex Officio to Executive

C. The other eleven members to comprise the executive to be chosen as follows:

One member of the staff, one member from each faculty (wives), and five members at large. The group would elect a president and secretary-treasurer from the executive members.

4. Fees - 25 cents per person a year. This was to cover the cost of tea, flowers, candles, tablecloths, and service.
5. Planning of Teas - Certain members taken in alphabetical order, would supply sandwiches and dainties for the teas. Senior members were to pour tea while the others served.
6. Membership - those eligible to belong to the club were women staff members, wives of staff above a demonstrator, the Superintendent of Residences' wife, and wives of academic officers as named in the U of A Calendar.

The constitution was approved and the name of the club chosen on January 20, 1934. Mrs. Wallace was the first president and Mrs. Elizabeth Weir, secretary-treasurer.

## THE YEARS BEFORE WORLD WAR II

In the spring of 1934, Dr. Kerr, then Dean of Arts, approached the club with the idea of its organizing a tea to follow convocation. The idea was accepted and Miss Eager, the residence dietician, chaired the committee.

For this tea, all members brought food and donned their Sunday best to become hostesses to the students and their guests.

Also in the spring of 1934, it was decided to invite the wives and lady staff from St. Stephen's College (United Church Theological College) to join the club.

During the remainder of the thirties, themes were used for the teas. An example was November 27, 1935, when the tea was close to St. Andrew's Day and the committee wore "Scottish caps." After tea, Keith MacDonald, in kilts, marched up and down the room playing the bagpipes.

Following this initial venture into music, a musical committee was formed and musical selections were rendered at all teas. Among some of the artists were Mrs. O. J. Walker, Mrs. Charles Brine, Mrs. Mrs. M. R. Marshall, Miss Lutie Jessup (Mrs. Dodge) and Mrs. Bessie Hudson. On occasions, students also performed.

The annual financial report for 1936 showed an income of \$39.15 and expenses of \$25.60. The expenses included flowers (\$2.00), printing costs for invitations (\$6.10) and three teas, which totaled \$17.60. As the teas were the mainstay of the club, they were prominent on the social pages of both the *Edmonton Bulletin* and the *Edmonton Journal*.

Dr. Tory, the first president of the U of A, envisioned the university as one big family. He encouraged staff to mix by socializing with each other at dinner or bridge. However, in a given academic year, one did not ever have a large party until after the Torys' "at home." This was protocol. Each faculty sponsored a dance and tried to outdo each other. Staff and students banded together to achieve this goal. Faculty wives helped with decorations. Two such dances recalled by a staff wife were an Egyptian theme designed by Dr. Silver Keeping, and an Agriculture dance where refreshments were provided in a vivid red cauldron and served by "the devil."

Many staff members lived in Garneau and most professors walked to the university, crossing through vacant lots. Windsor Park was bush with the exception of two streets and those of us who were children then hoed potatoes in the garden plots with our reward being a few of Dr. Shaner's prize peanuts to take home and roast. The circle of old homes, numbering ten, were where the Windsor Car Park now stands. Those who were fortunate enough to rent these had hot water heating from the university and either sweltered in the heat or froze in the cold, but the friendships made were life-long.

#### DURING THE WAR

Professors and students alike interrupted their careers to answer the call to arms. Although student numbers were down, the private sector was called upon to teach. Many professionals from the community became "part-time temporary staff." Of course their wives were invited to join the F.W.C., and many took on leadership roles. This social club became more than just a group of tea drinkers. Splinter groups helped the Red Cross roll bandages and knit. Another group of older ladies quilted for the Russians, while still others helped in the canteens and had many a soldier to their homes for meals.

For those of us who were school children, the campus appeared to be another military base. Corbett Hall was Initial Training Centre for the R.C.A.F., the residences housed airmen, and wartime buildings sprung up all over to provide training facilities. When the new U of A cafeteria opened in 1944, the Wauneita Society asked the F.W. C. if it could provide refreshments. The club declined as it felt individual members needed butter, sugar, tea and coffee rations for their own families. Instead, \$25.00 was donated.

Both the Medicine and Dentistry faculties decided to accelerate their graduating classes, which meant more convocation teas. These teas became the responsibility of the wives representing those faculties. More sandwiches were made to replace the usual quantities of dainties now hard to get due to wartime rationing. Also, tea essence became very popular for "never a drop was wasted."

Committees of F.W.C. members were set up to write to all staff members overseas, to buy toys at Christmas for staff children whose fathers were involved in the war effort, and others wrote to those who were bereaved. "Staff" encompassed all staff including maintenance staff and secretarial staff through academic ranks. Silver collections were taken at the teas and bake sales held to finance the above projects.

The spring and summer of 1945 saw the end of hostilities and normal campus life slowly returned.

#### THAT POST WAR PERIOD

By the fall of 1945, academic staff was being recruited from far and wide. The F.W.C. was ready for the onslaught. Having revised its constitution it formulated new policies to honor retiring members of staff and wives of retiring faculty with corsages and life memberships. It also welcomed the ladies from the newly formed Education Faculty. They were twelve of the thirty new members.

During the war, the Men's Common Room in the Arts Building was loaned to the ladies with permission from "The Men's Faculty Club." In February of 1946, Dr. Warren, the provost, gave permission to have teas in Athabasca Hall, as was the custom before the "wartime emergency." At this time, catering from the residence kitchen was to include tea, cream, sugar, tablecloths, and serviettes at a cost of 5 cents per person. The same year, left-over sandwiches went to the TB patients at the U of A Hospital. (Health rules were different in those days!)

Housing was constructed on 87 Avenue west of 112 Street and professors could rent for a few years. From these accommodations, commonly known as "Rabbit Row," came many a delicious goodie for F.W.C. teas.

Teas became increasingly popular and one never attended without hat and white gloves. New members of departments were introduced formally to the membership at the fall teas. In the spring of 1948, two convocation teas were held with 700 guests. By 1950, new members were welcomed at small neighbourhood teas. Most staff lived on the Southside and wives walked to many events. Many people had no cars, let alone two cars! The McKernan district was developing from the old skating lake to a new residential area. The Arctic Ice man still called twice a week and Woodland, N.A.D.P. or Edmonton City Dairy everyday but Sunday. Printed invitations were mailed to members, as many had no phones. Edmonton Telephones could not keep up to the population explosion and people waited months for installations. At this time, the club raised its fees to 50 cents a year.

The convocations of 1952 were in the U of A gym, built by the R.C.A.F. during the war as a drill hall. Thirteen hundred attended the convocation teas. In 1953, Miss Edna Bakewell, of the Physical Education Department, donated a beautiful hand worked tablecloth to the F.W.C. This cloth had been made by nuns in Quebec in 1883 and passed down to her through the Gariepy family. It was used for most teas until the late seventies when it became part of the Home Economics Archival display.

#### 1955    THE CLUB CHANGES    1970

This was "a period of redefining and strengthening club structure, and broadening activities." Although a fall tea was still held in the late 50s and early 60s, the idea of frilly tea parties was becoming less popular. During the "reigns" of Dr. Stewart and Dr. Johns, small coffee parties in neighbourhoods, at the presidents' homes, and later the Faculty Club, became more popular. Many of these socials had extra entertainment such as fashion shows, panel discussions, and evening speakers. Many wives now worked outside their homes and enjoyed informality.

The potential for membership grew from 500 to 1200 members in this period. In actuality three hundred and sixty-nine was the largest membership, but fees had been raised to \$1.00. A silver tea service was purchased for the Faculty Club.

Under the guidance of the presidents, the constitution was restructured, procedures written down for such things as convocation teas and welcoming parties, etc. In 1956, it was proposed that the Men's Faculty Club, the Faculty Common Room Committee, and the Faculty Women's Club amalgamate. The F.W.C. did not vote approval, as it was felt it would "jeopardize F.W.C. identity and incur larger fees."

Also in 1956, the membership formally accepted wives of Research Council, University Hospital, Library, Department of Extension, and Campus Government staff, such as Provincial Laboratory, Plant Pathology, and Economic divisions.

Life members were wives of retired staff, while Honorary members were widows of deceased staff. This now has been broadened to women senators, and members of Board of Governors also being honorary members.

In 1962, Interest Groups were introduced starting with bridge, French conversation, gourmet cooking, Cicero (public speaking), keep fit, and investment groups. These became more and more popular and broadened the scope of the club.

Women at this time were enjoying a more active role in all aspects of life and enjoyed the stimulation of listening to speakers whose topics were the issues of the day. Also, each person had individual interests. Many of these interests could be pursued through one of the F.W.C. groups.

As our campus became more cosmopolitan, faculty members went further afield for sabbaticals. From this interest, the "International Friendship" and "Katimavik" groups arose. Katimavik helped foreign students to adjust to Canada and learn about our city, while International Friendship whetted the appetite for travel through slides and foreign food. German and French Conversation groups grew. Besides a Book Review group, a group of readers pooled their resources to share books. The Gourmet Cooking group showed its enthusiasm by publishing an annual cookbook. The sports groups have included Curling, Swimming, Cross-country Skiing, and Keep-fit. Self-improvement has been the topic of one group, while Total Fitness, including weight control, was another. Art Gallery Tours, Lunching Out, Brown Bag Theatre, Art Workshops, and a Recorder Group fulfilled social and cultural needs. Two very helpful groups were Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Blood Donor Clinics. In 1979, the U of A blood donor clinics, staffed by F.W.C. members, gathered 5% of all blood in northern Alberta. Tapes of memories of F.W.C. members and life at U of A by the "Keeping in Touch" group are now part of the archives. Investment groups were very popular. The perennials through the years have been Bridge, Handicrafts, and Flower Arranging.

Highlights from the club's business during this time included an invitation for divorced women to remain as members of the club until such time as they resigned or remarried, and placing of all the minutes of the F.W.C. in the archives. These minutes may be reviewed at the discretion of the archivist.

Some social events to remember were the gourmet potluck suppers put on by club executives as a thank-you to interest group conveners. The Honorary and Life Members' teas, usually given by the University president's wife, became very special occasions. One that deviated from this pattern was hosted by the executive and held in Rutherford House. For many it was a nostalgic reminder of their student days. Annual general meetings and dinners were held at various spots including Lister Hall, the Faculty Club, and St. Paul's United Church. The dinners at the latter were a great deal of work for the executives that put them on but it was so much fun to get to know each other really well. In 1978, the year of the Commonwealth Games, red, white, and blue were the colours and hilarious skits the entertainment.

By the end of this era our brief news releases became real newsletters and the membership list went on the computer.

1983 OUR ANNIVERSARIES 1984

U of A 75<sup>th</sup>

F.W.C. 50<sup>th</sup>

These have been two big years for F.W.C., both socially and in terms of projects completed. During the seventy-fifth anniversary of the university, social activities included the fall tea, a fall luncheon at which U of A president Myer Horowitz spoke to guests on the history of the university, a spring luncheon where turn of the century music was provided by Elsie Achuff, vocalist, and Mark Sirett, pianist, and finally, the long awaited seventy-fifth anniversary dinner and program, to which gentlemen were invited.

Guests at this happy occasion were greeted at the door of Lister Hall by "Mrs. Rutherford," "Mrs. Tory," and "Mrs. Barclay Fairley." At any given table, the ladies might be wearing gowns from 1938, 1950, and 1983. During the dinner, toasts were proposed to the women faculty members, the Deans of Women, faculty wives, the first women graduates, the wives of U of A presidents, chancellors, and chairmen of the Board of Governors, and lastly, our honored gentlemen guests. A musical revue starring faculty wives included vignettes from campus life and ended with the arrival of Wugie, the Universiade '83 mascot, who led us in "Welcome the World." The evening ended with a sing-song and a rollicking rendition of "Ring Out a Cheer for Our Alberta...."

The last event of this memorable year, a Sunday brunch for faculty wives and guests, was held in the new Universiade Pavilion. It was the first social function held there.

The projects for the year included the sewing of some colourful street banners for Universiade '83, and the Quilting Group's major project, a gigantic colourful wall hanging (7 ½' by 9 ½') depicting the University Academic Processional. This beautiful piece of art now hangs in University Hall.

In the fall of 1983, guests at the fiftieth fall tea wore hats reminiscent of earlier eras. A luncheon honoring past presidents was held in September with twenty-one in attendance. Of the forty-five past presidents, thirty are living, all in the Edmonton area.

We wished ourselves a "Happy Birthday" in November by holding a potluck luncheon at St. Paul's Church. The buffet provided a wide variety of delicious food. The program took place in a room decorated in the university colours, green and gold, and consisted of a review, a sing-song, and a parade of fashions for specific events in days gone by. The fiftieth birthday cake topped off our big day of nostalgia.

The tea for Honorary and Life members will be the highlight for some ladies who have belonged to the club since its inception.

For the rest of us, tonight's dinner, the Gourmet Cookbook, the history, and lastly, Fashion by the Decade, with music to match, will culminate the golden festivities.

Our object was and is to provide social settings to meet other wives and staff and hopefully make lasting friendships.

To quote our university president's wife, Barbara Horowitz, in her report of April 22, 1975: "Our club provides comfort and camaraderie for two-hundred-and-thirty women, which is worthwhile in itself."

With that thought, we embark on the road to our Diamond Anniversary.

**Pictures of Past Presidents can be viewed on the following two pages.**



Above: Helen Bentley ('64-'65)  
 Willa Woods ('78-'79)  
 Lois Newsham ('72-'73)



**Above:** Back Sheila Petersen ('76-77)  
 Front Helen Thompson ('56-'57)  
 Catherine Folinsbee ('66-'67)



**To the left:**  
 Marjorie Bowker ('55-'56)  
 Kay Quon ('73-'74)  
 Jackie Phillips ('82-'83)

**To the right:**  
 Dot Thornton ('57-'58)  
 Edith Whidden ('63-'64)  
 Lucy Salter ('52-'53)  
 Betty Lilge ('61-'62)





**To the left:**

*Back* Virginia Van Vliet ('65-'66)

Silver Keeping ('59-'60)

*Front* Mona Smith ('60-'61)

Joan Green ('69-'70)

Joyce Howarth ('71-'72)

**To the right:**

Mary Nursall ('75-'76)

Peggy Godfrey ('70-'71)

Nona Davis ('67-'68)



**To the left::**

*Back* Kathy Marsden ('80-'81)

Sheenah Coutts ('77-'78)

Shirley Larke ('81-'82)

*Front* Barbara Horowitz ('74-'75)

Dorothy Ayer ('83-'84)