

The Benton County Genealogical Society - Part 3 -

Annual membership dues were \$1.00 at first. They were raised to \$2.00 in 1973, and remained at that amount until 1984, when the specific cost of membership was removed from the By-Laws, the same time the cut-off date for being in the membership list was moved forward to January 15th.

According to lists published in January each year, membership has ranged from the first, Charter number of 58, to a low of 46 in 1986, to 130 in 1995. Attendance taken from the sign-in sheets at meetings, was 10 in October, 44 in November, and 16 in December, 1971. From January 1972 through December 1995, the number signing the attendance sheets varied from 6 in June 1972, to 49 in January 1992.

From the beginning the fiscal year has coincided with the calendar year.

Regular meetings were set on the second Saturday of each month, and so they continue. Special meetings were provided for. Several have been held.

Meeting times were set for 11:00 am for Workshop for members, 1:00 pm for Business Meeting, and 2:00 pm for Program. When a Beginner's Class was held it started at 10:00 am. Some members brought sandwiches. Instant soup, coffee and tea were provided. Meetings were held in the Elizabeth Ritchie Room in the basement of the Corvallis Public Library, a convenient place as the Society's books were on Library shelves.

The Mid-Valley Genealogical Society bought books. They owned none when they organized. By December 1972, the group purchased and donated four books, while the Library acquired an additional eight. A dozen more publications were donated to the collection that year. Acquisition of books increased so that in 1974 Susan Taylor's report showed 209 genealogical books on the shelves and 13 periodicals in the Library. In May 1986, 297 genealogical books and periodicals were listed in the Society's Library Catalog Card List. The 1990 book list numbered 411, and the September 1995 shelf list tallied 1322.

The first elected officers, who served through 1972, were President, Velma Parsons; Vice-President, Celia Wilson Coon; and Secretary/Treasurer, Josephine Zadina. The three Directors, with no indication as to how they were selected, were Hazel A. Beals, Harriet Moore, and Bernice W. Robison. Officers elected for 1973 were President, Erma Lee Brown; Vice-President, Marjorie Burianek; Secretary/Treasurer, Elizabeth Akin. No mention was made of Directors.

By the end of 1973 the group decided to add a Second Vice-President and to separate the Secretary/Treasurer's jobs. Officers for 1974 were President, Mildred Hawkins; 1st Vice-President, Susan Taylor; 2nd Vice-President, Edna Wiese; Secretary, Betty Moore; Treasurer, Dorothy Blust. One interesting item, told by Edna Wiese, is that the group was so intent on being free from any possible tax requirements that the early Treasurers used their own Social Security numbers as the Identification Number for the Society's bank account!

In 1974 the first list of Committee Chairs is noted: Historian, Celia Coon; Librarian, Francis Hallam; Publicity, E. Mitch Beard; Surname File, Elizabeth Akin; Phone, Ruby Boyes and Marjorie Burianek. In September 1974 the group amended the By-Laws to conform with the current practices. Within the last year we have eliminated the Phone Committee.

Minor adjustments have been made to the Article pertaining to Nominations and Elections. Installation of Officers, once done in January, was moved to December by 1984.

The article on Amendments to the By-Laws has had small changes. In 1984 an Article was added, designating the quorum needed to amend the By-Laws, but it was eliminated at the last revision.

Over the years, the Society has grown and changed. The By-Laws have been an adequate, working framework, without Constitution or Charter.