

SIX DECADES
Speech at the December Dinner 2008

It seems appropriate on an important anniversary such as our 60th to reflect on the many good things our club has accomplished in its six decades of existence. Although a considerable number of interests and activities of CFUW members have remained constant, one cannot help but notice the wide variety of venues, interest groups, fundraisers and other activities that we've experienced over our history.

[INTEREST GROUPS]

Consider the diverse interests of our membership. Hopefully you noticed in our slideshow the list illustrating the cross section of interest groups we've entertained. Of special note...

- Arts & Crafts [1948 and again now!]
- Drama [entered plays twice in District Drama Festival]
- Poetry
- Penal Reform [visited Convent of the Good Shepherd, Burwash Industrial Farm, and the District Jail]
- Know Sudbury – members visited Copper Cliff north mine and went underground to the 4000 level therefore joining the Honorary Miners Club
- Unrest in Education - led to a well-attended open meeting with Lloyd Dennis co-author of the Hall-Dennis Report "Living and Learning"

[FUNDRAISING]

Fundraising efforts have also varied widely. The first fundraiser was the sale of magazine subscriptions and the assigning of a club levy. Next was a dinner-dance function with guest speaker Lester B. Pearson, then Minister of Foreign Affairs. A mammoth Bridge party for 400 was held at the Legion and was a huge success. Soon the club became one of the few organizations in the city to bring in cultural events. We began with the National Ballet, and the musical Gigi. For over a decade, opera became our main focus and we brought at least a dozen different operas to town. Again, these have been represented on one of our slides. You may have noticed Barber of Seville and La Traviata and Carmen. *[Carol -Personally I recall attending Carmen as a student. Little did I know I'd be a member of the club responsible for bringing it to Sudbury.]*

Incredibly, we often had a second major fundraiser in those years, various performances for children. The list on our slide includes The Vancouver Children's Theatre, and Sharon Lois and Bram.

Other major fundraising activities included

- the cabaret The Climax Jazz Band, successful for several years;
- Trash and Treasure garage sales;
- the publication of a club cookbook --popular enough to require a 2nd printing. [*Pulls out her cookbook here.*];
- and one of our more controversial endeavors – the infamous Bingo! [*“Some of you will remember working your shift as a runner in the smoke-filled Capitol theatre.”*]
- Now for 13 consecutive years we have hosted Celebrate Women, our collaborative fundraiser with YWCA and LEAF – for details please see...(pause) our all-important slideshow.

[SCHOLARSHIPS]

All of these fundraising activities have allowed us to award dozens of scholarships or bursaries totaling upwards of \$150 000 [or \$115 000 plus \$56 000 endowments]. We began in 1949 by awarding one scholarship worth \$100 along with a gift of a silver compact! Today we give out 6 scholarships and 3 bursaries totaling \$5160. Apart from scholarships, at various times we've used our funds to make significant donations to important institutions, eg, Laurentian University's library [\$300 + 500=\$800], or to worthwhile causes, for example, we supported a South African family by paying the daughter's tuition to Vukela private school.

[VENUE]

We are an active club in more ways than one: every few years we change our venue! Hopefully you saw our list of the nine locations we've used for our monthly meetings and perhaps retain fond memories of the comforts afforded – or lack thereof.

Of note, of course, is our first year, 1948-49. The inaugural meeting was held in April in the upper lounge of the Coulson Hotel (a classy, respectable place at the time!). This was followed by a September tea welcoming university-educated women to join -- the membership fee was \$3. Regular general meetings continued on the 3rd Monday of every month; coffee was served from the neighbouring restaurant, Murray's.

[ISSUES/ACTIVITIES]

In addition to time and effort spent on raising funds, our records show a wide assortment of other activities initiated by our club.

- In the early years there was considerable interest in politics and all meetings began with a political discussion, held by a panel of experts within the membership.
- One big undertaking was a Careers Night for secondary level students. This began in 1962 with 100 students attending and grew to 1400 students by 1965.
- We had a short (15 min) weekly television program on CKSO in the 60's on courses, careers, investments and scholarships.
- Another initiative supported new Canadians; our English Classes were intended for housewives and shift workers and were taught primarily by our own members.
- We held an Art Exhibition of works by the late Nellie Kiellor Lowe, one of our members
- For our centennial project in 1967 we raised funds to purchase art for the Laurentian University Museum & Arts Centre. The piece, entitled 'Grey Days, Georgian Bay' by Goodridge Roberts was purchased for \$1100 and was later appraised in 1998 at \$15 000!
- We began a Talking Books Project; club members recorded university textbooks on audio tapes
- 25th anniversary in 1972: Dinner –Dance and special June speaker Doris Anderson, editor of Chatelaine
- other guest speakers of interest: artist Ivan Wheele, June speaker 1966
- Pauline McKibbon, Lt.Governor of Ontario [spoke at Regional Conference 1974]
- Flora MacDonald, PC MP at June dinner 1975
- Cabinet Minister Mary Collins, another June speaker
- And most recently, Elizabeth May, leader of the Green Party of Canada

Often we have written letters of support for important causes, an example of which would be our 1978 letter supporting the YWCA's request for a Crisis Housing Centre. We all know this was a successful venture leading to construction of Geneva House.

This is in addition to our on-going involvement and support of CFUW Resolutions, and you can be certain that there will soon be a call for a committee to work on this year's Resolutions! Our VP Mary Gallant will be happy to take down the names tonight of any of you ready to volunteer.

An important project that our Sudbury club worked on in the last decade was the renaming of the Bell Park Amphitheatre to the "Grace Hartman Amphitheatre"; again we worked collaboratively with four other community groups. Grace was our first president and Sudbury's one and only female mayor. She was also very involved, along with charter member Jean Dick who is here tonight, in creating a YWCA in Sudbury.

I've spoken primarily about our local achievements but membership in CFUW-Sudbury also means membership in our national and international organizations and supports the numerous important causes they initiate.

[CFUW has 10 000 members in its 130 clubs.]

Our club can be proud of its track record for supporting regional, provincial national and international levels of this organization. First we have hosted such events as

- Regional Conference 1964
- Regional Conference in 1974
- Northern Ontario Regional Mini-Conference 1979
- Ontario Council 1988 (our 40th anniversary)
- Various Regional Gatherings
- *[alternatively just say we've hosted many regional and provincial conferences over the years]*
- And of course the AGM - CFUW's Annual General Meeting hosted in our 50th year 1998. This ambitious undertaking brought out our strengths as a club and received high praise from visiting delegates.

And secondly we have provided support in the form of future officers. Past president Margaret Orange led a delegation to the UN Status of Women Conference in Geneva Switzerland in 1966 when she was VP for Ontario; in 1967 she became president of CFUW for a three-year term; and in 1977 she was elected 4th VP of IFUW.

Indeed our special guest speaker tonight, Linda Souter, had her own humble beginnings as president of our club back in 1975-1977. She went on to hold positions at the provincial level [*Regional dir Ont nort; , VP Ontario*] before

becoming national president in 1985. She fulfilled the roles of IFUW's 2nd VP, then first VP before assuming the presidency of IFUW 1998-2001. Linda now lives in Ottawa and enjoys time with her husband, two children and four grandchildren. Ladies, please help me welcome our own Linda Souter.

*Written by Susan Darling; delivered by Carol Stos December 2008.
Sources: old minutes and programs; the 50th summaries & AGM program;
newspaper articles.*

Additional information of importance was put into lists (referred to in the speech) that became part of our slideshow

- Charter members, 1948
- Past Presidents
- Venues over 60 years
- Interest groups
- Opera fundraisers
- Children Performances
- Celebrate Women; 13 year history