

20 years after Camp Mohaven

In Seattle 200 call for women's full partnership in church

by Morten Juberg

The Association of Adventist Women invited Morten Juberg, long-time editor of the North Pacific Union Gleaner, now retired, to attend the Seattle Conference and report on it.

More than 200 women from throughout the United States and Canada met in Seattle, Washington, October 14-17, for the 11th annual conference of the Association of Adventist Women.

With the theme of "Partners in Ministry" they gathered for fellowship and study but mainly to review progress in bringing Adventist women's needs and hopes into the mainstream of the church.

Prominent at the front of the Red Lion Seatac Hotel, the conference meeting site, was a large inflated replica of a can of popular beer. While men and women attending another convention there paid their homage to the king of beers, the Adventist women worshiped the King of Kings as in a small oasis in a desert of worldliness.

In a way, this annual gathering has roots in a meeting at Camp Mohaven, Ohio, 20 years ago. At that time 14 women and 13 men formulated a comprehensive statement on the role of women in the church. Foremost in this statement was a belief in the equality of men and women before God and in the church. They also looked forward to the ordination of women as pastors and hoped for more opportunities for women in church leadership posts.

Now, 20 years later, they took a quick look back. But in the main they directed their vision to the continuing goals of equality in the marketplace and in the gospel ministry.

To provide information and direction, the conference planners, headed by Dr. Helen Ward Thompson, organized 22 seminars covering a wide scope of helpful topics. These ranged from sexual misconduct in the church to an update on menopause and breast cancer. Other topics included current issues in the church affecting women, finding the abundant life, and helping people involved in divorce.

Gary Patterson, administrative assistant to the North American Division (NAD) president, came to Seattle to represent the official church. Overflow audiences interacted with him about the progress the church is making on issues affecting women.

Dialogue with church leaders

In a lively and often provocative discussion, Patterson provided background relating to the vote on women's ordination at the 1990 General Conference (GC) Session in Indianapolis, Indiana. [Delegates voted 1,173 to 377 not to consider ordaining women at that time.]

"I predict that a plan to ordain women will pass in the NAD year-end meeting this November," Patterson said. "Then the proposal would go to the Annual Council in 1994, and if it passes, it will be referred to the 1995 GC session."

Patterson continued, "The thing that is going to be the most valuable to us is when we have effective, strong leadership among our women pastoral group." Conference delegates saw an example of this leadership during the Sabbath worship service when Nancy Canwell presented the homily. In her sermon "First Love," Pastor Canwell called for a return to the basics of Christian life.

During the Sabbath school hour, delegates received an insight into varied activities of nine women's ministries. Kit Watts, assistant editor of the *Adventist Review*, in introducing the panel, told the audience, "We are not here by accident. We are celebrating women's gifts and commitment. We are partners in ministry." She termed the reports as coming "from women who are filled with vision, filled, if you will, with the spirit of prophecy."

Elizabeth Stemdale, who heads the NAD Office of Women's Ministries, said plans are in place for a Women's Day of Prayer on the first Sabbath in March 1994. She also noted that 1995 has been designated the Year of the Woman.

Topics that might have been verboten a decade ago received careful attention. Peggy Harris, of Beltsville, Maryland, reported on WASH—Women and Men Against Sexual Harassment and other abuses. As is usual, the highlight of the weekend meeting was the honoring of the 1993 Women of the Year. The five selected this year were Nyla Juhl, Nancy Marter, Sheree Parris Nudd, Cheri Stowers, and Loma Tobler. (A full report of the event appears on page 8).

Singing in a strange land

A liturgy entitled "Singing God's Song in a Strange Land," prepared by Marta and Charles Teel of Riverside, California, was used during the Sabbath worship service and gave courage to the delegates who have faced 20 years of continued frustrations but also many gains.

A portion of the liturgy read, "We can sing God's song if we follow Jesus. The radical demand of the gospel is that we take up the cross, that we stand for justice and righteousness, that we make a difference. We can sing God's song in a strange land! We can sing God's song as we truly take up the cross and follow. We are called to risk

our names, our titles, our degrees, our positions, our statuses, even our prejudices for a vision of a world where justice, wholeness, and empowerment prevail. We can sing God's song in a strange land."



The 1993 Adventist Women of the Year (left to right): Loma Tobler, Sheree Parris Nudd, Nancy Marter, Nyla Juhl, and (seated) Cheri Stowers.



Marta Teel (center pulpit) led the congregation in a liturgy written especially for the Seattle AAW conference, "Singing God's Song in a Strange Land."



In a lively, provocative discussion, Gary Patterson represented NAD church leaders at the Seattle meeting. Women's ordination might make it onto the NAD year-end agenda, he said. Two weeks later, the GC administration sidetracked the initiative for at least one more year.

Dates announced for next AAW conference

The 12th AAW conference will be held in the Washington, D.C., area, September 29-October 1, 1994, according to Betty Howard, coordinator for special events. Watch for further information in coming issues of the *Adventist Woman*.

March 31 deadline set for Women of the Year nominations

To nominate outstanding women for the 1994 Adventist Women of the Year (AWOY) awards, applications should be postmarked by March 31, according to Ardis Stenbakken, AWOY coordinator. "These should be women who make a difference—in their homes, church, community, or professions," she said.

Each application should include (1) a biographical sketch of the individual, noting outstanding personal qualities, education, and achievements, and (2) at least three letters of recommendation, one by an Adventist pastor. Send to Coordinator, Adventist Women of the Year, P. O. Box 7414, Langley Park, MD 20787.

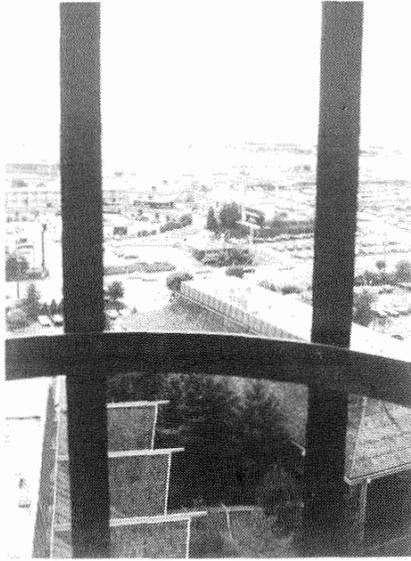
In a swirl: Seminars and symbolism, food and friends

by Rosemary Bradley Watts

As I drove into the Seatac Red Lion entrance I saw Bernie Beck (Grants Pass, Oregon), unloading boxes. She is a born hostess. I knew immediately that AAW would have a hospitality center where I could sit and talk. What I didn't know was that the center would be a penthouse suite on the twelfth floor, overlooking the bustling airport. Choosing the Emerald City for the conference was a smart thing to do. Chrysanthemums and winter pansies bloom together this time of year. I love AAW conferences.

On the mezzanine, Dr. Helen Evans (College Place, Washington), director of the 1993 conference, and Cheryl Simpson (Southern California) were registering the early arrivals. Bertha Dasher (Battle Ground, Washington), was setting up a display from a Seattle Christian bookstore while Aileen Sox (Boise, Idaho), polished up the sales rack of books from Adventist publishing houses. I was surprised to see so much available for Adventist women.

There was time to make a florist run before things got started. Kit Watts (Silver Spring, Maryland) and I wanted to get flowers for Lorna Tobler. Twenty years ago when she and Merikay Silver had worked to bring pay equity to Pacific Press, Kit, Pat Horning Benton (now in Buena Vista, Colorado), and I had sent flowers. Working without pay equity ourselves at the Review and Herald Publishing House, we added this message: "Right on! Fight the good fight! We are with you!" Now that Lorna had been named one of the Women of the Year it was time for flowers and the same message again—but what a joyful difference!



For those who jetted to Seattle, the Red Lion Hotel was just a hop, skip, and a jump away from the airport.



Joyce Greene, AAW treasurer, led a seminar on how to read financial statements and comment on them intelligently.

By the clock

With no opening meeting, only the clock told us that the opening hour had arrived. We could choose two of the eight afternoon seminars. Each was led by an able advocate and each was pertinent to Adventist women's lives. We could select finances, legal issues,

physical and mental health, or spiritual growth.

So quickly the afternoon went! So many friends to talk to and catch up with. Already I was feeling pushed. I would never have all the time I wanted to visit, to learn, to reflect.

Then it was time for a reception and the first plenary session in the ballroom. AAW President Elisabeth Wear welcomed us, introduced the prime movers of the conference, and recognized leaders attending from various Adventist women's organizations. In a multi-screen show, Katy Jo Johnson (Green Lake, Washington) showed us pictures of ourselves—women of the Adventist community simply doing what we do. Women with husbands, women at work, women with daughters, women in exotic countries, women at play. It was a perfect way to introduce us the "Partners in Ministry" theme of the conference. Women ministering to their families, in their paid professions, and in volunteer positions.

But the evening wasn't over yet. We were soon treated to a delightful concert of works composed and performed by women. Of the three women performers—Susan Pickett, violin and viola; Sonja Gourley, soprano; and Debra Richter, piano—both Gourley and Richter have studied or taught at Walla Walla College. Pickett teaches at nearby Whitman College.

Music by women for women

The performers chose works by Anna Amalia, a German composer who wrote in the 1700s; by Amy Beach, an American

writing at the turn of the century; and by Gwyneth Walker, who lives on a dairy farm in Vermont and wrote her *Fantasy Etudes* in 1992.

First glimpse of special women

Something was new this year—Selma Chaij Mastrapa (Beltsville, Maryland) gave an early introduction of the 1993 Women of the Year. It was only an introduction, but each received a medallion to wear. This thoughtful touch allowed us to recognize and honor these special women all weekend.

I found it particularly poignant and redolent with symbolism that Lorna Tobler had not yet arrived and did not hear a tribute given her by Dayton Chong, a vice president of the Central California Conference. Twenty years ago, much of what conference leaders there had said of her was both unkind and untrue.

I thought how much of women's efforts go unsung until the women themselves cannot hear the praise—but their work lives on with men saying how good it is. (I contrasted this with the wonderful story of Deborah and Jael and Barak—where somebody got it right the first time.)

Except for the symbolism, it was a sweet moment. And I knew that Lorna would yet receive her applause at the Awards Banquet. (I wonder if she and Merikay will appear as heroines in the future editions of the *SDA Encyclopedia*.)

The day's program—even for just half a day—was full. But there was one thing more. At the evening prayer circle, Penny Shell (Silver Spring, Maryland) introduced Beverly Bretsch (Portland, Oregon) to us. Bev brought us to Jesus at the end of our first day, and we prayed.

Rosemary Bradley Watts writes from Richland, Washington.



Before the 1993 conference opened on Thursday, Bertha Dasher, Kit Watts, and author Rosemary Bradley Watts (right) met for lunch at the hotel restaurant.



Selma Chaij Mastrapa, coordinator of the Adventist Women of the Year project, presented Nancy Marter with a medallion on opening night.



Pat Gustin (right), from the faculty of Walla Walla College, got acquainted with Dayton and Yvette Chong at the Thursday night reception. Mrs. Chong is the Women's Commissioner for the Pacific Union Conference.

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Mail copy at least 5 days in advance of the deadline. The editor schedules Friday and Sunday afterward to put material together.

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Beverly Bretsch, associate pastor of the Sunnyside SDA church, led a seminar on personal spiritual growth.



Halcyon Wilson, associate pastor for the La Sierra University church, presented the Friday morning devotional.



Yvonne Stratton, M.D., led a discussion on women's health issues. She also represented the Adventist Women's Institute.

Friday morning, October 15

At a gallop: More seminars, keynote address

by Jean Sequiera

What woman hasn't felt so busy she's wished for another pair of hands? I craved not hands but ears. Assigned to report four simultaneous Friday morning seminars and the keynote speech, Shakespeare's words reverberated in my head, "Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears."

Aided by an accomplice (resembling my former Walla Walla College literature professor), I recruit four pairs of ears. With camera in one hand and schedule in the other, I head for the corridor where AAW seminars are being held.

My first pair of ears belong to one who chose "Beyond Survival—Longing for Joy," presented by Joyce Thomsen-Blake, and communications teacher Eileen Greenwalt. As women deal with abuse issues in their lives they must find the God of the still, small voice. Women must recognize they are valuable, that they need to flourish and grow, and that they can reclaim their true selves.

Another pair of ears listens to Beverly Bretsch, associate pastor of the Sunnyside church, Portland, Oregon, as she speaks on "Personal Spiritual Growth." She suggests ways in which women can nurture their spiritual needs by creating rituals. These may vary from meditating in a car's quietness to singing prayerful songs while driving; from having lunch with friends to reading comfortably at home. Ideas shared stimulate others to recharge their spirituality by observing soul-nourishing rituals.

Meanwhile, next door, Yvonne Stratton, M.D., a private practitioner, writer, and lecturer on women's health issues, shares

her expertise on an "Update on Birth Control and Sexually Transmitted Diseases." She mentions that the Pill is the number one choice of birth control among women, but it also relieves cramps, hemorrhaging, and functional cysts. However, the only protection from sexually transmitted disease is a good quality condom.

Finally, my fourth pair of extra ears listen intently to a helpful seminar reinforcing the

importance of women developing wise lifetime financial strategies. Guidelines presented in "Financial Security for Women" by Lyla Neumann motivate this listener to discuss new options with her banker.

Keynote address—by a man?

After a delicious quiche and salad luncheon, Verla Kwiram, one of the Conference '93 organizers, introduces the keynote



Joyce Thompson Blake (standing) co-directed a seminar with Eileen Greenwalt (not pictured) geared to encouraging survivors of abuse. Both live in the Walla Walla, Washington, area.

speaker. Am I alone in feeling pangs of disappointment that our speaker is not a woman? Should this be a requisite?

We learn that Patricia Wismer, who was to have been our keynote speaker, recently had a massive heart attack and died. A tribute to her suggests she was a clear-thinking scholar, outstanding speaker, and admired by her Adventist friends.

When Douglas Thorpe is introduced as a Seattle Pacific University English literature professor, a spark of hope is kindled in my English major mind. He also teaches Christian prayer and meditation, modern women in fiction, and British Christian writers. My heart warms to this softly spoken bearded man.

After leading us in reflective prayer, Thorpe comments with quiet humor that he decided he had found the Adventist gathering in the hotel (there are several other groups meeting in the same hotel) when he heard the announcement being made about the buses taking us to the Bellevue church. The announcement stressed that there would only be 144 reserved seats. Thorpe says he thought, "I'd better get on...sure, they say they're just going to Bellevue, but you never know!"

In his address Thorpe speaks of the bond of love moving between us, "coming as a gift, crossing boundaries of color, race, and gender."

He weaves together many images. We are touched by his portrayal of a God who is like a woman kneading dough into the bread of this world, nourishing, comforting.

Thorpe reaches deep into the soul of every Seventh-day Adventist when he relates the story of his own father's 1929 visit to his grandfather—who edited an SDA journal. The youngster repeats the phrase "Gee whiz," and is forced to stand for two hours in a dark closet. This dominating strictness of his grandfather the boy equates God with terror, not love.

"Do we need new metaphors today?" Thorpe asks. "Can we change the Taskmaster to the Nurturing One?" Mary Magdalene wept at the tomb. Hiram Edson wept at the Great Disappointment. We should weep because we have incorrectly portrayed our God. Thorpe commented, "The joy and radiance of God's love cannot be contained, no cross can kill it, no tomb can close it in." We should be joyful children, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Jean Sequiera has been secretary for the Association of Adventist Women. She is also a freelance editor and writer living in College Park, Maryland.

Friday afternoon and evening, October 15

So many options: Women's church, career tips, music, drama

by Madeline S. Johnston

Friday afternoon's seminar menu offered the same hearty, nourishing, well-balanced options that characterized the entire conference. We could choose two of eight topics.

First, I joined 30 others, including two men, to hear Susan Jacobsen, Marta Teel, and Ginger Harwood talk about "Women's Church," the worship experience led by women on the La Sierra University campus, five times in the past year.

Aesthetic worship

Multicolored dresses and fabrics draped the walls of the conference room; bright handbags and a spinning wheel were at the front of the room; colorful fabric draped the podium.

Women's Church purposes to study the Bible in an informal setting, interpreting it through a Christian woman's perspective. Teel said, "We dig more wells in the Word."

Harwood said that many see women in the Bible only as the submissive wife, obedient child, ruined woman, or woman of sin. She maintains that the stories of the Bible tell us that "Women of faith have many different kinds of lives. The Bible doesn't discount work in the home, and we must affirm it. But we must tell the rest of the story."

Jacobsen added, "We have discovered community, beauty, an aesthetic sense in worship. We use all five senses."

These women then led us in some of their worship activities. We began with a "body prayer." First we formed a chalice of our hands, lifted it to God to receive a gift, then with our hands folded across our chests we took in God's gift, and finally, with arms outstretched, gave it to others.

The brief service included hymns about women, a flute solo, antiphonal reading, and a short homily by Harwood.

Afterward, participants shared reactions, questions, and suggestions. Penny Miller said, "I have really appreciated the aesthetic dimension." Another added, "One strength of your program is that it is participatory."

Women in a man's world

The second session I attended was Alvin Kwiram's "Opportunities and Challenges for Women in the College/University Setting." Sharing from his perspective as a vice provost at the University of Washington, Kwiram used overhead transparencies of graphs and charts to show recent career trends for women. More and more women are moving into

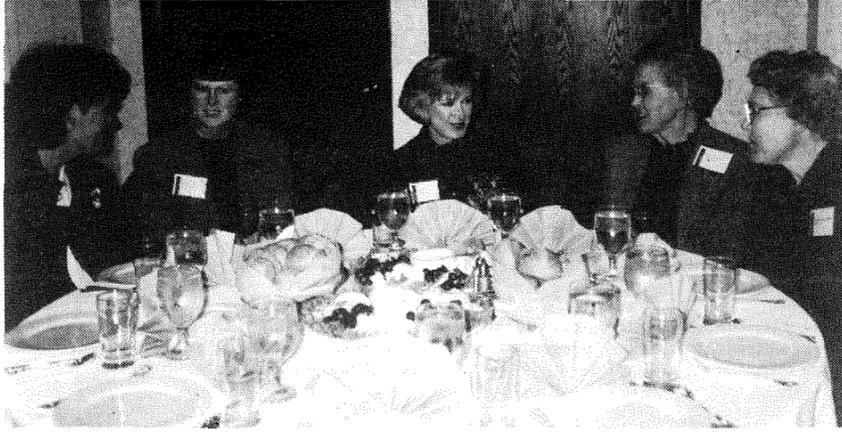
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Marta Teel (standing), with Susan Jacobsen and Ginger Hanks Harwood (seated immediately next to Teel), described the philosophy and activities of those involved in the women's church group meeting at La Sierra University.



Alvin Kwiram, vice provost of the University of Washington, outlined the career challenges women face in a man's world.



After 24 hours of concerts, presentations, and discussions, the traditional agape meal served on Friday evening of the AAW conference gives people a chance to relax and visit with friends before the evening program.



In the Bible drama, Deborah Anfensen Vance (pictured with daughter Chelsea) represented the woman Jesus healed from an issue of blood.

Continued from page 3
business, engineering, and educational administration.

Kwiram also gave advice on what it takes for women to get good jobs and climb into management positions. Doing a good job is not enough; women have to be very good. To advance, women must establish their credibility. This may involve simple, overlooked skills such as travel know-how, acting comfortable in a hotel or restaurant, and driving well.

"A woman must also know the rules of the game," Kwiram noted. Some of them: understand the chain of command; perfect your

skills; never lose your head; never disagree with your boss in public; master the art of being a Lone Ranger (the only woman) at business meetings.

Kwiram also advised women to identify a role model, and, if possible, lots of them. "Network," he said; "get to know the right people. Keep on top of your industry. Pay due attention to demeanor and appearance."

Superb drama

In the evening, following AAW's traditional agape feast, the Walla Walla Drama Group, directed by Rodney Vance, presented "I Knew Him," a series of monologues.

Seven women reflected on how Jesus changed them. Each woman chose her own character and wrote her own script. Each was superb.

Characters portrayed were Jesus' mother, the sister of Lazarus, the woman who touched Jesus' hem, Jairus' daughter, the woman at the well, a woman servant of Caiphas, and Mary Magdala. Those enacting the stories were, respectively, Lisa Lennox, Sue Dixon, Debbie Vance, Natasha Maynard-Reid, Beverly Beem, Beverly Archer, and Linda Emmerson.

We enjoyed music, too—the piano artistry of Jacquie Shafer, and the young women

of Auburn Academy's Sylvan Chorale, with their conductor, John Neumann.

With the 9:30 prayer circle (led by Chaplain Margaret Turner), and a trip to the penthouse hospitality suite for munchies, drink, and fellowship (maintained by Bernie Beck), the spiritual menu for the beginning of the Sabbath was as enriching and varied as the seminar options of the afternoon.

Madeline S. Johnston is a freelance writer and editor living in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Friday and Sunday mornings, October 15, 17

The business of initiating and voting: Testing our resolve

by Kit Watts

Before the first business session of the conference on Friday morning, Halcyon Wilson, pastor and counselor from the La Sierra University church in Riverside, California, launched us spiritually. She led a prayer circle at 8 a.m., and then provided a stirring devotional at 8:30.

Stretching dollars

The first major item of business was money. Joyce Greene, AAW treasurer, provided the details. They were encouraging. As usual, members' dues fall way short of even paying for the six issues of the *Adventist Woman* published each year.

Generous and consistent donations are what keep AAW alive. Personal and corporate gifts make it possible to honor Adventist Women of the Year, send free copies of the *Adventist Woman* to 700 key SDA Church leaders, pay rent on a small office in Takoma Park, buy postage, pay the phone bills, etc. And, thankfully, people who believe in AAW did it again in 1993!

Next conference site?

During the balance of the Friday morning business session and the subsequent one on Sunday, two agenda items were addressed.

First, where should the next AAW conference be held? Some proposed meeting in Ohio to commemorate the 21st anniversary of the Camp Mohaven Committee on the Role of Women held in 1973.

Others argued in favor of Washington, D.C., where they could shop and sightsee before, after (and during?) the next conference. During a final round of discussion on Sunday, the shopping tourists won the day by a slim margin. Too bad about history.

Why resolutions?

President Elisabeth Wear had asked Alyce Pudewell to oversee AAW resolutions and chair the meetings where they were discussed. Pudewell was admirably organized. Resolutions generated before the conference were flashed on a screen from an overhead projector so all could see and comment.

Major topics addressed by resolutions were as follows: need for church policies addressing sexual abuse and harassment, hiring more women in visible leadership positions, seeking out women speakers for major church meetings, using inclusive language, and giving tangible support to women pastors and chaplains.

By Sunday, 15 resolutions had been adopted—five directed to the North American Division, five to the General Conference of SDA, one to SDA members in general, and four to the AAW board.

In addition, AAW members voted 28 commendations to individuals, organizations, publications, and institutions that have made strides toward or have adopted policies that support Adventist women.

Inevitably, someone asked *Why adopt resolutions? What difference does it make?*

Betty Rayl, women's commissioner for the North Pacific Union, argued that resolutions are important because they raise awareness. Peggy Harris, former AAW president and

chair of WASH, noted that while not everything we ask or aim for comes to pass, some things do. "We began asking for an Office of Women's Ministries at NAD and the GC in 1984," Harris said, "and in 1990 it happened!"

Dayton Chong, a vice president from Central California Conference, said resolutions help focus on objectives and see priorities. "Push ahead," he counseled.

Pudewell concluded the discussion with a touch of humor:

"Our resolutions are a little like Chinese water torture. If we keep at it, the drops will wear a hole in the rock."

The 1993 AAW resolutions and commendations appear in their entirety on pages 5 and 6.

Kit Watts is historian for the Association of Adventist Women and lives in Silver Spring, Maryland.



Alyce Pudewell, of the Pacific Union Conference Department of Education, chaired the two AAW business sessions on Friday and Sunday. Resolutions were flashed on a screen to facilitate debate.



During the Sunday morning business meeting Dayton Chong proposed that AAW develop an advisory group that would include men who support women's issues in the church. The resolution was adopted.