

REFLECTIONS...

By Pat Brumback

Some of you that are as old as I am remember the phrase “times are a changin’”. Well, each generation has seen times change, some good changes and some not so good. Rather than get into the changes that we are now experiencing, I would like to reflect on times gone by, times that we have experienced in our association with the United Methodist Women.

As we learned from our UMW Sunday last year, times were certainly different for the women who had the insight and fortitude to make our organization come to life and grow into what it is today – a mission for the well-being of women, children, and youth all over the world. But who has made this possible? That is what I would like to reflect on as we look back over the years of the women involved in this work at Manor Memorial.

“Back in the day”, when I was raising three sons, working full time and striving to be involved in the activities of the church, I was mentored by several ladies who had a great impact on my life; namely, my aunt – Mary DiTolvo, Rebecca Whetzel (Ken Whetzel’s mother), Evelyn Kerlin, Helen Farrow, Zola Wilson and Georgiana Shaw. The common denominator here is that they were all members of what was then the W.S.C.S. (Women’s Society of Christian Service). This later evolved into the UMW. These ladies along with a multitude of others were dedicated to the work of supporting the programs of this organization. They were role models.

As time went on, sadly, these ladies passed to a greater calling leaving behind their memories and example of service to those of us that had joined the ranks. This is the important factor in reflecting on days past and looking to the future. Who will carry on this work? Our group, like many others in the Harrisonburg District, Virginia Conference, and around the world, is diminishing. Just in the past several years we have lost dedicated members, not just to death, but to changing circumstances in their lives that have necessitated moving to facilities that provide additional care. Although they are just as interested in the work that we do, they cannot actively participate in the meetings and physical work that we are called upon to do to be a viable organization.

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Who will there be to carry on when we can no longer do this work? Do we just say “Oh, well, it was nice while it lasted.” Are we “too busy” with busyness that does not look to the needs of those less fortunate than we are?

In reflecting on members that have been a part of our organization and have passed away in the last several years, we lovingly remember Barbara Lear, Evelyn Rankin, Ellen Dever, Elizabeth Bullett, Delores Haynes and June Mathias. Those that are residing in assisted living facilities are sisters June McDaniel (Gambrills, Md. And Shirley Fuller VMRC), Estelle Garrison, Dot Hussing, Doris Rodeffer, and Charlotte Whetzel. Having left our community and no longer a member are Kaye Fadeley, Pam Hennessey, and Judy Spangler. We remember all of these faithful members with love and thankfulness for their contributions.

I would be remiss if I did not share a sorrowful, but fond adieu to Mary Otey. Mary has served as assistant treasurer and most recently as vice president. She will be greatly missed and will hold a very special place in our hearts.