

Reflections and Recollections of Past Events

Wow, it doesn't seem that long ago that WDCC celebrated our 50th anniversary. We had a Saturday night dinner at the Muskegon Country Club in 2001. I was Vice President, so it was my job back then to call all of the members for RSVP's. Members, spouses, friends, and community leaders were all invited to commemorate the occasion. Mary Kendall chaired the event. One of our guest speakers was Chris McGuigan, President of the Community Foundation. Chris spoke on the need to have a fully blended community to be fully functional—a goal in which we're still working on achieving.

When I first joined our organization, everyone just called it **Women's Division**. One of the first projects I remember working on was the Historical Walking Tours. We would dress in Victorian clothes with full length skirts. The tours would start at the Muskegon Museum and end at the Emery House garage. We baked molasses cookies, which we made available for guests. We had a script to follow, and on one lovely Sunday afternoon Cindy Larson and I were guides together. We felt very fortunate when some of the tours would include an English garden in the backyard of one of the historical homes on Webster Avenue.

Lucy Nalley (1991-92) was the President of the WDCC when I joined. She was a fun loving, outgoing New Yorker who adored Muskegon. We used to have a live auction at our summer picnic and members would donate items to be auctioned. After dinner Helen Jean Arntz (1969-70) would be the auctioneer. She had a big, generous personality and owned one of the first women-owned businesses in the area—Lakeside Department Store. Part of the fun of the auction was Helen Jean personally driving the bidding up. Because of this skill of hers, I ended up with Lucy Nalley's donation of a carved Hawaiian scene that she brought back from vacation. What a lovely gift and evening!

Another treasured memory of WDCC was Dorothy Hammer(1965-66). Dorothy would turn up at every general membership meeting with her card table, money box, and roll of tickets. Once she sat up her table, she would proceed to quietly sell 50/50 tickets. About halfway through the meeting, she would have someone draw the ticket, announce the winner, and personally give them their cash. Thanks to Dorothy, this tradition has continued for over 30 years and has racked up a sizable contribution to the community.

When the Tall Ships Challenge came to Muskegon in 2001, WDCC cooperated with the Community Foundation and the Muskegon Rotary in greeting the ships and crew. In addition, several of our members volunteered for many shifts down at Heritage Landing selling tickets and helping with tours. Kristina Moseler, WDCC President (2000-02), and Mary Ballantyne were big volunteers. Records revealed that visitors came from every state in the Union, except Hawaii. This event was a real turning point in Muskegon for being the place to be.

Before my membership began, WDCC started the volunteer usher program at the Frauenthal Center. Mary Shanks (1984-85) started it with JoAnn Buerly organizing it. Many of our members volunteered regularly to assist with ushering at the performances. Sometime in the 1990's, Frauenthal took it over, but it started with our organization.

Respectfully submitted by Carol Beatty