

ALABAMA HOMEMAKERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

History — Our Story

In 1926 a small group of Alabama farm women had a dream to form a State Council composed of 303 Home Demonstration Clubs with a total membership of 6,098. This dream became a reality on August 3, 1926, as representatives of the clubs met at Alabama Polytechnic Institute (later became Auburn University) with Mrs. C. R. Bicker, Chairman of Home Demonstration Work, Alabama Federation of Women's Clubs presiding. Mrs. Bicker moved that a State Council be organized and this motion carried. Mrs. L. W. Spratling of Lee County moved that Mrs. Glenn Bradley, also of Lee County, be the temporary Chairman and Mrs. Bradley was elected. Mrs. Paul Adams of Jefferson County was appointed temporary Secretary. Mrs. Bradley appointed the following committees: **Nominating** - Mrs. W. R. Jeffers of Etowah County; Mrs. Harriet G. Gillette of Mobile County; Mrs. C. D. Ray of Macon County; Mrs. J. A. Vandiver of Jefferson County **Constitution** - Mrs. B. C. Schamagel, Tuscaloosa County; Mrs. Richard Pruett, Colbert County; Mrs. R. W. Rawlinson, Elmore County After a recess, the following slate of officers was submitted by the Nomination committee and subsequently elected:

President Mrs. J. W. Morris, Talladega County; Vice President Mrs. Gordon DeRamus, Autauga County; Secretary Mrs. J. A. Vandiver, Jefferson County; Treasurer Mrs. P. W. Summeral, Conecuh County. On August 5th, the following District Directors were elected: Mrs. Richard Pruett, Colbert County; Mrs. B. C. Schamagel, Tuscaloosa County; Mrs. L. W. Spratling, Lee County; Mrs. D. C. Searcey, Henry County.

A constitution and bylaws were adopted on August 4th and Miss Agnes Ellen Harris was the State Home Demonstration Agent when the State Council was organized. *This first group of women chose the following objectives:*

1. *To complete organization of county councils in every county (38 organized at the time).*
2. *To have a satisfactory diet for farm people.*
3. *To cooperate with the Farm Bureau in increasing income for farm families.*
4. *Running water in every farm home in Alabama.*
5. *To have more and better recreation.*

Although some things at that meeting in 1926 might seem strange to the homemaker today, the adopted program is as relevant to today's life as it was then whether we live on a farm or in an urban area. The programs selected for emphasis were: nutrition, clothing, childcare and rural recreation. The first yearbook was published in 1928. In 1931 citizenship was a new and major objective with Mrs. M. L. Batson, Jefferson County, Chairman. The first state project was the purchase of a grandfather clock for Smith Hall girls' dormitory at Polytechnic Institute. Council projects and activities have varied over the years reflecting current needs in the home, community, and Nation. In 1932, the State Council began sponsoring a public speaking contest. Soon after, a scholarship fund for girls was initiated. During the depression years, the Council placed emphasis on cooperation with the National Recovery Act. Other programs that reflected this era were mattress making and "live at home" programs. During the years of World War II, wartime activities and war production were among projects listed.

The Alabama Council of Home Demonstration Clubs joined the National Home Demonstration Council in 1945. The National Council was a member of the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) therefore, the Alabama Council became identified with farm women all over the world.

The Homemakers' "Collect" was written by Miss May Kyser in 1946 and became an inspirational addition to club work.

A highlight of 1951 was the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the State Council. Twelve past presidents were honored at a dinner on April 30th at Auburn University. Two former Vice Presidents, Mrs. Gordon DeRamus and Mrs. T. P. McClinton represented former deceased Presidents Mrs. J. W. Morris and Mrs. John H. Lee.

Civil defense and safety became important programs in 1957. By 1960, clubwomen had assumed a more active leadership role and by 1969 were giving all programs at club meetings. In 1965, the name of the organization was changed to Alabama Extension Homemakers Council (AEHC) to conform with the name change of the national organization to National Extension Homemakers Council, Inc. (NEHC).

Although 4-H had always been a special interest to Extension Homemakers, “family life and youth development”, as such were not added to the program until 1966. International relations was a major interest in 1967. Mrs. Aroti Dutt of India, President of ACWW, was a special guest speaker at the 1967 state meeting. For the next several years, there were many outstanding programs in the area of international relations. Cultural Arts was added to the program in 1971.

In 1970, a civil rights lawsuit was brought against the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service (ACES); in which the membership and activities of AEHC were questioned. After careful study of alternatives, it was decided to declare Extension Homemaker Clubs and Councils as independent organizations. In this status, we would have the same relationship to and the same services provided by Extension to all other integrated organizations and groups. Some adjustments made by the State Council included: *Revision of State Council bylaws to reflect changes in organizational structure adopted at the 1972 State meeting; elected officers who were serving in 1972 remained in office one additional year to facilitate the transition.* Two educational chairmen who coordinated programs in safety, health, family life, cultural arts, international relations, and citizenship were appointed to the Board of Directors. A State Newsletter was initiated in 1974 and published quarterly to provide much needed communication between the State Council, County Councils, and local clubs—the Newsletter editor was also a member of the Board of Directors. Mrs. Mary E. Coleman, retired State Leader in Home Economics of ACES, was asked to serve as advisor to the State Council during this period of reorganization and adjustment. In 1971, Alabama finally received recognition from NEHC when Nell Byrd from Lee County was appointed to serve as Family Relationships/Child Development Chairman (1972-74). Mrs. Byrd was the first person from Alabama to serve in an NEHC position. In 1976, the 50th anniversary of AEHC was observed with the meeting held in Auburn.

This was our Golden Jubilee and was dedicated to Mrs. Coleman. This was also the bicentennial of our country and Extension Homemakers had every reason to be proud of the rich heritage upon which they had built to meet the challenges of the future.

The Mary E. Coleman Scholarship was established in 1976 in honor of Mrs. Coleman. A Scholarship Chairperson was appointed to the Board of Directors. Changes in bylaws made provisions for funding this scholarship. Memorials and honorariums would also be accepted at any time. This scholarship is given annually by AEHC to an ACES agent/specialist who meets the criteria for continuing education in family programs. Applications are judged by: the Scholarship Chairperson, one member of AEHC, and one member of ACES appointed by the President.

Dr. Dorothy E. Tate came to Auburn in 1976 as the Assistant Director of Home Economics. She brought expertise and experience in serving as State Advisor to AEHC. The Cultural Arts exhibit is one of the good things AEHC has included in its annual meetings. Each county has the opportunity to exhibit their selected writings, arts, and crafts. The categories continue to broaden even today as more homemakers express themselves through various artistic and literary endeavors.

A President-Elect was added to the AEHC officers to serve one year working closely with the President to acquaint herself with the responsibilities of the office of President. The immediate past President serves AEHC for the next term of office as the Parliamentarian and ex-officio member of the Board representing the past Presidents' group. As educational programs increased, AEHC recognized the need to add Chairpersons in the pro-gram of work area. This addition helped to keep our program in line with the National programs. With four Chairpersons in the areas of Health, Food and Nutrition/Safety, Energy and Environment, Family Relationships and Child Development/Family Resource Management, International/Citizenship and Community Outreach, AEHC offered more opportunities for life-long learning and the fulfillment of physical and personal needs of the people.

The AEHC Award to home economists was first established in 1977. This award was given to ACES home economists in recognition of outstanding work in home economics adult programs. Four recipients (1 per District) were given certificates of recognition annually. Applications were judged by a committee composed of three professional home economists who were not employed by ACES at the time and were not members of AEHC. An Awards Chairman was appointed by the President to join the Board of Directors. In the late eighties, the award was discontinued as the need for it no longer existed.

Nine AEHC Board Members and the State advisor attended the Southern Regional Leadership Training Conference in Starkville, MS in 1978. As a result of this meeting, each of the four District Directors held a District Meeting in early 1979 with the theme, “Leadership in Action”. Board members presented the leadership materials and ideas making them available to help strengthen all County councils and clubs in the State. The

HOMEMAKER, a magazine of NEHC, was published bi-monthly. AEHC voted to revert from the *NEWSLETTER* to the *HOMEMAKER*. Alabama news was included in the *HOMEMAKER* and became a source of information reaching more homemakers. More news of national and international programs and activities were available through the magazine. AEHC supported the "USA Food for Stamps Program" and "The Year of the Child was initiated in 1979". Also, AEHC began to have more representatives attending NEHC and the Country Women's Council, USA, (CWC) conferences; and a delegate attended the ACWW Triennials and reported on its activities at the Annual meeting reports are a vital part of any program. As clubs grew in number and strength through the development and promotion of outstanding programs and projects, AEHC voted to award certificates of recognition to the counties for the best reporting of their achievements. These certificates of recognition helped to increase participation in reporting by counties and better reports were received.

AEHC voted to resume publication of the *NEWSLETTER* when *HOMEMAKER* magazine raised its publication costs for State news. The *NEWSLETTER* would continue to be published quarterly and would carry County news, with each County reporting on an appointed schedule. State membership covered subscriptions to the *NEWSLETTER*, but non--members could subscribe and were urged to do so. Members were encouraged to still subscribe to the *HOMEMAKER* to keep abreast of National and International programs.

In 1979, a proposal for State membership was passed. Individual membership was not mandatory. It did not affect local and county membership. Among the many advantages offered with membership were voting privileges; which were formerly open only to the voting delegate from each county known as the County Council President. Membership cards were to be issued to each member yearly upon payment of dues. The dues were \$5 per person per year. This membership plan was designed to strengthen the State organization and to allow program expansion and progress. A Statewide membership drive was launched in February 1980.

Each year brings exciting happenings to Homemakers. The 1980 Annual meeting was held at Auburn University, and this was the first time for a three-day format. Learning sessions and workshops were added to the program agenda. A workshop for training County officers was offered to meet the need for training future leaders in local and County clubs and the entire second day was devoted to learning sessions that offered information relevant to the interests of Homemakers. A quilt display was a special feature with one new or old quilt per County for exhibit and viewing only. Another added attraction was the State Christmas Tree ornament project. Fifty counties made over 400 ornaments from materials native to their location illustrating a product, industry, tourist attraction, etc. These ornaments were used to decorate the Christmas tree in the Governor's Mansion in Montgomery. In December 1980 AEHC Board members were invited by Governor and Mrs. Fob James for lunch after they decorated the tree. Thousands came to view the Christmas tree and the ornaments were later placed in the Home Furnishings Department of ACES at Auburn to be used in programs as needed.

A State Quilt Project was begun in 1980 with each County sending a representative to the State meeting workshop to help plan and select a design for the quilt. Fifty-one counties designed and made a quilt block featuring a floral motif - enough for a quilt and two pillows. This large quilt was presented to a representative from the Governor's Mansion at the 1981 State meeting. The quilt and pillows were to be displayed on the Folsom bed in the Mansion House where they could be viewed by visitors and tourists. This State project exhibited the cooperation among AEHC clubs and demonstrated the talents of their members. Mrs. Betty Newman, NEHC Southern Regional Director, was a guest speaker at the 1981 meeting. District Night, with the 4 Districts meeting separately, was added to the program. This sharing and caring fellowship has helped to bond the Counties together in mutual concerns and learning experiences.

The Official Program Book replaced the President's Packets, which were issued in the President's workshops at each annual meeting. This book contained the program of work and all organizational and support materials and was part of a permanent notebook, which could be kept and passed on to each incoming County Council President and State officers. It contained a current section, which could be updated annually to include the new program of work, officers, and other related resources.

In 1982, a new face-lift was given to the opening session at the Annual meeting. A podium cloth and a two--sided flag bearing the AEHC emblems along with 2 flag stands and poles made by the husband of a member were presented to the Council by a Homemakers club in Chambers County. These pieces were made of purple and gold velvet, the AEHC colors, the first owned and used by AEHC. The United States flag, the Alabama State flag, and AEHC flag were carried by 4-H girls from Chambers County in the processional. The State project for 1982 was the 4-H State Camp on Lay Lake in Shelby County. Counties contributed a blanket and pillow with the County's name embroidered on the border. These items were presented to Dr. Cecil Mayfield, State 4-H leader, during the banquet at the Annual meeting. Dr. Mayfield invited homemakers to use the facilities of the 4-H Camp and to hold District meetings there.

Since Alabama's goal was to double State membership by 1986, a membership workshop was incorporated into the 1982 Annual meeting program. This workshop taught the values of State membership and the types of membership available to interested persons. Monetary awards, certificates of recognition and Homemaker pins were given to winners of the membership contests.

Banners were given to the Counties fulfilling the contest criteria. Certificates of Appreciation were awarded to 50-year members in recognition of their many contributions to the Homemakers organization through the years. Interest in Cultural Arts being greater than ever prompted having a "Small Home-Based Business Show and Tell" before the opening session on the first conference day in 1982. It offered encouragement to homemakers who have home-based businesses and to those who were just getting started. An auction was held for the first-time following District night at this meeting. Handmade items valued at \$5 or more were donated by each County and the proceeds were added to the State treasury. This has become a part of the Annual meeting each year and now the money is earmarked for specific programs or projects. Two Alabama homemaker members participated in the 1982 NEHC Annual meeting held in Ohio. One entertained with a dramatic reading at the Southern Regional Banquet and the other conducted a twenty-minute workshop on tatting. A two-day workshop on public policy and how to get involved in the legislative process was held during this meeting. This legislative workshop developed 5 resolutions supporting the Cooperative Extension Service. A previous resolution was passed at the 1981 meeting in Biloxi, MS. These 6 resolutions were explained at the AEHC Annual meeting and at the following Spring District meetings. Copies were distributed to Homemakers and they were urged to contact lawmakers in connection with the action needed by the resolutions.

AEHC delegates and the State advisor attended the Southern Regional Leadership Conference held in Jackson, MS in the Fall of 1982. This leadership conference was funded through NEHC's "Nickels for National". The name was changed to "Nickels for Leadership" in 1983. Immediately following the meeting, plans were made to hold 4 District meetings in Alabama in the Spring of 1983 utilizing the knowledge and materials gained from the workshop. Some of the programs were modified to meet the needs of Alabama homemakers. The "Development of Needle Arts Through History" was the State project for 1983. Counties were encouraged to hold countywide exhibits and treasure hunts to locate the oldest existing pieces of needlework. The background history of each article was documented and slides of the heritage needlework were made in some counties during the documentation process. In conjunction with this project, many counties used the slide show on textiles from the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

During 1983, Nina Langley, AEHC President, signed a contract with the Archives Department of Auburn University which provided for the yearly deposit of AEHC's non-active files and records for safekeeping in the Archives. This insured the safety of these records from being destroyed and made them available for study and research by persons interested in the history of farming and other areas of rural life in Alabama.

Heritage Day Skills demonstrations were held in conjunction with the State meeting in 1983. Crafts persons were invited to demonstrate such skills as weaving, spinning, tatting, and pine-straw basketry. Dr. Ron Daly, National Specialist in Family Relationships and Child Development, USDA Cooperative Extension Service, Washington, D.C., was the keynote speaker. The State conference was videotaped and the tape made available to homemakers who never attend Annual meetings. Since AEHC voted to award each outgoing State Board member a Certificate of Appreciation for their leadership and contributions to the growth and expansion of our program for each term served, these were presented for the first time at this Annual meeting.

Alabama was jubilant to boast a winner in the first "Great American Family Awards Program" in 1983. This program to recognize the role of the family with forming and preserving the Nation's values and to inspire families to strengthen their relationships and increase community service activities was begun by First Lady Nancy Reagan as part of National Family Week - which is observed each year during the week of Thanksgiving. The Larry McCord family from Elmore County was one of the nine families nationally named to receive this honor. The McCords attended the State meeting in 1984 and were presented a Certificate of Appreciation from AEHC.

Edith Wilcox served as a delegate representing AEHC at many meetings of the ACWW. In 1983, she was elected to serve on the Extension and Mutual Services Committee at the Triennial Conference held in Vancouver, B.C., Canada. She continued to serve in this position for two terms. Two copies of the book, *OUR WAY OF LIFE*, were purchased to send to the 1983 ACWW Triennial. This book depicts the way of life in the United States and Alabama's books had the inscription, "Alabama Extension Homemakers Council-1983" written inside the cover. These books were given to delegates attending the meeting.

AEHC was pleased to receive recognition on the national level during the early 1980s. We received awards for: Cultural

Arts, Public Relations, Short Story Writing, Membership Increase, and *HOMEMAKER* magazine subscriptions. Miriam Watkins, Lauderdale County, was appointed NEHC Health, Foods, and Nutrition Chairman for 1982-84. AEHC programs and projects during this time included: The Planting Seeds of Education in cooperation with National Homemakers Week resulted in trees and shrubs being planted throughout Alabama during the 1980s; the "Alicia Kits"- a CWC, USA project; The Year of the Handicapped Program; and the ACWW project of sending kits to the country of Ceylon - namely, the Society of Lanka Mahila Samit. One county mailed kits to Sri Lanka and received an acknowledgement from the President of the Society. Many counties saved canceled stamps for the "Food for Stamps" Program.

Since one of the NEHC goals was to double our membership by 1986, the AEHC developed incentives and contests to promote the recruitment of new members. Competition for the large banners awarded to counties from year to year was keen and participation was great in the contests for smaller silkscreen banners, pins, and certificates. Constant improvement of programs relevant to the current needs of homemakers led to the organization of new clubs as well as county council reaffiliation with AEHC.

The "Family Community Leadership" (FCL) program—originated with interest in strengthening women's capabilities in leadership and the role of women in public policy formation was presented at the 1983 NEHC meeting held in Wyoming. AEHC scheduled this program for a daylong workshop at the 1984 State meeting. In 1985, seven AEHC delegates and Dr. Dorothy E. Tate, State Advisor, attended the Southern Regional Leadership Meeting in Jacksonville, FL., which featured the FCL Program. In the spring of 1986, District meetings introduced this program to homemakers in Alabama. FCL links home economics and community development with public affairs and teams, volunteers with Extension staff in all aspects of decision making, training, and program delivery. Three workshops featuring FCL techniques were presented at the AEHC State meeting in 1986.

In 1983, AEHC was invited to prepare a quilt square for the 1984 World's Fair in New Orleans. This square became part of a National quilt representing all States. Fifteen homemakers from Alabama attended the NEHC meeting held in Louisville, KY, and saw a slide show featuring this quilt. Five participated in the fashion show held during the Southern Regional Meeting in Kentucky.

Over 200 sewing and health kits were sent to Paraguay, Ecuador, and Ceylon in 1984 from Alabama counties as part of a State project. Enthusiasm of the women receiving the kits was great—some of them had never even owned a pair of scissors. In 1985, AEHC was nominated for and placed in the top ten Governor's Voluntary Awards Program for their efforts in education. Congratulations were received for our significant statewide efforts from President Ronald Reagan. AEHC members voted to award lifetime membership to past Presidents in appreciation for their dedication and service to our organization. A subscription to the *NEWSLETTER* was included with this honor. Annual meetings bring a variety of learning, entertainment, and fun for that once-in-a-year fellowship together. The Sing Along was a highlight on banquet night during 1984-86 annual meetings. It was planned and year fellowship together. The Sing-Along was a highlight on banquet night during 1984-86 Annual meetings. It was planned and produced by Jean Ann Moon (who became AEHC President in 1985) and Sheila Hatcher, an AEHC member. This special event became more innovative as the years went by and turned into a colorful revue of song and music often with an international flavor. One representative from each county attended the Sing-- Along workshop and participated in the revue presented on banquet night.

1986 was indeed a year of celebrations - ACES's Diamond Jubilee, AEHC's 60th Anniversary, NEHC's Golden Anniversary and the opportunity to work with four grant projects! Kick-off day for the 75th Diamond Jubilee Celebration of Home Economics Extension in 1986 was March 14th. Plans for this big event started in 1983 with ACES home economics extension staff and AEHC members appointed to work on this celebration. The purpose of this celebration was to increase public awareness of Home Economics Extension and to acquaint Alabamians with the innovative educational programs available to them. Guests from every part of the State went to Auburn to share in the festivities. AEHC voted in 1985 to contribute twenty-five cents per member to help with this celebration. Total contributions reached \$1,600. AEHC members made 136 paperweights commemorating the early years as "Tomato Clubs" and 75 years of Alabama Extension Home Economics and these were presented to each Alabama legislator. Dr. Dorothy E. Tate, State Leader of Home Economics Extension, presided during the afternoon session of the kick-off celebration. The vintage fashion show models wore fashions from 1890 through 1985. These authentic fashions in a variety of day, swim and sportswear and evening gowns and cloaks kept the audience spellbound. Several members of the original "Tomato Clubs" were present and were honored along with other fifty--year plus homemaker members. Skits and exhibits showed a panorama of progress in Extension including the newly expanded "Food and Nutrition" Program. Dr. Ann Thompson, Director of the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service, presided at the banquet that night. The Proclamation from the Governor and the Joint Resolution was presented by members of the State Legislature and 75 honorees from over the State were recognized. Dr. Dorothy E. Tate was honored for her outstanding work of coordinating the 75th anniversary and was given a standing ovation.

The story of Alabama Home Economics Extension from 1911-1986 titled "*Seedtime and Harvest*", written by Irby Barrett, an Extension Home Economist, was a comprehensive and delightful history and was made available to attendees. One tribute given is so worthy of quotation: "As its 75th anniversary is celebrated in 1986, Alabama Extension Home Economics pays tribute to those pioneer agents who wrote the preface to its extraordinary story. They left a legacy of wisdom, strength, and dedication, which will endure as a source of inspiration. All honor to them."

In keeping with this year of historic celebration and because of our research on "The Development of Needle Arts Through History" project, the Birmingham Museum of Art asked AEHC to work with them on a grant they had received to conduct a "Decorative Arts of Alabama Survey". The initial contact with AEHC was made during District meetings in 1986 and the Birmingham Museum field researchers followed up during the Summer and Fall by examining individual pieces. AEHC received 3 national grants during this period: "BELTS" (Belts Ensure Life Time Safety) 1985-88 from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; "ABC's of Nursery Safety" 1986-87 from the National Consumer Product Safety Commission; "Family Community Leadership" (FCL) 1987-90 from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. "BELTS" reached 5,000 homemakers, 470 clubs, and 65,000 non-homemakers face-to-face with programs to create public awareness of seat belt usage, child restraint law, and working toward a mandatory seat belt law. The "ABC's of Nursery Safety" reached over one and a half million Alabamians through displays, puppet shows, a slide set on nursery safety, fair booths, media, and programs to parenting and civic groups. AEHC received Honorable Mention for this project in 1987 from NEHC. AEHC received a \$2,000 planning grant and then a \$50,000 three - year grant for the FCL program. At the 1987 meeting, AEHC earmarked the Silent Auction money for homemaker scholarships to the FCL State Institutes.

In preparation for its Golden Anniversary, NEHC sponsored the "Oral History Project" with the taping of voices of homemakers from all States. Alabama made 5 tapes including oral interviews ranging from a young homemaker to a 90-year-old active homemaker. Numerous newspaper clippings, pictures, scrapbooks, and other records were microfilmed. Copies of these were made and deposited in the Archives at Auburn. Eleanor Arnold, Editor, merged serious and popular history, anecdote and reflection, professional and lay contributions, and concerted as well as individual effort into a book, "*VOICES OF AMERICAN HOMEMAKERS*", which was offered for sale at the 1985 NEHC Annual meeting held in Estes Park, CO.

AEHC celebrated its 60th anniversary June 16-18, 1986 at Auburn University with the theme "Living Dreams". The conference highlighted the six decades of Extension Homemakers and Extension Home Economics with "From Dreams to Reality"—a display room filled with exhibits and original Extension publications and sample items from the 60 years. We saw handmade hats, chair caning, mattress making, belts and much more—things we had learned because of Extension programs. Conference attendees wore garments and hats from the last 60 years on banquet night. The entertainment for the evening featured a fashion show of 6 decades of fashion accompanied by the Sing-Along chorus performing songs from these decades. In the business meeting, AEHC voted to bring their terms of office in-line with NEHC and have three-year terms instead of two-year terms. In recognition of our "sixty years of outstanding service to Alabama", Governor George C. Wallace proclaimed June 16--18, 1986 as Alabama Extension Homemakers Council Observance. The proclamation stated "the Council's projects and varied activities have met the challenges and needs of the home, community, and Nation." Representative Pat Turnham came to our meeting to present the Joint Resolution from the House and Senate of the Legislature of Alabama for our contributions to improving the lives of Alabama families through our volunteer efforts.

Myrville Edwards from Elmore County designed and made a three-foot by three-foot quilt square in recognition of AEHC's 60th Anniversary that was included in the 1017-foot "From Sea to Shining Sea" banner made for the Statue of Liberty Centennial Celebration. Alabama delegates celebrated NEHC's Golden Anniversary in Blacksburg, VA on July 19--24, 1986. Miriam Watkins from Lauderdale County was elected NEHC Vice President for the 1987--89 term of office. Twenty--six Alabama clubs were recognized for being in continuous existence for 50 or more years. Alabama received National recognition: First place in Health and third place in Environment—which led to the nationwide PAL'S (People Against Littered States) program. This program originated in the Curry Club of Walker County. AEHC had an "ABC's of Nursery Safety" exhibit in the State show case.

The 1987 AEHC state project was "Project 87", a joint project of all program of work areas for preservation and restoration of Alabama's historical wealth in our buildings and their furnishings in connection with the 200th Anniversary of the US Constitution. The theme of the meeting, "Alabama, Our Home", reflected this project in a fashion show of garments made of natural fibers made in Alabama factories and fashions made by AEHC members. Counties sent in slides of historic buildings in their area, and these were shown during the fashion show. These slides were later compiled into a Historic Alabama Buildings slide set. The 1987 Annual meeting was held in Birmingham, a change after several

years of meeting on the campus of Auburn University. Betty Buff, NEHC Southern Regional Director, attended the opening session and the proceeds of the Silent Auction were earmarked for scholarships to FCL Institutes for AEHC members. Since the ACWW Triennial was to be in Kansas City, MO in 1989, homemakers across the United States were asked to do special projects. AEHC members agreed to make 2,000 sets of needlepoint coasters to be used for mailbox stuffers for each delegate attending the Triennial. AEHC members also contributed handmade pillow tops and lace collars that were offered for sale in the gift shop at the Triennial.

Since Kansas is the “breadbasket” of the United States, the basket project was developed for each club with a one dollar per member goal. A club member would put a food item, flower, or a craft in a basket and carry it to a club meeting where it was auctioned off. The winner would take the basket home and bring it back to the next meeting filled with another item and so on for a year. The proceeds were used to help provide travel scholarships to the Triennial for delegates from the Third World Countries. Over \$2,600 was collected for this project in Alabama.

Spring of 1988 saw AEHC members bringing “Birthday Pennies” (one penny/year old) to the District meetings for the “Goats for Haiti” project. Thirty-five goats were purchased with the District pennies. Pennies collected later enabled the purchase of a total of 102 goats for this self-help project. The Safety Chairman introduced the “Host Responsibility Project” at District meetings. The State project encouraged party-givers to not permit their guests to drink and then drive. The AEHC 1988 meeting theme, “Homemakers, A Changing Image”, was reflected in the vote to increase individual State dues from \$5 to \$7 to cover the increase in National dues from five cents to one dollar per member and the increased cost of printing the *NEWSLETTER*. The meeting was held in Huntsville and served as the beginning of the planning year for the “Alabama Reunion”. At the National meeting held in July in Charlotte, NC, Jean Ann Moon (AEHC immediate past President from Marshall County) was appointed to serve as NEHC Family Life Chairman (1989-91).

The “Alabama Reunion” touched every facet of life in our State, families, communities, education, government, industry, tourism, you name it. Everyone was urged to work and clean up and fix up our homes, schools, towns, roadsides, etc. and then invite those who had moved elsewhere to come “home” for a reunion! AEHC immediately set about planning special programs and projects. Homemakers restored old buildings in their local communities such as an early one-room railroad station; helped museums reconstruct log cabins, build rail fences, catalog furnishings in pioneer homes; helped construct a nature trail laying a pathway through the park and marking all the trees and shrubs on it; cleaning up roadsides and taking part in special community celebrations commemorating by-gone days, etc. Homemakers from 23 counties handcrafted 43 dolls for the “Alabama Reunion and Create-a-Doll” competitions at the 1989 AEHC State meeting, which was held in Auburn at the newly opened University Hotel and Convention Center. Dolls in the “Alabama Reunion” category represented individuals who played a prominent role in the development of our State and the Create-a-Doll category was a competition showing homemaker expertise in doll making. Mrs. Guy Hunt, Alabama’s First Lady, was a special guest at the doll exhibit making opening remarks and assisting in the official ribbon cutting. After the exhibit closed, the “Alabama Reunion Dolls” were returned to the counties who made them in order to be placed in local exhibitions. The dolls in the Create-a-Doll category were sold at a silent auction and the money contributed to the University of Alabama Medical School in Birmingham to be used in children’s projects and programs. The “Birthday Pennies” collected at District meetings were contributed to the Pennies for Friendship Fund of ACWW.

The first “Family Community Leadership Training Institute” was held in early 1989 at the 4-H Club Center near Columbiana with 34 delegates from 7 counties participating. Later in the year, FCL institutes were also held in Decatur and Montgomery. Six FCL Institutes and an FCL Environment and illiteracy Public Policy Forum were held in 1990. A total of 18 AEHC scholarships were awarded to homemakers attending institutes in 1989 and 1990.

The 1990 annual meeting was again held at Auburn with the theme, “Golden Opportunities”. Since the special emphasis for 1991 was to be membership, Susan Brown (Extension Home Economist from Hastings, Nebraska) delivered the keynote address on “Golden Opportunities - Membership” and led a workshop later in the program. The special attention given to membership paid off with an increase from 1790 in the year 1990 to over 2100 the following year. During 1990 AEHC members reached 4,729 persons in face-to-face contact and another 483,410 with media contact in our state “Gift-of-Life” project. Other program emphasis was latch-key children, teenage pregnancy, AIDS, cancer, safe drinking water, reading programs, and embroidery kits sent to foreign countries and kitchen kits sent to Ecuador.

Homemakers brought “Birthday Pennies” to District meetings in the Spring of 1991 for the Dorothy E. Tate Scholarship. This scholarship was established to honor Dr. Tate by recognizing the invaluable help, guidance, and encouragement she gave to our organization while serving as our advisor from 1976--91. The scholarship will be awarded for continuing education to AEHC members working toward degree or non-degree personal development goals. The Paul W. Bryant Conference Center in Tuscaloosa was the site of the 65th Annual AEHC meeting held in June, 1991. This conference was dedicated to Edith Wilcox to recognize her years of service to AEHC, ACWW, and the NEHC Foundation. Mrs. Wilcox, a past President of AEHC, served on the ACWW Extension and Mutual Services Committee for two three-year terms and was a trustee of the NEHC Foundation for two three-year terms. Nell Finney, NEHC Southern Regional Director, attended the meeting and

was the speaker at the opening session informing the members about the new National headquarters, which was established in Burlington, Ohio. New bylaws were presented and passed reflecting a change in the term of office from 3 years back to 2 years. This change was made to enable more members to serve on the State Board and to make it easier for qualified members to accept nomination to office.

Responding to a need, Fall Gatherings were initiated in Autumn 1991. County Presidents and other interested members came together to learn more about AEHC and its programs and projects. It also provided a time of interaction and sharing of concerns among those attending.

The 1992 Annual Meeting was held in Oxford. Since NEHC had changed its name to National Association for Family and Community Education, Inc. (NAFCE), AEHC voted to change its name to Alabama Association for Family and Community Education (AAFCE). Although both organizations changed their name, their mission remained the same—to strengthen individuals and families through continuing education, leadership development, and community service. The 1992 Birthday Pennies in the amount of \$1394.90 were collected at District Meetings and sent to the NAFCE Foundation. During the NAFCE Annual meeting held in Burlington, VT, President Mary Ann Riley was honored to receive the Golden Wheat Award on behalf of AAFCE for this contribution. Fall Gatherings were held again and new official program notebook inserts were distributed to all County Presidents. The notebook inserts were also made available for others to purchase. The increase in National dues came soon after the name change causing some membership loss. NAFCE week was set as the 2nd week in October. “Buy a book, buy a Brick” was introduced and we won a National certificate for our efforts. We won a National environment award and received \$500. Another successful project was “Books for Newborns”. The first year of the “Children and TV project”, we returned over 1000 TV logs, wrote 488 letters to Senators of the 1763 reported nationally. National Headquarters became a reality with the purchase of the Ellis home in Kentucky. Mid-winter Presidents’ meetings were started for Presidents to share.

Upon her retirement, we contributed \$500 to a scholarship in honor of Jeanne Priester, who served as NAFCE advisor for many years. In 1992, the Kellogg funds were exhausted and the last activity of the “Family Community Leadership” program was an issues forum on “Aging and Health”. Many Alabama women benefitted from FCL training and unfortunately, no other funding source was found.

Fall Gatherings were started to accommodate more members attending District meetings for leadership training. Spring meetings continue with a speaker regarding a State project and having a fun time. A new membership brochure was printed. Membership forms were designed, printed, and sent to counties. We became incorporated in order to protect Board Members and achieved tax-exempt status. Auburn archives requested updates on our organization for a permanent record. Terms of office were changed from 3 years to 2-year terms. A policy was adopted not to release names and addresses of members and officers to other organizations without executive approval. Birthday Pennies and Silent Auctions at State meetings continue with the funds going into our scholarships—Mary Coleman for Extension Professionals and Dorothy Tate for our members. For the first time, a National President attended our State Meeting and she was the keynote speaker. Our National Parliamentarian presented a workshop on parliamentary procedure. State meetings were held in Oxford, Auburn, and Dothan. We worked with Dr. Richards at UAB on his “Spinal Cord and Brain Injury prevention education program”. These lessons were given in each District and taught to Headstart, 4H, and scouts. Counties could purchase lessons, which included posters and tapes.

The United Nations International Year of the family offered us a unique opportunity for teaching, learning, and networking. We served on the planning committee for the Governor’s conference on parenting in 1993 and 1994. We networked with the State Home Economics Association, Cooperative Extension Service, Alabama State Department of Education, Governor’s office, Alabama Power Company and representatives from Auburn, Samford, Alabama, and A&M University. Programs to celebrate the family were a monthly television program, co-sponsored Governor’s conference for 2 years, “do more in 94 pledge sheets”, a family calendar, family t-shirts, state song taped for sale, 101 ways to celebrate the family. These were given to all members and each member was asked to participate in one or more of these family activities. The focus of the 1994 Governor’s Conference was immunization and resulted in more children being protected. A side project was “Boo Boo” animals made for children who received their immunization at the health departments across the state and started a family tradition.

During 1995 AAFCE members were very busy and 3,513 “Boo Boo” animals were made. The main focus was “Before It’s Too Late Vaccinate” and it went along with the Federal program “Every Child by Two”. Handouts were put in doctor’s offices, day care centers, and churches to encourage parents to have their children immunized. The “Vision/Habitat” program of collecting used eyeglasses resulted in 1,500 eyeglasses being collected. To encourage children to read, 120 storybook aprons were made and given to preschools, day care centers, kindergartens, and libraries. We continued with the pledge for “Children and TV violence”. Alabama was fourth in the nation with this pledge. Our international program was a project with Heifer International and Habitat for Humanity in Uganda. We raised \$1,250, which was enough to buy an animal, build a house, and dig

a well to provide safe drinking water. The Tom Beville Center at Snead College in Boaz, Alabama was the location of the 69th Annual conference. Juanita Canton, NAFCE Secretary, and President of Tennessee FCE attended and was the General Sessions speaker. Her topic was "Marketing FCE". Dewey Hammonds, President of Marshall County FCE gave the inspiration on "What We May Become, Has Our Salt Lost its' Savor". The National Conference was held in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The Spring of 1996 started with Regional Leadership Training in Shreveport, La. and we had 3 members attend. District meetings were held and Birthday Pennies were collected. On April 5th, the pledges for "Tune out Violence" were signed with Alabama totaling 4,062. This was the fourth highest amount sent from any state. "Boo Boo" animals and storybook aprons were still being made. A new special project was added, "Make a Tote Share a Joy"; and each club was asked to make several tote bags and place a book and small toy or game in each one. These were given to pediatric departments at hospitals. "Water for All" an ACWW project was our international project and \$1,000 was donated.

The Heart of FCE Award was established by the National FCE in order to recognize the grassroots members who are seldom honored. We asked each county to select an honoree and send the nominations to the District director. One from each District to be honored and the overall State winners name is sent to the National level and honored at our Annual conference. District I was Margreete Black of Limestone County/District II Marvella Edwards of Elmore County/District IV and State winner Elizabeth Williams of Calhoun County.

The AAFCE received \$5,000 from the FCL Program to be given as grants of AAFCE County Councils, FCL teams, or local FCE clubs. The amount of money awarded for each grant is decided on an individual basis with the maximum being \$500 per grant.

An invitation was issued in 1998 to the Country Women's Council to have their Annual conference in Alabama in 2001 and Huntsville in Madison County was chosen as the conference site. The 70th AAFCE Annual conference with the theme of "Carrying the Torch of FCE" was held at Lakepointe State Park in Eufaula, Al. Dr. Virginia Geeoble, representing AAEHE Retired Members, presented the 1996 Friends Award to AAFCE. Judge Charles Fleming the Judicial Judge in Geneva County spoke on "Children First Foundation". Pamela Jones, Southern Region Director NAFCE, Past Tennessee State President, and an attorney spoke on "Carrying the Torch of Change".

The 60th NAFCE meeting was held in Cincinnati, Ohio. Tours of the new National headquarters were held. Alabama had the most bricks bought and placed on the porch with 36 in place and 10 more to be placed. In 1997, we were 6th in the nation with pledges for the "Tune Out Violence" Campaign. New projects also started were wheel chair and walker bags and sent to hospitals and nursing homes. The India Project was also supported again this year. Recycling was included in the programming also. Alabama participated in the National Angel Awards program on TV ratings. The 1997 Annual conference was held in Huntsville. The 1998 Annual conference was held at the conference center at Auburn and the theme was "FCE on the Move to the 21st Century". Coffee mugs with the FCE logo were given to the meeting attendees. Miriam Watkins of Florence received a special award and it was presented at the District meeting. President and Vice President attended the mid-year meeting in Kansas City, MO. The 1998 National conference was held in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Membership for Alabama was 898 members. Birthday Pennies were to be applied to the Dorothy Tate Scholarship Fund. A display on the state India Project was shown at the National Meeting. Many changes took place in 1999 and for the first time Alabama had a corporate sponsor to help with the state meeting at Shocco Springs in Talladega. This year FCE was given a permanent seat on the 35-member Advisory Board for the Auburn Extension System. Five of the seats are permanent and FCE was given one of those while the other 30 seats will rotate members. Cultural Arts continues to be a strong program. Items made from recycled materials was added as a category and it was fun. Heart of FCE Awards program was continued. The 50-year and 50+ year members were encouraged to report their exact number of years as a member and were given a certificate stating those years. The theme for 1999 was "A Century to Remember". The Alabama Alumni was formed in 1999 with 18 members and 14 of the alumni members attended the Annual conference at Shocco Springs.

Since the FCL grant money was used up, funds were established to continue grants and will be called Alabama FCE Grants. The National Headquarters building was sold this year due to declining National membership and could not afford to maintain the building. We have been notified that when the settlement from the National Foundation is completed, all States that were still members of National on January, 1998, would receive at least \$1,000 plus additional money to be determined when all the debts have been satisfied. Additional amount will be figured on a per person basis with the dollar amount to be determined. This could be a sizable amount and we look forward to receiving this in our State

"Tune Out Violence" pledges continued this year and Alabama was 3rd in the Nation with 5,010 pledges sent in. A new promotion project was started in 1999 by Vice President Wanda Whaley called "Display Your Sign". Clubs were encouraged to make a sign with their club name and to display this sign every time their club was meeting or participating in

any project or program.

India Project was continued and we donated fund in \$350 units dollar support and also, we collected 3,500 skeins of thread and needles, which were mailed, to the India project. The membership in 1999 went up from 1998's to 1,156 and this was a good sign that programs and activities were what the members were asking for. The attendance to meetings also increased and we are encouraged by this trend.

The theme for the year 2000 was "Together, We Can". Leora Dickinson was selected as the Heart of FCE winner for 2000 and was recognized at the National Conference in Hawaii as the State winner and was listed in the program book with other State winners. We continued the wheel chair and walker bags because of the popularity of the project. "Breast Cancer Awareness" was added as a program in 2000 as well as the "Water Watch" project for clean water. "Skin Cancer Awareness" was also added as a major project and encouraged the use of sun- screen and wearing of hats to prevent skin cancer due to exposure to the sun. At the Annual meeting a "hat parade" was part of the awareness program with decorated hats. Our State advisor proposed formation of a task force to study the relationship between FCE and the Auburn Cooperative Extension System. We look forward to participation in this study. The membership in 2000 was 1127. Several Alabama FCE members attended the CWC meeting at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. At this meeting the official invitation presentation was made to the CWC members to come to the Holiday Inn Research Park in Huntsville, Alabama in 2001. The presentation was well received and Shelby Hicks will serve as the Chairman of the meeting. The CWC officials expect 300 to attend and we look forward to hosting this meeting in Alabama.

Spring meetings for all four Districts were held in March 2001. AAFCE received a check in the amount of \$7,598 as a result of termination of the National Foundation. The membership voted to put the money in the AAFCE General Fund Account. The State annual AAFCE Conference was a celebration of the *75th Diamond Jubilee*. Guest speaker, Dr. Dorothy Tate, retired Extension and State Advisor shared special events and moments of the Tomato, Home Demonstration Clubs, Extension Homemakers Organization, and Alabama Association for Family and Community Education. Dr. Ann Thompson, retired Extension Administration Auburn, continued to share with encouraging remarks. Dr. Martha Johnson, Extension State Program Leader and State Advisor brought greetings from the Alabama Cooperative System and talked about the future of the organization.

This celebration was held in May 2001 at Shocco Springs in Talladega with 116 members present. The four Districts, in honor of our AAFCE members and Extension guests, hosted a reception. A collection of \$966.84 was received for the ACWW/CWC India project. The learning sessions included: Your Health, Irradiated Foods; Little River Canyon; Don't Sweat the Small Stuff; Click It or Ticket; Sew and Tell, and Fun-time. Over 24 awards were given to the counties. One hundred and thirty ribbons were given in Cultural Arts. A Mary E. Coleman Scholarship was given. Certificates were given in recognition of 25, 50, and 50+ year members. Jan Ripoll of Dale County received the National Heart of FCE.

In July, 2001 three members attended the National FCE Conference in Providence, Rhode Island along with over 300 members from the United States and Puerto Rico. Alabama was recognized for being one of the 5 Charter Member States of the National organization with 65 years of service and membership. The conference speakers and workshops focused on the families and communities through continuing education, developing leadership and community action.

AAFCE hosted the Country Women's Council, USA, 69th Annual Meeting in Huntsville at the Holiday Inn Research Park in September, 2001. AAFCE committees planned an excellent and busy conference for CWC, which included a walking tour of the Huntsville Historical District, Botanical Gardens, and the U.S. Space and Rocket Center. Also visits to 3 large farms, Research Park and bus tour to Jack Daniels Distillery in Lynchburg, TN. There were interesting speakers and workshops, including Carolyn Griner of National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA. National FCE President Harriet Steenson gave a presentation on Calcutta and William F. Killough, III presented "In the Eyes of Children" photos from 70 countries around the world. All 4 Districts held Fall Gatherings in October 2001 where the counties received their Program of Work, Cultural Arts forms and educational information for 2002.

Two AAFCE members attended the National FCE Mid--year Leadership Seminar in Kansas City, MO in February 2002. The 4 Spring District meetings were held in March. Members were encouraged to take part in the "Tune Out Violence" campaign in April and to collect signature pledges.

Alabama 4H celebrated 100 years in 2002. Mrs. Elizabeth Frost of Shelby County was AAFCE senior member and 4H'r. She attended the District IV meeting and did a presentation on sewing sofa and chair slip covers, making aprons, and shared knowledge of her many years of volunteer work in Extension. Her daughter, Dora Grace Smith a retired County Agent, assisted Mrs. Frost. In June, 2002, AAFCE members met for the 76th Annual State conference at Shocco Springs in Talladega and the theme was "United We Stand". One of the high- lights was a visit from National FCE President Harriet Steenson. She gave a slide presentation, "How Do You Get to Calcutta, and Why Are We There". District I hosted a "get acquainted" reception for Mrs. Steenson. District II hosted Cultural Arts with 132 ribbons being awarded to State members. District III was in charge of door prizes with all prizes to be designed from recycled items. District IV hosted the Awards Banquet and Installation Ceremony. The Alumni was in charge of the Silent Auction. Dr. Dale Monks of Auburn University presented a program on "Biotechnology" in Food and in Farming. Other programs were Flag Etiquette, Elder Law, and Decorating with Napkins.

Award certificates were given for written reports and certificates honoring 25, 50, and 50+ Year members. Kathryn Young was the National Heart of FCE winner for Alabama. AAFCE members continued celebrating Alabama 4H's 100 years. Many of the AAFCE members were former 4H'rs and brought memorabilia and shared memories of days gone by.

Two members attended the National FCE Conference in St. Louis, MO and brought back an award for Geraldine Club of DeKalb County for 1st place in 2002 Family Choice TV. They collected 1,364 pledges for the "Tune Out Violence" campaign. Alabama was the 3rd place State winner with 3,322 pledge signatures. Dot Beason was elected to serve on the National FCE Board as Southern Region Program Coordinator. All Districts held their Fall Gatherings in October 2002. In December, AAFCE members met at the Auburn Conference Center for a retirement luncheon honoring Dr. Martha Johnson. Dr. Evelyn Crayton is the new State Advisor.

The theme for 2003, "Reaching for the Stars", had a twofold purpose: 1. Recruit new members. National FCE's membership drive offered its members a star-shaped FCE pin for each new member recruited. *Stars Fell on Alabama* again as several members received FCE star pins for recruiting new members. 2. Show member appreciation—to recognize that the members are the true stars of the organization and that they are what make the organization "shine" because of all the good work that they do

National FCE changed to having National officers take office in the Fall instead of in January. Alabama FCE members voted to have State officers take office on September 1st instead of January in order to blend with the National FCE.

The ACWW Triennial was held in Hobart, Tasmania in 2003. Sarah Estes of Walker County attended the meeting as Alabama FCE's voting delegate. The report of actions taken by Alabama FCE supporting the resolutions and recommendations that were passed at the previous Triennial were included in an ACWW publication, which was distributed at the Triennial.

At the National mid-year meeting in 2004, National FCE raised issues that were very unfavorable to Alabama FCE and later proposed bylaw changes to enforce those issues. Being very concerned for the State organization, the State Board members met and discussed the situation with a lawyer from Jasper, Al. After studying the AAFCE bylaws and the pro-posed amendments to the National FCE bylaws, the lawyer recommended that Alabama FCE disaffiliate from National FCE. The members were made aware of the situation, and at the 2004 State conference in Montgomery, the members duly adopted a Resolution to disaffiliate from the National FCE. They also voted to conduct business temporarily as "Alabama Home and Community Leaders" until a new name could be chosen. At the 2004 National conference in Richmond, Virginia, a Notice of Disaffiliation was delivered to the National FCE and Alabama homemakers embarked on a new beginning. Dr. Evelyn Crayton, of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, was asked to become AHCL's State advisor; to which she agreed. With her support and the continued support of Alabama Cooperative Extension System, the AHCL moved forward "making a difference" in the lives of others.

2005 - 2006 Gail Williams of Cherokee County

When I think of all the years I was honored to be President of Alabama Homemakers and Community Leaders, I think of opportunities presented and challenges met. The years leading up to 2004 had been good years but change was forced upon us with happenings in our National organization. When I was elected President, our Alabama membership had to decide on a new name, new symbol, new programs of work and Blue Book; as well as new, rescinded, and amended bylaws. We dug our heels in and learned new ways of working together using computer communication that was so much quicker than "snail mail". Some of the members received both digital and hard copies of the *NEWSLETTER* and some opted to receive only digital copies. Membership began to come back and grow. At our 2005 Annual State conference at the Alta Vista Hotel and Conference Center in Birmingham, Al, we had 21+ first-timers attend. The 2005 on-site planning committee, Jannette Lackey, Jane Yates, Virginia Clinton, and Jo Edmonson with our host counties in District IV (Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, Walker, and Winston, and Cherokee County McCord's Crossroads Clubs were wonderful and gave of their time and money to help make the conference a memorable one for everyone. 2005 began our year of celebration of our new name and our 79th anniversary. We had many wonderful speakers and Dr. Evelyn Crayton told about new programs and new ideas that are available to use as program sources and educational materials. Due to the settlement of a decade's old lawsuit, Dr. Crayton and Auburn University could play a part in our organization again. Eloise Litz, a motivational and nationally recognized humorist, spoke to us about W.I.N.G.S. (Wonder, Inquisitiveness, Nurturing, Growing, and Soaring). Our cooking skills were enhanced with a tour of the Virginia Culinary School and restaurant, which provided our food for the conference. We ended our time by releasing balloons off the beautiful balcony at the Alta Vista as a symbol of our faith in a growing Alabama Home and Community Leaders organization. The second year my Board and I traveled the State with many new programs and materials that we presented to each County President that attended the District meetings. We continued with our year of celebration that culminated with a formal dinner and cake at the BJCC Sheraton Hotel on September 8th—10th, 2006. Cherokee, Etowah, Madison, Randolph, and Talladega Counties all were on the planning committee and the results were fabulous. Speakers were varied and diverse and we were treated with cooking, quilting, Christmas ideas, cancer updates, gardening, and jewelry. Richard Lindsey brought greetings from Montgomery and spoke about the importance of heritage skills. Prudence Hilburn, Billie Lang Crumly, James Spann, Renee Morrison, and Eddie Aldridge were nationally recognized speakers. Our talented State member Karla Crum did pictures of the Silent Auctions, County, and District meetings as well as first-timer pictures. Presentation of Colors was by members Jim Beason, Pat Portzer, and Billy Harrison. Jo Edmonson, Frankie Johnson and Mary Francis Fox presented patriotic songs. Your organization began in 1926 and we celebrated the 80th year wearing our new pin with our State and date of organization surrounded by our new name. This pin has the best of both worlds—our past and our future. We are who we are because of where we have been. We wear our pins to show that we are proud to be a part of a group with such a wonderful heritage and a soaring future.

Key Members, first-timers, former Presidents, and guests were recognized at dinner. "Show and Tell" gave the members a chance to see what other clubs, counties, and Districts were doing in their meetings. We also had Boards of AHCL achievements during the year that were taken to each District meeting around the State to allow more membership to enjoy AHCL accomplishments. The Board members during 2005--2006 were District leaders, Ruth Ann Stalnaker, Linda Paramore, Reather Jones, Esker Harrison, and Dot Beason. My right-hand helpers were Vice President Judy Case and Treasurer Ruth Peek and a wonderful Secretary and advisor Sue Moman. Our State advisor was Dr. Crayton and the Parliamentarian was Wanda Whaley. My personal goal as President of AHCL was that everyone would have a renewed enthusiasm for our organization and a realization that Alabama Homemakers and Community Leaders is not made up of an "I" or a "they", but a group that is made

of “us”.

2007 - 2008 Esker Harrison of Henry County

Upon being handed the gavel, work had begun. The Blue Book was in need of revisions and updates and this was accomplished early in 2007. Plans were being made for the “Fly, Fly Away” conference to be held at the 4H Center in Columbiana, Al in memory of O’Neal Mayfield, who quilted the State quilt hanging at the 4H Center. The array of banners, uniquely designed by clubs and counties were displayed. What a great way for advertising our great club to new members. Competition began for the AHCL Creed and a number of entries were reviewed with the award to

Loretta Johnson at the conference. The Creed was adopted in 2007 and all attendees received a bookmark with the Creed inscribed. The first AHCL cookbook was introduced in 2008—a beautiful royal blue padded cover with gold Alabama Homemakers and Community Leaders logo containing over 1000 recipes from members across the State. The cookbook was delivered at the District meetings in the Spring. The State conference “Follow Your Dreams” was held at Shocco Springs in Talladega, Al. Upon entering the facilities, members were greeted with “bedstead signs” for directions. Louise Nichols, ACWW USA President honored AHCL with her presence and with her happy, bubbly personality. She was enjoyed by all. She updated the attendees to the activities of ACWW and CWC. AHCL presented her with checks totaling \$5,000 to be used for 3rd world countries and 2011 Triennial. It has been 2 great years with 2 new clubs, 34 new members, and hopefully growing. There is so little time with so many to serve that AHCL job will never be completed.

2009 - 2010 Ruth Ann Stalnaker of Madison County

At the beginning of my term as State President, I felt overwhelmed with all the love I received from the members of this wonderful organization. Through God’s guidance and with the help of other homemakers, we had a great 2 years. First thing to be accomplished after I received my gavel was to clarify the new non--profit tax laws to the counties. It was confusing but with the help of fellow homemakers and an accountant, we are straight with the IRS now. We are a category of 501(c)4 not a 501(c)3 which means donations made to our organization cannot be declared as a donation to a non-profit on our tax returns. We had a great speaker at the Annual conference on the new tax laws and he received many questions. It was recommended that each county get a tax identification number and not use the State number as we are not an umbrella organization. Each county should file a tax return each year. The 2009 conference was at Lake Guntersville State Lodge with the theme of “Weaving Friendships through Homemakers”. It was a wonderful conference with a thrift store fashion show (price \$15 or less). We had great participation in the show. District I provided the table decorations, table favors and was great help in preparation for the conference. We established a State website for the organization—www.alabamahomemakers.org. We are trying to get with the swing of things with the younger generations. Your State President-Elect Judy Case and I attended the ACWW Triennial and were really impressed with their work. We learned so much by attending the meeting and articles were passed and friendships were made. The report was given at the Annual meeting in Montgomery in 2010. We incorporated some of the ACWW resolutions in our program of work for 2011. Each District had their Spring meetings and I thoroughly enjoyed them. I travelled around the State to different counties to help with the programs, to meet them, to install officers and was lucky to meet so many wonderful fellow homemakers. We provided all attendees with a permanent name badge with a magnet backing. Dr. Evelyn Crayton installed our officers for the year of 2011. At the conference, a scholarship was established for students who are seeking a career in Family Counseling at Auburn University.

2011 - 2012 Judy Case of Madison County

Alabama Homemakers is blessed with many talented women who are willing to volunteer their talents and time and 2011 and 2012 were no exception. The State Board members led us with great programs, great District meetings, great newsletters, and great financial record keeping. In 2011 donations of \$41,572.69 were given by Alabama Homemakers; 20,061 items were bought and donated; and 6,498 items were made and donated to a variety of groups in our local communities. In September 2011, State Treasurer Debbie O'Neal and President Judy Case attended the CWC National meeting in Columbus, Ohio. They interacted with other CWC members and officers and increased their knowledge of CWC and ACWW. October 2011 found Alabama Homemakers heading to Eufaula, Al to "Catch a Smile" at Lakepointe State Resort for the Annual AHCL conference. Numerous learning sessions and a tour of homes and downtown Eufaula were included in the conference. In 2012 Homemakers continued giving—donating \$35,871 and donating 36,404 items either bought or made. In the Spring, AHCL gave its first \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating senior from Dekalb County. A \$1,000 scholarship will be given for the next 9 years until the money designated for this purpose is used completely. In both 2011 and 2012, the State Board gave out Dorothy Tate scholarships for individual members to use for furthering their education, and awarded AHCL grants to clubs for community projects they were involved with. The AHCL grants are funded by the Birthday Pennies collected each year at the District meetings. In the Fall, President--Elect Linda Paramore and President Judy Case represented AHCL in Manchester, New Hampshire at the annual CWC meeting. Madison County hosted the Annual AHCL conference in Huntsville with the 2012 theme being "Hand in Hand with Homemakers". Attendees were treated with a variety of great speakers and good entertainment taking away memories of making new friends and catching up with old ones. Alabama Homemakers continue to support ACWW projects by collecting Pennies for Friendship and giving to special projects such as "Water for All". In 2011 and 2012, AHCL sent \$1,663.23 for ACWW projects. In keeping with changing times, we have joined the social media with a Facebook page which is linked from our AHCL website.

2013--2014 Linda Paramore, Dale County

There is just so much to say about the two years I was State President that it is hard to put in a limited space. The ladies of Alabama Homemakers and Community Leaders are an inventive and courageous group. They work continuously on projects that benefit their community and their state and the world. It has been an incredible honor to be able to lead this group of whom I am the least. They are a group of ladies that have more talent in their little finger than I do in my whole hand. My admiration goes out to all!

In October of 2013 we forged a different way to have a State Meeting. I wanted it to be a different type and a memorable experience for all. Through a lot of prayer and research God led me to explore the possibility of a camp at Springville. This is a retreat for Assembly of God Churches in this region. The first thing I wanted to ask was do you have to be from the Assembly to use the facility. A most gracious lady who answered the phone said no they let me work here and I am a Baptist. Since I am also a Baptist, I knew God had said it was fine. We became quite familiar with one another as I often had questions and she was always so patient and kind in helping me to go forward. It was a challenge for us all to organize the room situation and where we would place each of our meetings. But as always God had already planned this and we had a great time. Everyone seemed to love the peaceful atmosphere and quietness of our surroundings. The hit of the entire meeting was the ZIP line where 43 people zipped through space at a fast, fast speed! Billy my husband and I were one of the last to take the plunge but when they told me a lady was 85 years old and waved as she went across the lake, I wasn't about to let her get the best of me. It took all the courage I could muster but I did it and it was exciting. I was able to attend the CWC Convention to Manotowoc, Wisconsin along with Pres. Elect Joyce Davis and our husbands. It was a very interesting meeting and we

learned many new things and made many friends. As a result of us attending I was approached about becoming the Secretary of CWC and was nominated. We in this country share many goals with ACWW and it was interesting to see what we do support.

In 2014 we had a fast start with new programs and visiting all the District Meetings. It was a pleasure to visit each district and see what they were doing and just to fellowship with them. Plans were being made to have our State Meeting at Eufaula, AL at Lake Point in Nov. We were blessed to have Beverly Earnhart from ACWW to attend the entire meeting and she enjoyed herself tremendously. She did a program on what ACWW is accomplishing around the world. Since we contribute to this it was interesting to see what goes on in other places we support.

Scholarships were given and grants were given to clubs to help with progress in the communities we represent. Our ladies support many causes and contribute their money, time, and effort to help others in many ways.

As my time closes to be on the Board, is a melancholy time for me as I have been on the Board for many years and I will miss seeing you. I know we have great leaders coming on the Board and AHCL will be stronger and better as a result. I love each of you and Godspeed to all as you continue this work.

2015 - 2016 Joyce Davis, Marshall County

I feel honored and blessed to have been your president for the past two years. Without the support and encouragement of a great board and membership it would have been an overwhelming task.

In 2014, as President Elect, I attended the ACWW/CWC Annual Meeting in Manitowoc, WI with AHCL President Linda Paramore, at that meeting we were asked to host the 2017 ACWW/CWC Annual Meeting. After consulting with the AHCL Board, Linda and I extended the invitation at the 2015 ACWW/CWC Meeting in Tulsa, OK and they accepted.

In 2015 the AHCL Annual Meeting was held at the Guntersville State Park Lodge. The 2015 Board Members were Vice President Jill Stallcup, Secretary Sherry Equi, and Treasurer Christine Ashley. The District Coordinators were District I Linda Daniels with Jo Ann Stricklin appointed to complete her term when Linda had to resign due to family hardship. District II Julie Twining, District III Sallie Shields and District IV Linda Morrow. Laura Byrd worked to revamp the AHCL Web site making it a source where all current forms could be down- loaded. At the 2015 AHCL Meeting Nancy Curley was elected as Vice President, Jo Ann Stricklin was elected President Elect and Elizabeth Griswold came on the board as District I Coordinator.

In 2016 we celebrated 90 years of Homemakers in Alabama. The AHCL Annual Meeting was held at Shocco Springs in Talladega AL. The position of Media Coordinator was added to the board and Laura Byrd was elected as our first Media Coordinator and our web site changed to alhomemakers.club.

2017-2018 Jo Ann Stricklin, DeKalb County

First, I want to thank God for blessing me with the most creative and cooperative board. I am honored to be the first State President to come from DeKalb County. The board consisted of Nancy Curley, Vice President, Debbie O'Neal as Treasurer, Ginger Robinson as Secretary, Elizabeth Griswold, District One Coordinator, Sherry Equi, District Two Coordinator, District Three Coordinator, Martha Cates, and District Four Coordinator, Pam Stone, Julie Twining as President-Elect. Due to Laura Byrd having health problems, Kim Walls took over the Media Coordinator position. These women have been so wonderful to work with. They are bright, intelligent, and creative. Two new clubs were added, Sandy Sanders of DeKalb began the Joyful Hearts club in Fort Payne. Nancy Curley began the Lakewind Club in Tallapoosa County. Our state hosted the 2017 ACWW/CWC meeting in Huntsville. Joyce Davis, Parliamentarian, arranged the meeting and Madison County served as hosts. The attending members enjoyed a tour of Huntsville and the NASA Space and Rocket Center. Each club in the state made unique table favors for the meeting. We are honored to have the ACWC/CWC World President from Australia, and our United Nations representatives from New Zealand in attendance. Our 2017 state conference held at beautiful Lake Guntersville State Park. In 2018, we held our conference at Lakepoint State Park in Eufaula. Hurricane Michael came through on our second day. Our speaker and entainment could not make it for the banquet. Some of our members decided to leave before the storm hit. Five of the park's employees stayed through the conference to insure we had everything we needed. We stayed busy that afternoon with our crafts letting the storm pass. The State Board members, telling of their most embarrassing moments, provided entertainment. Everyone got a good laugh from that. (The members of the board were very good sports.) Our homemakers took everything in stride and we all made the best of the situation. Thanks to Alabama Power, we kept electricity except for one short interval. In 2018 Julie Twining, President Elect, and I went to the ACWW/CWC meeting in Dubuque, Iowa. The weather was perfect and we learned more about the International organizations. Upon leaving office, DeKalb County presented me with a quilt that had blocks made every county and club in the state. I, to say the least, was overwhelmed. May God bless our organization in the years ahead. Thank you all for this wonderful experience.

2019 - 2020 Julie Twining, Barbour County

This was a great opportunity to be of service to an organization that I felt was worthy of my support. My decision to join and support Alabama Homemakers was based on many things, but the one that caught my attention was that our club fundraiser supported our own local communities and charities. I knew where our dedicated work was going.

2019 started off as a great year. Our 4 Districts held fabulous March 2019 meetings. In fact, all of Alabama celebrated because it was our 200th Anniversary. The state project for that year was to make plan. Our members recycled so many plastic bags that went to good use. The plan was used by organizations to crochet charity sleeping mats.

The Board made the decision to have the October annual meeting in Huntsville, but because of construction work at the hotel, we had a last-minute change to Guntersville. The Board members worked frantically and diligently to make sure every detail of the convention change went off without a hitch. Our hearts are in this together as we wanted to be sure everyone has a great time. The help that we get from all our members is phenomenal.

A sad and shocking event rolled in with 2020. Covid 19. As the months moved on, it was obvious that big changes were happening around the world. The Board held hopeful thoughts that we just might be able to have District meetings. By March, everything was closed and shut down. District II did have a small meeting, but the annual meeting was canceled. The Board continued to meet by Zoom. On October 6th Ginger Robinson was installed as the new President with a new beginning for 2021.

I can't thank the board members enough for all the help they have offered. I also want to thank all AHCL members for supporting a fine organization.