

## Reflections from the Past: Remembrances of a Past President: Highest Attendance Ever at Annual Session

Nettie Ruth Brown (FL), Past President, 1975

The 1975 Annual Session was held in Knoxville with the theme *Spirit of '76 Spotlight on Professionalism*. It was the highest ever attendance for the association with over 2000 registrants. It seemed everyone wanted to partake of the "southern hospitality."

Because of the large number of participants, many late registrants had to be housed at other locations. Shuttles were arranged to transport them to the meetings. During the Board meeting, concern was expressed for the availability of hospitality for those who registered late. The Board agreed that hospitality would be allowed for the late registrants.

Many last minute changes had to be made to accommodate the large attendance. The opening session was held in the auditorium of the Coliseum. Two separate dining areas were set up because the ballroom could only seat 1200. An additional 600 were served in the lobby.

Over 80 companies exhibited with approximately 241 "excited" exhibitors participating. I remember one of the exhibitors was Faultless Spray Starch. Today, starching is almost a "thing of the past". That year there were many events sponsored by companies such as Miles Laboratory, Campbell Soup Company Coats and Clark, General Foods, Kraft and Production Credit Association. Many of these types of activities are now a "thing of the past", too.

One of the objectives of the meeting was to honor our heritage. With this in mind the NAEHE Bicentennial Photography Project was created and introduced at the 1976 meeting. Each state was allowed three entrees.

Having the 1975 Annual Session with the largest participation level so very successful made me extra proud to be our President.



Other highlights of the year:

In 1975, California was the newest (and last) state to join the Association.

The Board learned about a White House Fellowship for a female between 23-35 years old. The position would require working with Legislators and Cabinet members to coordinate new ideas and approaches to enhance the progress of government.

Past President Maxine Reeves, Louisiana, wrote the National Association of Extension Home Economists history and each state was requested to put a copy in their permanent file.

For the first time, the Association recognized the need for an established Public Affairs Committee. Their goals were to: "encourage Extension Home Economists not only to implement the quality educational programs, but also accept responsibilities of keeping volunteer leaders, program participants, local citizens, professional, business and agency representatives, government officials, Congressmen and Legislators informed about the contribution Extension Home Economics programs make to the quality of living". We were reminded that these criteria set forth over 30 years ago are still a viable goal for our Association today.

Other memories of interest:

In 1952 when I started work as an assistant Home Agent in Athens, Tennessee, you had to be single to work with Extension.

In 1976 in Florida, I was driving home one night from a meeting and was stopped by an officer because I was driving a county car. The reason he stopped me was that he had never seen a woman driving a county car and he thought it was stolen. Of course, he apologized . . . and I laughed all the way home.