

**THE FORMATION OF DEVONPORT WOMEN'S AUXILIARY 1932 to 1939
THE AMALGAMATION OF DEVONPORT AND PLYMOUTH WOMEN'S AUXILIARIES**

AND - SOUTH WESTERN DIVISION OF YMCA WOMEN'S AUXILIARIES FROM 1950 to mid to late 1980's.

It is noted that there was assistance given by women from 1932 and preceding years at the St. Aubyn Street, Devonport premises.

By 1935 most YMCA's had a group of willing ladies, wives and girlfriends of the male membership, who volunteered to help from time to time, serving refreshments or organising a special fund raising effort.

Records from the Minutes from March 1935

36 ladies volunteered to run a Bazaar, and assisted in raising £100, being responsible for 3 stalls, general, confectionary, fruit and flowers, together with serving refreshments and ice cream. The Bazaar commenced at 3pm, admission was 6p. It was opened by Lady St Levan.

The Bazaar was a success. Mrs Pendlebury, who had chaired the organising committee, thanked everybody for their efforts and it was suggested that an all out effort should be made to increase the number of lady voluntary workers. The potential of such a willing voluntary group had been recognised.

Mr Paige, the General Secretary asked the ladies to identify suitable volunteers. By 1938 the number of lady volunteers had grown to such an extent that they were now able to staff a lounge café between 6-30pm and 10pm each weekday, 2 ladies on duty each evening.

In the same year, another Bazaar was to take place in the Spring with a fund raising target of £80 to cover costs of renovations and alterations incurred for the new buffet area, together with the purchase of crockery.

The 1939 a Bazaar was arranged in the large hall in Devonport and had the theme of "Widdecombe Fair." The ladies made themselves country dresses with bonnets, a different colour for each stall. There were 14 stalls, some run by the members and a Model Exhibition. It was a great success and raised £113.

DEVONPORT YMCA WOMEN'S AUXILIARY FROM 1939 to 1956

Records from The Minutes from June 1939 to 1956. In June 1939, the first meeting of the newly named group of voluntary lady workers was to be called the Devonport Women's Auxiliary.

Officers elected:-

President Mrs Pendlebury Chairman Mrs Finemore Hon. Secretary Mrs Paige

Responsibilities were allotted for the various fund raising activities:-

Whist - Mrs Tidball Refreshments - Mrs. Brookes Ladies to staff the Café.

At the September 1939 meeting Mr Paige General Secretary read a statement:-

"Owing to the war conditions now prevailing, it will be necessary to entirely change the programme from civilian to military work. Members of the Women's Auxiliary are asked to volunteer your services for general work under the auspices of the Association. On the Authority of the War Office such work would be ranked as National Service. As Members of the Women's Auxiliary you are asked to enrol."

All ladies present offered their services and it was arranged that YMCA National Service forms would be sent to each, the ladies would meet the national requirements through doing duty in the canteen, which servicemen would soon be using.

Regulars at the meetings were Mrs Richards, Mrs Finamore, Mrs Reburn, Mrs Hawken, Mrs Littlejohns, Mrs Warn, Mrs Rogers, Mrs Tidball and Mrs Paige.

A letter was read out from the National Council of YMCA's outlining the YMCA programme for the war, also a letter of appreciation from the Commander in Chief, Devonport and his acceptance of the YMCA's offer of use of the canteen for the servicemen.

The Café/Canteen was to be staffed by the ladies on a rota opening mornings and evenings.

By 1940 plans were created for a hostel in the YMCA building, the ladies were asked for support and eventually, were called upon to repair pillowcases and sheets as well as other undertakings. Mr Paige retired and Mr Taggart took over as General Secretary.

The Canteen was moved to the ground floor for easier access from the street for servicemen. Paid staff were taken on to cater and provide cooked meals; the Women's Auxiliary provided a daily rota. They also purchased the kitchen equipment.

With the Canteen move, the ladies gained a sewing room and met each Wednesday afternoons to make items for their annual Sale of Work.

The few minutes available up to 1947 do not give details of the War Years, but there a formidable commitment from the Women's Auxiliary, fund raising and staffing the Canteen which was commendable bearing in mind Devonport was virtually wiped out by the Blitz. Buildings all around the YMCA were bombed.

By 1947 Mr Longden had taken over the post of General Secretary. The Hostel had closed. The Women's Auxiliary Officers were:-

President Lady Tozer Chairman Mrs Reburn Hon. Secretary Mrs Hawken
Hon. Treasurer Mrs. Dingle.

A new Women's Auxiliary fundraising venture was 'Old Time Dances.' At their peak of two a month, they were very successful with the ladies arranging the refreshments. A pianist, sometimes augmented by a violinist, with Mrs Ball, the wife of a member, together with Mr Mrs Atwill and their daughter, provided the lead and sometimes instruction with the dancing.



Shown above are members of the Devonport YMCA Women's Auxiliary and friends celebrating the 5th Anniversary of the Old Time Dances with Mrs F Reburn, wife of the MC, cutting the cake with Mrs Kimmins.

In 1948 two ladies from the Women's Auxiliary were invited to attend the Monthly Board Meetings to get a broader view of the work of the Association and to report back.

The Exeter to Plymouth Road Relay Race arranged by the YMCA Harriers finished at the Devonport YMCA and the Auxiliary were asked to arrange the tea for the teams which amounted to about 150. The race was an annual event over several years with the Lord Mayor often present.

The Women's Auxiliary River and Coach trips were well supported and enjoyed by the membership.

Two ladies of the WRNS who discovered the Devonport YMCA Canteen in the late 1940's enjoyed the welcome and made lots of friends, eventually joined the Women's Auxiliary. They made a great contribution with their fundraising ideas and furthermore each married members of the YMCA Rugby Club!

The Devonport Y.M.C.A. comprises some 350 young men and boys and is open to others of good character to join.

Fees—1/- per qr. from 12 to 16 years.
5/- per year from 16 to 21 years.
7/6 per year over 21.

Activities include—Harriers (Track, Road & Cross Country) Keep Fit Classes, Football (Rugger and Wednesday Soccer) Badminton, Camping, Music Group, Jazz and Swing Clubs, Interest and Discussion Group, Handicrafts, Socials, Whist Drives, Old-Time Dances, Billiards (3 tables), Table Tennis, Chess, Draughts, Sunday Men's Meetings, Evening Services, Teas and Conferences, Fellowship Meetings, Guild of Service.

Premises are open 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday and Sunday.
4 p.m. to 10 p.m., Weekdays.

Canteen, including Teas, Light Refreshments, Ices, etc., open at above hours.

Aim. To develop Christian character and all-round Manhood, SPIRIT, MIND and BODY.

Associates are invited to consider becoming Full Members and win allegiance of others to the call of Christian Service.

Devonport Young Men's Christian Association

SALE OF WORK

Wednesday, 24th Nov., 1948
AT 3 P.M.

To be opened by **LADY TOZER**
(President, Devonport Y.M.C.A. Ladies' Auxiliary)

In the Y.M.C.A. Lounge
56 St. Aubyn Street, Devonport

STALLS
Include Handicrafts, Pound and Produce, Book Stall, Cake Competition, Etc.
Organised by the Y.M.C.A. Ladies' Auxiliary.

SIDE SHOWS
Include Variety and Novelty Competitions by Y.M.C.A. Clubs
Including Harriers, Rugby, Wednesday Soccer, Badminton, and Cricket Clubs.

Admission by Programme - - - 6d.

NOTE: TEAS, ICES, Etc. will be served from 5-30 p.m.
MUSIC during Tea—selected recorded programme.
GIFTS in cash or kind will be gratefully received by Stallholders.

The Support of All Our Friends is cordially invited

By the 1949 AGM, Mr Strachan, Chairman of the Association was asked to take the Chair in the absence of the President

Present- Mesdames, Anson, Dingle, Dart, Davey, Evans, Hawken, Mutch, Kimmins, Littlejohns, Matthews. Miss's, Kalloway, King, Powell, Partridge, Porter.

And Mr Longdon, the General Secretary

There was a total of 45 names on the Women's Auxiliary membership list.

The New Constitution was read, discussed and adopted.

The following Officers were elected :-

President Lady Roborough Chairman Mrs. F. Reburn Hon. Secretary Mrs. R. Rendall Hon. Treasurer. Mrs. Dingle

During the year the ladies purchased a complete tea sets and lampshades for the lounge.

They also embroidered letters on cricket club badges and decided to pay for the repair and tuning of the piano. Lady Roborough agreed to open the Sale of Work.

At the 1950 AGM a message was read from Sir Clifford Tozer the President of the Devonport YMCA, thanking the Women's Auxiliary for the wonderful work they were doing in support of the Association, which included the various clubs who are able to approach them to help them with their fundraising.

Ongoing programmes included catering for Tea Table Conferences, general fund raising, Canteen duties all of which were a financial benefit to the Association. .

At a meeting in 1950 a letter was read from Mr Wickens, the Regional Secretary inviting three representatives of the Devonport Women's Auxiliary to attend the 7th December

meeting at the Plymouth YMCA Hoe Mansions, with the purpose of establishing the Divisional Women's Auxiliary in the South Western Division of YMCA's.

At the 1951 AGM the Officers elected were:-

President Lady Tozer Chairman Mrs Dingle Hon. Secretary Mrs Rendall
Hon. Treasurer Miss Kallaway.

Shortly there would be the ensuing amalgamation of the Association's Devonport WA and the Plymouth WA which offered time for them to get to know each other.

By 1952 there were representatives at quarterly meetings of the South West Divisional Women's Auxiliary held in turn at Torquay, Paignton, Newton Abbot, Exeter, Exmouth and Plymouth. Crockery and canteen equipment purchased including a refrigerator for £135

At the 1952 AGM the Officers elected were:-

The President Lady Tozer (resigned) and Mrs Washbourne took the post.

Vice President, Mrs Reburn thanked Lady Tozer on behalf of those present.

President Mrs. Washbourne Chairman Mrs Dingle Hon Secretary Mrs Rendall

Hon. Treasurer Miss Kallaway.

Lady Mansergh to open Sale of Work.

1953- Old Time Dances have been running for five years, a special celebration arranged. Mr. Frank Reburn was a YMCA stalwart as MC .and arranger for the Women's Auxiliary old time dances.. A special Anniversary dance was held with a cake and presentation to Frank.



Representatives from the WA attended the 3 day YMCA Bristol Convention. Following a request £2-5s-0d was given to Flood Relief at Great Yarmouth. A Special Reception to be held for Sir Clifford (Association President) and Lady Tozer (Past President of WA) on becoming Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Plymouth. The WA agreed to make and supply all the refreshments and organise accordingly. Total donations to Clubs during the year was £18-10s-5d.

1953 AGM

Present :- Mesdames Washbourne, Leest, Dingle, Rendall, Longden, Dale, Marston, Nettleton, Davey, Evans, Dart, Power, Kimmins, Snell, Rowe, Lintell, and Robinson.

Misses :- Kallaway, White, Porter, Cambridge and Sutton and Mr. Longden, General Secretary

Officers elected :-

President The Countess of Mount Edgcumbe. Chairman Mrs Dingle

Hon. Secretary Miss Kallaway. Hon. Treasurer Mrs. Longden.

Mr. Longden Gen. Sec. thanked Mrs Washbourne (retiring President) and Mrs Rendall (retiring secretary) on behalf of those present.

The Ladies ran a Christmas Party / Old Time Dance.

By 1954 planning was now well underway for the new Plymouth building. It was agreed that Plymouth and Devonport would amalgamate so Devonport was sold which helped to put the money into a new purpose built Plymouth City Centre YMCA premises.

In 1955 the YMCA held its Centennial Conference in Paris and the Women's Auxiliary promised £50 to assist two delegates.

During 1956, the future of the Plymouth and Devonport Women's Auxiliaries, the General Secretary Mr Longdon, suggested they should cease to function separately and a new WA be formed with two Sub Committees for Canteen and Catering, the other for Social Activities and fundraising. During the next year the amalgamation of the WA's would take place in readiness to move into the new building. A meeting was to be arranged with representatives from both sides to discuss how best this could come about.

Arrangements had been made to close the Devonport YMCA building in St. Aubyn street on the **30th June 1956**, when all members would be accommodated in the YMCA at Hoe Mansions Plymouth.

PLYMOUTH YMCA WOMEN'S AUXILIARY CONSTITUTED FROM THE AMALGAMATION OF THE DEVONPORT AND PLYMOUTH AUXILIARIES

Sadly the records of minutes of meetings after 1956 and the amalgamation have been lost, together with the minutes of the Plymouth YMCA Women's Auxiliary up to 1956

1956

A meeting of both Plymouth and Devonport Auxiliaries took place on 5 July 1956 at the Plymouth YMCA - Chairman Mr Trott of the Plymouth Board of Management. Present- Mesdames, Reburn, Marsdon, Rendall, McRae, Brown, Parkhouse, Trend, Peard, Watkins, V..Winnicott, H..Winnicott, Low, Couchman, Jillard, Cooper, Dart, Dingle, Longden and Miss's Oxford, Hockings, Lang, Byrne, Symons, Hunt, Powell, Porter, Kallaway. Gen. Sec. Mr Longdon and Residential Sec. Mr Wilkins.

A New Constitution was drawn up. A small committee was appointed. Everybody was encouraged from the successful meeting which was arranged to discuss basics and for everybody to get to know one another.

Later in the year the amalgamation was agreed under the Devonport Women's Auxiliary Constitution to be thereafter known as the Plymouth YMCA Women's Auxiliary.

The Officers Elected ;-

President To be confirmed Chairman Mrs. V. Winnicott Hon. Sec. Miss. Kallaway.

By May 1958 the WA had moved into the New PlymouthYMCA Building in Armada Way. Mr H. Steele was General Secretary.

The newly formed Plymouth Women's Auxiliary presented a large voluntary workforce. Fund raising was now the main objective to pay off the large debt created by the new build. The ladies soon established a weekly sewing group with their own room, making items for their sale of work or Bazaar, which became an annual event with many stalls. Held in the Plymouth YMCA theatre/main hall, it attracted the crowds and over the years raised hundreds of pounds. The ladies collected throughout the year items and gifts to stock the stalls. The Bazaar was always opened by a local dignitary or VIP; the Lord Mayor often attended. The sewing group were always at hand to do any sewing work in connection with the hostel or building in general.

Whist drives were regular fund raisers. The ladies arranged the refreshments for the Tea Table conferences, dances and other events including selling tickets for plays and shows held in the YMCA theatre.

Elected Officers of the Plymouth Women's Auxiliary 1959 - 1965.

President Mrs.H.Winnicott Chairman Mrs V.Winnicott Hon.Sec Miss W. Kallaway

1962

Mr Morley Manaton, became YMCA Regional Secretary and presented long service badges to the Plymouth YMCA Women's Auxiliary.



Medals awarded for 40 years service went to:-

Mrs M Cooper, Mrs M Couchman. Miss E. Trend, and Mrs E Winnicott ; for 30 years service to Mrs P McRae, Mrs B Winnicott, Mrs I Reburn, and Mrs. W Priest ; for 20 years service to Miss D Hallett Mrs. E. Bone, Mrs. G. Rendall, Miss J Watkins, Mrs W Jillard, Mrs O Lang, Miss L Hunt, Mrs. R. Peard, Miss P Hockings, Mrs O Parkhouse, Mrs D Gregidgo, Miss M Banham, and Mrs D Cooke; for 10 years service to Miss D Gunn, Miss W Kallaway, Mrs B Lintell, Miss N Duff and Mrs W Preece.

The Women's Auxiliary's assisted in staffing of the Coffee Bar for 12 hours a day, 7 days a week which made a considerable saving in revenue of hundreds of pounds a year to the Association. In appreciation of their work, in January 1965 the Plymouth YMCA members gave a party, with supper, for the ladies. This in time was to become an annual event.

In 1970 Desmond Willcox took over as General Secretary. In October 1970 the Annual Women's Auxiliary Bazaar raised over £314. In the last 14 years the ladies had raised over £6000 for Plymouth YMCA funds.

Times were changing, with the Women's Auxiliary not recruiting younger ladies, the commitment of the older stalwarts, although still invaluable, understandably were reduced. The Buffet was still their main service. The hall/theatre, where the Bazaars, were held, was converted to squash courts, The Bazaars continued in smaller areas of the building. In appreciation of the work being done by the Women's Auxiliary, Des Willcox, General Secretary, arranged annual outings for the ladies to gardens or other places of interest. They often were invited to Association Dinners.

1973 heralded a new area of service for the Plymouth Women's Auxiliary. Following a successful exploratory shop in an out of City shopping area, the first YMCA Charity Shop in the country was opened in the basement of the Plymouth building. Pearl Willcox, wife of the General Secretary was the Manageress and the Women's Auxiliary were serving in the shop. Often, items the ladies made in their sewing group were sold in the Charity Shop once the Bazaars finished.

The ladies still continued to assist when alterations to the Plymouth YMCA Building meant charity shop premises had to be found in other places in the City. Sadly, the mid to late 1980's saw the demise of the Plymouth Women's Auxiliary whose number by then, for various reasons had been depleted. Nothing to date has taken its place as a recognised body, although there is still voluntary help.

The contribution made by the Devonport and Plymouth YMCA Women's Auxiliaries over many years will go down in the history of the Association as being exemplary in what they achieved. A group of dedicated and fully committed ladies, who were thoroughly reliable in every way, with the Aims and Purposes of the Movement in mind, gave, over the years countless hours to raise thousands of pounds to help establish a YMCA in Plymouth on a firm footing from which so many young men and women have and will benefit.

SOUTH WESTERN DIVISION OF YMCA WOMEN' S AUXILIARIES 1950 to mid to late 1980's.

Records of Minutes of Meetings available only from 1956 to 1976
Gaps being filled from other sources.

1950 - A letter from Mr. Wickens, Regional Secretary, to all the YMCA Women's Auxiliaries in the South Western Division, requested representatives attend a meeting at the YMCA Hoe Mansions, Plymouth on the 13th. December 1950. The representatives at the meeting agreed on the commencement and formation of the South Western Division of YMCA Women's Auxiliaries.

The ladies would now be able to exchange ideas, encourage one another and generally broaden their knowledge on the YMCA work.

The Women's Auxiliaries that sent representatives were, Exeter, Exmouth, Paignton, Newton Abbot, Torquay, Plymouth and Devonport. There was not always full representation at each meeting, the format was, starting at 3pm. the business and reports, followed by a speaker on the YMCA work, often the Regional Secretary, who usually took the opening prayers. At the close of the meeting the host Association provided tea.

Initially the meetings were held quarterly and that was eventually changed to twice a year. Minutes did not always give all the reports of each of the Women's Auxiliaries attending in detail, maybe because they were repetitive. The few available minutes, to follow give an indication of their fund raising efforts.

As appropriate delegates were nominated to attend the YMCA South West Divisional Council Meetings held at the Torquay YMCA and the National Women's Auxiliary Meetings in London.

1952 - AGM at Hoe Mansions Plymouth.

Officers elected :-

President Nancy Viscountess Astor Chairman Mrs H Winnicott
Hon. Treasurer Mrs. V. Winnicott Hon. Secretary Mrs. Dewdney

1953 Meeting at Newton Abbot

A Fund for the payment of expenses discussed and it was decided to set up a Divisional Delegate Fund. Although the tea is given by the host Association at the conclusion of the Divisional meetings, every body to pay a shilling and this would go into a Fund for expenses of delegates.

1954 AGM at Plymouth.

The President Lady Astor Promised £30 to send a young Plymouth member to the YMCA Centennial Conference in Paris in 1955. Lord and Lady Astor had generously supported the Plymouth YMCA over the years.

1955 Meeting at Exmouth.

Mr. Dewdney General Secretary Exmouth YMCA asked for help from the ladies for the Bath and West Show being held at Launceston.

It was decided the Women's Auxiliary affiliation fee of 5 guineas to the National Council was too much and it was agreed to send 3 guineas.

29 Nov. 1956 AGM at Hoe Mansion. Plymouth

Representatives from Exeter, Exmouth, Paignton, Plymouth, Torquay and Brixton.

Officers elected :

President Lady Astor Chairman Mrs. H Winnicott Hon. Secretary Mrs Dewdney
Hon. Treasurer Mrs. V. Winnicott.

Meeting 9th May 1957 at Paignton.

Present :- Mesdames Munn, Fenton, Harris, Parsons, Longly and Miss Lavers - Paignton
Mesdames Norris, Parrish, - Exeter
Mesdames Leach, Searle, Dewdney- Exmouth.

Reports:-

Plymouth - Fund raising proceeding in earnest towards the New Building Fund.

Whist drives and Old Time Dances are good fund raisers.

£12-60 given to the Hungarian Relief Fund

The Wednesday sewing group made 150 sheets ready for the hostel in the New Building.

Various items being made for a stall at the planned Bazaar.

A special Sale of Work raised over £86. Canteen regularly staffed by the Ladies.

3 new members have enrolled.

Best wishes have been extended to the newly appointed Gen. Sec. Harry Steele.

Paignton – During another successful year, the work by the Ladies has increased the funds to the extent refurbishment has been able to be carried out throughout the YMCA building. A Dancing Display made a profit of £27. The Sale of Work raised £50.

The following was paid for by the WA:-

- New curtains, pelmets
- A radio for the juniors
- £91 for redecorating the gym,
- plus £75 for gas heaters.
- Financial aid was given to the Football and Table Tennis Clubs.
- A donation was made to the Hungarian Relief Fund
- Profits on Whist Drives run by Mrs. Fenton and helpers were £21-18s 0d.
- A trip to Longleat and a Jumble Sale brought in another £15.

Since taking over the running of the Canteen last October, the Ladies have increased the takings considerably

Exmouth – Another successful year with a profit of over £81 from the Sale of Work last September. Income from Bridge, Whist Drives, Jumble Sales and other efforts enabled the Ladies to hand to the Board of Management of £100. Curtains, Lino and Furniture has also been purchased. A donation has also been made to the Overseas Work.

Following the Reports, Mr and Mrs Taggart told about their work among the Hungarian Refugees and his involvement in the Movement. Tea was served at the end of the meeting.

Meeting 1958 at the New YMCA Armada Way Plymouth

The Meeting was a Rally of all the YMCA Women's Auxiliaries in the SW Division.

42 Ladies attended

Chairman Mrs H Winnicott welcomed the members to the New Building which had been opened the previous day. Representatives were elected to attend the National Women's Auxiliary Meeting.

Reports:-

Plymouth - It has been a most eventful year for the YMCA in Plymouth, a dream has been fulfilled in the New Building and the result is worth all the work this has meant by all concerned.

The last Bazaar at Hoe Mansions November raised £176-13s 0d for the Building Fund.

The Auxiliary Sewing Group and the Guildhall Working League were responsible for many of the curtains seen hanging in the New Building.

The Hospital Welfare Fund through Auxiliary member Mrs Couchman gave £100-12 to the appeal fund. Two rooms in the building are retained in the hostel for anybody with relatives in the hospital. The Auxiliary are staffing the buffet from 10am to 10 pm in relays of 4 hourly shifts, for this work we have had to recruit several new members..

Torquay – Were pleased to report a successful year of work and several new members have been recruited. Fund raising has been through the annual Sale of Work, Musical afternoons, (Arranged by Mr and Mrs Mansfield) Jumble Sales and a new venture, coffee mornings. The furnishings for 3 of the bedrooms in the new extension and some of the curtains have been given by the WA. The proceeds from the Autumn Sale of work paid for a new floor in the Social Room. At present the Ladies are organising efforts for renovations and decorations to the Chapel. The Ladies provide flowers for the Chapel every week. Weekly meetings are arranged by the Ladies to repair hostel linen and other sewing jobs. The total raised in the last few months is £250.

Paignton :- The WA is still supporting the various sections, the outlook is promising. Ladies attending our afternoon meetings have agreed to collect and make articles in the summer months to sell for fund raising. A Dancing Display has been arranged and it was agreed that part of the proceeds should go the Paignton Hospital Out Patients Department, which is now being built and for the Old Peoples Club Christmas Party.

Whist Drives are held each week and the Annual Sale of Work is planned for October. The Ladies have arranged refreshments for YMCA, meetings and other functions. A coach trip to Bournemouth was arranged, 60 members and friends enjoyed the outing and a profit was made. Jumble Sales have also been held the proceeds divided between the Clubs. The Ladies have completed 12 months taking full charge of the Canteen with good results. New curtains for the TV Room are planned also trestle and card tables. The Paignton Ladies wish Plymouth YMCA very success in their new venture.

Exeter :- Another good year of Fund Raising was reported on ,made up as follows ;-
Jumble Sale £21-8s-7d, Garden Party £41, Mayday (joint effort) £152-2s-3d
Sale of Work £55-17s-0d. A Concert raised £12-12s-0d and the proceeds given to the Hungarian Relief Fund. £6-6s-0d was sent to the YMCA Overseas Work.

Exmouth :- The Autumn Sale of Work opened by the Exmouth YMCA. President Mr Stuart Hibberd raised over £90. Other means of raising money were by Whist, Bridge Drives and Jumble Sales. Providing Teas, as required also made a small profit to the funds. At the end of the year £100 was handed over besides a previous gift of £35. £10 was given by the WA to buy paint to decorate the building.

Outside help was given to an Old People's Home towards A TV set. Future events, a stall at a Fete run by the Round Table and a Sale of Work. Following the reports Mr. Steele and Mr. Wilkins conducted the Ladies around the New Building, which was a memorable occasion, having heard so much about it and its development, everybody was grateful for the opportunity. We all hope it will be a great asset to the Plymouth YMCA.

The Ladies were afterwards entertained to tea by the Plymouth Women's Auxiliary.

1958 AGM at Plymouth

The Officers elected :-

President Lady Astor Chairman Mrs. H. Winnicott Hon. Secretary Mrs. Dewdney
Hon. Treasurer Mrs. V. Winnicott.

Meeting 1959 at Paignton

Miss Payne on behalf of the Paignton Women's Auxiliary presented Mrs. H. Winnicott with a cheque, the money to be spent on the Chapel in the New Building of the Plymouth YMCA. Another cheque was given to Mrs. Morrow for the Chapel in the Torquay YMCA, which had recently been redecorated. The gifts were most gratefully received and thanks were expressed for the kind generous gesture of the Paignton Ladies by Mrs Winnicott.

1961 AGM at Plymouth

Officers elected :-

Due to Mr. Dewdney retiring as Gen. Sec. of Exmouth Y.M.C.A., Mrs Dewdney handed over being the Hon. Sec. to Mrs Searle of Exmouth Women's Auxiliary.

Mrs H. Winnicott wished to give up the Chairmanship so Mrs V. Winnicott agreed to take it over as Hon. Treasurer as an additional responsibility.

Both ladies were thanked for the service they had given over the years

President Lady Astor Chairman and Hon. Treasurer Mrs. V. Winnicott

Hon. Secretary Mrs.Searle.

Meeting 29 April 1965 at Torquay.

Present 25 Ladies. The Treasurer reported £10 in hand

Mrs. Vince was elected to attend the Y.M.C.A. Conference at Nottingham

Meeting 1965 AGM at Plymouth

Present 22 Ladies

Election of Officers (New President)

President Lady Roborough Chairman and Hon. Treasurer Mrs V. Winnicott

Hon. Secretary Mrs. Searle.



Above is a picture of Mrs Gilbert of Compton Castle and Vice President of the South West Division of the YMCA Women's Auxiliary making a purchase from a stall at the Bazaar in Cobourg Street, Plymouth

Meeting 1968 at Exeter

This was a Special Meeting to meet and get to know the Ladies of the Auxiliaries from the Western Division.

Present - over 74 Ladies

The Delegates were Elected for the London meeting

The £3guineas Affiliation Fee was being sent

Visiting Auxiliaries were from Bath, Bristol, Bridgewater, Kingswood, Taunton, and Weston -Super- Mare.

Reports were received from both Divisions, which demonstrated the usual dedication and hard work from the Ladies to raise Funds for their YMCA's. Even the small number of Ladies in some Associations still achieved excellent results.

The Speaker was Mr. Morley Manaton YMCA Div. Sec. who said this would be his last Auxiliary Meeting (due to retirement) and what a wonderful climax it was the two Divisions meeting and with so many Ladies present.

Thanks were expressed by the Ladies, who said what a tower of strength Mr. Manaton had been to them all. A presentation was made to Mr and Mrs Manaton from the two Divisions, with best wishes for a long and happy retirement, with good health.

Special thanks were given to the Exeter Ladies, who had done so much to make the meeting such a success, including providing such an excellent tea.

1968 :- South West Division WA.

Members who attended meetings during the year

Exeter Mesdames Coldridge, Gorman, Birch, Pope, Black, Barratt, and Wright

Exmouth Mesdames Vince, Searle, McMullen and Miss Osler

Torquay Mesdames Mansfield, Coker, Crocker, Sindon and Miss's D and I. Hamilton

Paignton Mesdames Munn, Webber, Lumly, Harris, Hill, Bulley, Simpson, Crabb, Beer, Soudy and Simmons

Plymouth Lake, Carter, Reburn, Rendall, Robinson, Low, Parkhouse, Braddon, Kimmins and Winnicott.

14 Nov. 1968 A.G.M. Plymouth

Present 20 Ladies.

The Chairman introduced Mr. K. Williams , the new YMCA Divisional Secretary.

Also the sad loss of the Paignton WA Chairman, Miss. Payne was recorded.

Election of Officers (No Change).

13 Nov. 1969 A.G.M at Plymouth.

Present 22 Ladies

Election of Officers (No Change)

The Chairman welcomed the President Lady Roborough.

The Ladies stood in silence in Memory of Mr. Morley Manaton, past Div. Sec and

Mrs. H. Winnicott, former Chairman of S.W. Division of Woman's Auxiliaries

Lady Roborough presented a number of Long Service Medals for 10, 20, 30 and 40 years

Special mention was made of the Chairman, Mrs. V. Winnicott's service of 50 years, at

present there is no medal for that many years. Certificates were presented to four Ladies who had received medals previously.

The Speaker was Mr. Williams, Regional Secretary, who talked about YMCA work in the SW Division.



Plymouth WA enjoy a trip to Bickington Gardens, Exmouth, Devon early 1970s – picture includes Mesdames Hocking, Sandercock, Robinson, Banham, Parkhouse, Symonds, Kirber, Kimmins, Rendall, Watson, Willcox and Miss Kallaway.

Meeting 22 April 1971 Exmouth.

Present 13 Ladies.

A Special Meeting of National YMCA Women's Auxiliaries Honorary Secretaries held in London suggested the following points:-

- Long Service Medals should be awarded for 19, 20, 30 and 40 years personal and continuous service.
- National WA Annual General Meetings should be held annually preferably in the Spring, in the presence of the President whenever possible. London still being the first choice of venue.
- Meetings of Honorary Secretaries should be repeated from time to time.
- No further Annual Subscriptions need be paid to Headquarters.
- More publicity was needed to encourage younger women to join their local Auxiliaries.
- It was felt that each properly Constituted Auxiliary should be allowed to have

National Women's Auxiliary Member elected to the Local YMCA Men's Committee.

It was agreed that we should still pay our local Auxiliary Affiliation Fee of £1 to help Delegates who went to London or elsewhere.

A Conference was being held in Manchester 9th to 13th Sept. 1971 to discuss the Report of the YMCA. National Commission. Mrs Vince to attend as a Delegate.

1973 AGM Plymouth

Present 18 Ladies Mr. Willcox Gen. Sec. Mr. Williams Regional Secretary. Everybody was sorry to hear that the Chairman Mrs V Winnicott had to resign for health reasons. Mrs Reburn took the meeting. Mrs Searle took over being Hon. Treasurer.

Officers elected :-

President Lady Roborough, Chairman Mrs. Reburn, Hon Sec. and Treas. Mrs Searle
Mr. Williams suggested Mrs. V. Winnicott (retiring Chairman) be made a Vice President and a book of poems sent to her.

Meeting 1974 at Paignton

Present 18 Ladies and Mr. Williams. YMCA Regional Secretary. Mr. Williams thanked the Ladies for all their financial help without which the Y.M.C.A. could not carry on. Over £1000 had been raised by the S.W. Division of Women's Auxiliaries for the YMCA Overseas Work.

7 Nov 1974 AG.M Plymouth.

Present 17 Ladies Mr. Willcox, Gen. Sec. Plymouth YMCA.

Officers elected :- (No Change)

The Ladies stood in silence in Memory of Miss Simpson, who was Paignton's Women's Auxiliary Hon. Secretary for a number of years. £8 was being sent to the Joan Marsham Memorial fund in London.

6 Nov 1975 AGM Plymouth.

Present 16 Ladies. Mr and Mrs Willcox, Mr. Dyer Regional Secretary.

Election of Officers The only change was Mrs. Gilbert, who through other commitments was finding it difficult to attend the meetings and felt in fairness she should give up being Vice President. Following thanks it was agreed to make Mrs. Williams a Vice President.

On 5 May. 1976

Preceding the Meeting the Auxiliaries S.W. Division met up for a get together, over coffee with the Auxiliaries W. Division at Bridgewater YMCA.

There was a talk and Demonstration on Basket Making.

4 Nov 1976 AGM Plymouth.

Present 18 Ladies. Mr Willcox Gen. Sec. and Mrs. Willcox,

Election of Officers (No Change)

The Auxiliary had disbanded at Exmouth. With Mrs. Searle from Exmouth being the Secretary/Treasurer of the Auxiliaries, which now presented problems, it was suggested that Plymouth or Paignton co-opt the Exmouth Ladies. This was agreed.

In 1976 the Plymouth WA visited Taunton and met up with the Western Division WA. Being few in numbers, it has been suggested one group be formed, to be called West Region of Women's Auxiliaries.

From the last available minutes it is clear there were difficulties for the ladies in trying to carry on, the numbers of members of the Women's Auxiliaries had depleted. This was due to changing times, not recruiting younger members with the nucleus of stalwarts getting older, with the associated problems and some Associations closing down. By the mid to late 1980's the meetings had ceased, sadly no official body took its place, although without doubt there are ladies still making a contribution as and when needed.

The Associations in the South West Division are indebted to the large number of lady voluntary workers, fully dedicated and committed to the Aims and Purposes of the YMCA who over the years gave countless hours raising funds.

I am extremely grateful for the history and documentation of the Devonport and Plymouth Women's Auxiliary as well as the South West Region of Women's Auxiliaries which was produced by Mike Reburn, Board Member of Plymouth YMCA and Trustee to the South West YMCA Trust Fund.

David H Smith

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