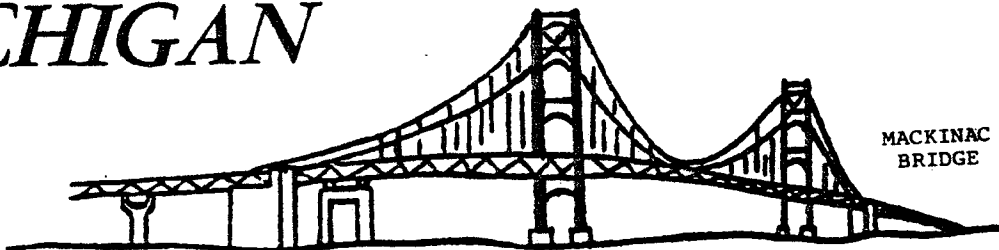


MICHIGAN



ASSOCIATION OF EXTENSION HOME ECONOMISTS

December 11, 1984

Cleo Stiles Bryan, Historian
National Association of Extension
Home Economists
Box 749
Tahlequah, OK 74464

Dear Cleo:

Here is a copy of Michigan Association of Extension Home Economists history through 1975. It was surprising to learn we began in 1928.

The 50th Anniversary of NAEHE also encouraged us to have some of our records placed in the University archives.

Sincerely,

Judy Marks

Judy Marks
50th Anniversary Chair

/w

enc.

cc: Marilyn Rudzinski,
President MAEHE

... *Great Lake State* ...

Michigan Association of Extension Home Economists

From what we can collect from our past, Michigan had 20 full time Home Demonstration Agents as members of a National Professional Association in 1936. We are assuming it was NAHDA.

In another record we found that Michigan members participated in forming a National HDA club as a sub-group of the National Home Economics Association.

A History of
The Michigan Association of Extension
Home Economists
1928 to 1975

by

Ruth B. Beale

and

Jeanne M. Converse

retired, Extension Home Economists

1982

FORWARD

This is my first attempt at writing history. I have a new appreciation for historians. First there are the painful choices of what to include and what to leave out. And then when one gets all finished, a whole flood of information comes to mind that might have been included.

The reader may notice that, within the narrative itself, there is no attempt to list officers, award winners, list of projects and programs, etc. To begin with, we didn't have a complete accounting; and the narrative would get lost in statistical data if one attempted to include it all. This is an attempt to write a readable story. Some of the statistical data may be found in the appendix, as are supportive documents. Einer Ostrom has been working on the history of the overall Extension Service. He has, of this writing, compiled a complete listing of who worked where and when.

Ruth Beale and I, as new retirees in 1979, sorted boxes of minutes, correspondences and souvenirs of the professional association. Ruth did most of the compiling and notes. I have written the story, embellishing the recorded facts with supporting information from my own research and some from memory alone.

I discover that I am in a unique position to draw rather reliably from memory. I was 12 years old in 1928, the same year that the early Home Demonstration Agents met to organize a professional club. My mother was a high school teacher and a 4-H leader in our small town. I married the son of one of the first 4-H leaders in Michigan. John Converse and I met in the county 4-H orchestra and attended Michigan State College, earning degrees in Animal Husbandry and Vocational Home Economics. John was a 4-H agent when we married. Later, when we

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moved to the family farm, we became part of the extension audience. I taught Family Life Education in our local high school in the late 50's and early 60's while earning my Master's degree in the same discipline. I became an Extension Home Economist in 1966. From my vantage point, and Ruth's notes, I respectfully submit this bit of history.

*Jeanne M. Converse
Retired Extension Home Economist*

In 1928, a few "Home Demonstration Agents" as they were then called, met at the Hunt's food shop in East Lansing to form a club. There is no record of the number who met that day, only that they assessed themselves \$.50 each to buy "gifts" of appreciation for the specialists. In those days, the specialists created the lessons appropriate to the recognized needs of the day. The Home Demonstration Agents traveled to the college to learn the lesson and then re-taught it to the housewives in their home counties. In this way the specialists efforts were efficiently multiplied.*

The next 50 years were to see the Home Demonstration Agent Club evolve into a complicated professional association to be known as the MAEHE, Michigan Association of Extension Home Economists, an affiliate of the National Association of Extension Home Economists, NAEHE. It would also be a cooperating member of the Michigan Council of Extension Associations, MCEA.

The concerns of the association are expressed in the minutes, the correspondence, and in the various supportive documents of the association.

Extensions history is a reflection of the history of society itself. Extensions purpose has always been to anticipate or react to change and to research and report that which will be helpful to citizens in coping with the existing problem or situation.

* Before HDA'S were employed, specialists had been traveling outstate to identified groups of rural women. Many of these women were 4-H leaders in need of subject matter (food preservation, nutrition, clothing construction). Sometimes a group of women attended a short-course on such subjects as child development. Sometimes group leaders (volunteers) attended classes taught on campus at the land grant college and re-taught the lessons to neighbors back home. Some of these rural groups elected officers and a study group was formed. Thus the extension study group is as old as the early days of extension.

The Extension Service responded to the needs of rural families in depression years in a number of helpful ways. Mattress making helped use surplus cotton and at the same time helped the rural family furnish their home. Furniture refinishing and upholstering at home, as well as clothing construction and food preservation, helped raise the standard of living for rural America.*

* The Extension Service grew out of the technology of World War I. Cotton bote weevil control, pressure canning, corn production technology, etc. The rural family also had need to "catch up" socially and culturally with it's city cousins. In the next 50 years we were to see a technological explosion in agriculture, road building, automotive design, radio, movies, T.V., refrigeration, central heating and air conditioning, steel construction, plastics, space travel and computers.

We saw the great depression, World War II, the Korean Conflict, Vietnam, the Cold War and the beginning of fuel shortages, too much waste, pollution, and shortages of both food and water.

The world became our community. The melting pot continued.

We were challenged with values imported with our immigrants.

Families and individuals experienced the stresses that accompany change.

Michigan Agricultural College became Michigan State College and then Michigan State University, a world institution. Dr. John Hannah, an Extension Poultry Specialist became president of MSU and guided it thru years of rapid growth. In retirement he worked with the United Nations as head of AID (Agency for International Development) and later with FAO.

By 1936, 20 full-time Home Demonstration Agents were members of a full functioning professional club. They had dropped the gift to specialists as their reason for existence. Michigan members participated in forming a national HDA club as a sub group of the national Home Economics Association. Dues were \$3.00 in 1932 and reduced to \$2.00 in 1937.

Problems beset the club. So many H.D.A.'s were getting married that it was moved and supported that a staff member should have worked at least a year to warrant a wedding present from the club.

Low sugar recipes were developed during sugar rationing of WW II. No records were saved in 1942. In 1943 the state president resigned to join the armed forces.*

In 1943, there were 30 H.D.A.'s in Michigan. At their annual meeting they voted to contact the Agricultural Agents Association and request some kind of joint meeting.

* World War II and the years that followed brought other changes to affect our society. Nylon and T.V. entered the consumer market. Good roads, cheap fuel, and the automobile turned rural America into a suburban society. Women who had worked in defense plants would never see themselves as mere housewives again. School consolidation came rapidly and the "hick" from the farm would be picked up by the school bus and receive an education equal to any.

Extension study groups flourished. Many new members came from the suburbs and small cities. Women were anxious to improve the appearance of their homes. They were tired of rationing. They wanted new clothes, recreation and social life. They added "crafts" to their study group curriculum. New members joined to get in on the wonders. (Basket weaving, aluminum etching, copperpainting and accessories for the costume and for the home.) The Extension Service responded. Success could be measured in numbers of enthusiastic members.

1944 seems to mark the end of an era and the beginning of another. State Home Economics Leader, Edna V. Smith, retired. She had served a good many years to establish a strong H.D.A. force in Michigan.

That year the national H.D.A.'s separated from the American Home Economics Association. They held their own national meeting in Chicago at the same time as the National 4-H Congress. The Michigan president attended as a delegate.

Now change came rapidly.

The 31 H.D.A.'s on staff invited the Home Economists who had been hired as emergency war food assistants, to be guest members until such time as they became permanent employees of the Extension Service.

A three-member legislative committee was appointed. Five association meetings were held that year. The H.D.A.'s were urged to join the Michigan Home Economics Association. The national association of H.D.A.'s ask that a creed be written by each state. (See Appendix)

The minutes record the need for helping rural and urban women understand each other.

Staff benefits appeared on the agenda in 1946. A health insurance was now available. A committee was appointed to study the possibility of other benefits. (Insurance, ratings, salary adjustments, discounts.)

A salary committee was appointed at the 1947 annual meeting. Herb Berg, Assistant Director was invited to discuss the salary schedule. Women 4-H Agents were invited to join the Association. Representatives from the Ag. Agents and from the 4-H Agents Associations were invited to attend HDA Association meetings. The first executive committee was established, made up of officers and one elected counselor from each extension district.

In 1948 there were 48 HDA on staff. There is another mention of a possible combined extension association.

As the 1940's merge into the 50's the first handbook for HDA's is issued. The handbook suggests that the HDA might find it desirable to develop her own lesson on occasion as local needs dictate.

Ten of the HDA's are reported to be enrolled in the MSU retirement plan, as contrasted with 50% of the Ag. Agents. All are encouraged to enroll.

From our 1981 perspective we see the 50's as a time of professional change for the Home Economist. The 1956 minutes report 67 Home Economists on staff. (Note the creeping name change.) Salaries range from \$4200 to \$7800. Dues in the state association were now \$12 per year, and later raised to \$15.

The handbook was revised (see appendix). A big sister program was implemented. It was suggested that a master's degree was a desirable attainment for a Home Economist in Extension.

A name change was suggested and in 1959 the official title became "Michigan Home Economics Extension Agents' Association". The agent was to be officially the "Home Economics Extension Agent".

As in all change experience, the profession was not without it's problems. Staff benefits personnel reported that of all those agents not enrolled in retirement and insurance programs, the Home Economists made up the larger percent. (It could be assumed that many were using their husband's - or future husband's - benefits for their family financial planning.)

The executive board met with specialists to seek ways to improve lessons for new homemaker audiences.

The executive board met with County Extension Supervisors to discuss problems of policy.

Concerns channeled thru the association were:

1. Who hires and fires Home Economists?
2. Why do state supervisors meet with county supervisors behind closed doors?
3. Will an Institute for personnel be created?
4. Why so many Ag. Specialists and so few Home Economics Specialists?
5. The Extension Director was asked for more personal - professional guidance and evaluation from the state supervisor.
6. There was a need for new and better bulletins.
7. HDA's wanted training in human development and family relations.
8. How much time should the Home Economist spend with study groups?

Suggestions given to home economists indicate that the national leaders were addressing the problem, "What education is needed in homemaking and who should the audience be?" A national institute for research for the home was considered at the 1957 session of congress.*

* During the 1950's Truman and Eisenhower were the Presidents. The Korean Conflict, the Cold War and the United Nations dominated our conscious. Student exchange programs were supported. Agriculture was asked to help feed the post-war world. It responded with a production unparalleled in history. Farm organizations (such as Farm Bureau) became a power group to be respected by both the legislators and the Extension Service. 4-H audience organized into a power politic. Extension Homemakers in Michigan (the study group organized) had it's own influence upon the legislative body charged with state budget. In some cases, it was a negative effect as women emphasized their love for the "craft" lesson. The other homemaking education was there (nutrition, consumer education, family finance) and ignored by some. To this writing in 1982, there are women who equate the extension study group with the craft lesson.

Footnote continued:

A national movement (destined to become controversial) appeared in a sincere effort to aid the modern stresses felt by the family. SEICUS founded by Dr. Mary Calderone, sought to establish guidance for wholesome sex education. Related subject matter sprang up in all areas of human development.

A national publication known as FOCUS was to help define subject matter in Home Economics. It was used for in-service training and program planning for both teachers and Extension workers.

A state specialist in "Home Industries" was charged with the task of bringing the craft interest to a higher level of refinement. Silk screening was to be the first lesson and could be used as a means of supplementing income if the learner should so desire.

It was suggested that Home Economists develop lessons for the low income audience.

Consumer education was encouraged because, it was pointed out, "today's homemaker is more of a consumer than she is a producer in contrast with her pioneer sisters of yesteryears."

A State Program of Work was published in 1958 as a guideline to the Home Economics Extension Agent.

That same year, the first of the Marketing Agents in Extension was appointed. The task was to serve both producer and consumer in marketing Michigan's rich supply of food. (Fruits and vegetables, dry beans, red meat, fish and poultry and the cereal grains) As the 50's pass into the 60's, a training center in the northern lower peninsula was conceived, built and paid for.

Camp Kett named after Arne G. Kettunen, State 4-H Program Director from 1925 to 1956, was to be used for both staff and lay leader training. Camp Kett is now known as Kettunen Center.

The MAEHE supported the effort and recorded the progress in the minutes of its meetings.

In 1959, N.P. "Pat" Ralston was named Director of the Extension Service in Michigan. Miriam Kelley was appointed leader of the Home Economists in the Extension Service of Michigan.

There are quite a number of references about the directives issued by Ralston and Kelley. Director Ralston explained that the salaries of the Home Economists were lower than other extension personnel because they posed a higher risk to the employer -- they get married and leave after a short time. Leader Kelley explained that the power structure of women is not yet state-wide. (Did she mean that the Home Economist might do something about it?)

Home Economists were informed that crossing county lines would no longer be discouraged. The Home Economists were asked to prepare a joint exhibit for annual conference.

Reports would be given to State Legislators.*

* John F. Kennedy served as President of the USA from January, 1961 until he was assassinated in November, 1963. The space age, the civil rights movement and involvement in Vietnam marked his short time in office. His successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, launched the war on poverty and the Vietnam thing turned into a bad news war.

It is interesting to note that no mention is made in Association minutes of the crisis that occurred in the Michigan Home Economics Extension program in the mid 60's. It seemed to certain legislators that the Home Economists were spending a disproportionate amount of time on "crafts". The question was asked, "Why are such high salaries being used for this purpose?" The extension study groups innocently helped to support this image. They loved the craft lessons. It was the housewife's relief from other cares of the day. The extension service valiantly continued to give the best of research in nutrition, civil defense, child development, consumer education, and so on, but many of the groups failed to report the result of that effort. Sophisticated measuring was not yet a working tool. The legislature drastically cut extension funding accompanied with an ultimatum. Change or go without!

The early 60's saw other changes. A group liability insurance was established. A travel leave policy was stated. Out of state travel must be given advanced permission. Any six months, or more, leave of absence would mean losing the county where previously stationed.

The County Agricultural Agent (Co. Extension Administrator) was to be known, henceforth, as the County Extension Director. He was to be held responsible for all extension programs in his county.

A series of extension news releases would be available to staff.

Concerns voiced in association meetings:

1. Of what value is annual conference?
2. Staff experience date conflicts for lack of advanced notice.
3. There is an inequality in retirement benefits for the spouse of women staff members. Martha Griffin, State Representative will attempt to help.
4. Some staff feels a communications gap with state staff.

* When funding was cut in the mid 60's, the Administration was forced to promise, "no crafts". Lack of funds made it necessary to reduce numbers of Home Economics appointments. Some resigned. Directors Ralston and Kelley were casualties of the change. George McIntyre, former Director of Agriculture in Michigan, was appointed Director. Loa Whitfield, retired State Leader in Extension in Ohio, was asked to set the new direction for the Home Economics program. These new administrators established an area program for Family Living Education. Each Home Economist was given an area assignment. (Two or more counties.) Some staff shared assignment for more than two counties. The new title given to staff was Extension Home Economist. In-service training in program planning, based upon empirical data was held. Staff were taught, in some depth, how to evaluate results of a program. Fred Peabody, new Personnel Director, authored a self-evaluation devise to be used for staff performance. Salary adjustments would be affected by these judgements.

Association minutes in the late 60's refer to messages from the new directors. Director McIntyre hoped that the southern counties would soon have one Home Economist per county again, although the area program and specialization would still be encouraged.

McIntyre also stated that, "you not neglect your city audience, at the same time you continue to emphasize that extension will always have a rural orientation."

Loa Whitfield died of cancer in 1958. Her last directive was a letter to Home Economists. "Always be proud of who you are and what you do. The family is the backbone of society and your job is to make more resources available to the family so it can do it's job."

Lois Humphrey was appointed Family Living Director in 1969.

Her message; Seek to reach five identified audiences, (1) Young families, (2) Families in poverty, (3) 4-H leaders, (4) Leaders of all womens organizations including the study group, (5) The elderly.

A Young Homemaker Magazine was printed and circulated in the early 70's. A T.V. series for young families was aired.

In the late 60's, the U.S.D.A. earmarked funds to establish an Expanded Nutrition Program for poverty families. Michigan set up the program in counties where there seemed to be the greatest need. The Home Economists in those counties became administrators of the program. They hired, educated and supervised aides to carry out the work.

Lois Humphrey encouraged Home Economists to reach out to all family leaders in the community for program planning. She smoothed the path by planning with officers and leaders at the state level. She supported Wilma Miller's effort to plan College Week for Women with leaders of women's groups in Michigan.

Lois, Wilma and George McIntyre instigated the legislative dinner at College Week with great success.

The Association minutes of the late sixties indicates continued professional growth. Dues were now \$18. All members were urged to read the *Journal of Extension*, a national publication. A public relations handout was published and distributed. Various exhibits were constructed for members to borrow. A new staff benefit was offered to replace the old MSU retirement system. TIAA (Teacher Insurance and Annuity) in conjunction with CREF (College Retirement and Equities Fund) offered both an annuity and a major medical insurance. The University provided a 5% matching fund - tax deferred.

MAEHE helped to sponsor a Conference on Civil Rights.

The long sought joint association became a reality. In 1970, the MCEA (Michigan Council of Extension Associations) elected it's first officers. The first order of business was to honor retiring MSU President, John A. Hannah. A John A. Hannah Award was established. The recipient to receive recognition for innovative programming. Their name will be engraved on a plaque in the Directors office and a small cash amount (the interest from the money collected) given to the recipient.

Administrative retreat for the MCEA and the supervisory staff was begun an annual affair. It was an attempt to bridge the gap that had been felt from time to time.

Extension Agents were asked to vote whether to unionize with MSU faculty. The vote was a resounding NO. As someone explained, "we prefer to sit on the same side of the table with our employers."

In 1970, seventy-one MAEHE members were 100% members in the National Association. Members are urged to attend national meetings and to get involved in

Several Extension Home Economists participated in an inservice training experience known as "Quest for Quality", a three year study-travel program for any Extension personnel.

some responsibility. Members who did attend national meetings reported how proud they were of Michigan's Programming.

A grievance committee was appointed by the association president in the early 70's. Grievances could be channeled thru, and summarized by, the committee and thus remain anonymous.

The minutes of one business meeting at the time of College Week tell of Director Humphrey attending to discuss the list of grievances reported to her by the committee. Most of the questions had to do with the new evaluation procedure. Other concerns raised were that annual conference is still too much Ag. oriented. There is also continued need for solid resource materials from the specialists to help us with our new audiences.

An interest indicator was used by the nominating committee in the search for officers and committee members.

The Association Officers published their own handbook for officers and committees. MAEHE stationary was printed featuring a sketch of the Mackinac Bridge. The president proudly used it to make a summary report to the national association.

A rank and tenure committee was established. Representatives to joint association committees were appointed. A rookie award was established for those who had worked less than five years. (So many new and innovative programs were being started by new staff.)

Jeanette Shadko was named citizen of the year by Benzie County. She was later appointed to serve as County Extension Director, the first woman in Michigan to hold that position. Alfreda McGuire was the first woman in extension to be honored as Faculty of the Year by MSU. She was honored for her successful handling of the Expanded Nutrition Program in Kent County.

A number of communications from the administration were recorded by the association secretary.

The administration adjusted salaries for women in an attempt to equalize salaries with those of the men.

Instructions were given on carrying out the federal laws on Affirmative Action and Civil Rights.

A "continued employment and dismissal policy" was instituted, including an appeals procedure.

Administration encouraged EHE's to get involved in their own job description.

Rural Development was recognized as a new national concern.

Lois Humphrey encouraged EHE's to learn to write proposals to obtain some of the federal monies becoming available in the war on poverty.

The impending fuel shortages were predicted. In-service training helped all extension personnel prepare to teach people how they might cope.

Because of an already jump in the cost of fuel, extension looked for ways to improve on delivery systems. Some of those suggested: Radio, tv, newsreleases, columns, newsletters, events where more than one presentation could be delivered on the same day, exhibits at shopping malls, fairs, public gatherings. Conference calls were tried in place of the committee meeting sometimes.

Lois Humphrey was an advocate of the women's liberation movement, and like many agents, she appeared to be pushing a bit too hard for the cause on occasion. When Director McIntyre retired and Gordon Guyer was appointed the next Extension Director, Gordon reorganized the administrative team. Upon the advise of certain others, Gordon removed Ms. Humphrey from the position of Family Living Director. He had need for the talents of a different kind of leader to implement his envisioned goals. Lois sued the University. After many months of deliberation, the Federal Judge ruled in favor of the University.

George Stachwick, from the marketing programs, served as acting director of the F.L.E. program. As this historian completes her self-assigned task of taking us thru 1975 Doris Wetters had not yet received her appointment.

As this period of history (1975) makes way for the next, we find a strong emphasis on the team in the county. Regular staff meetings were encouraged and staff was rewarded for indications of a supportive attitude.

Teams of any kind were rewarded for successful effort.

The Family Living Audience continued to expand. The young democratic family and the growing number of single fathers helped all to recognize that men can be homemakers and nurturing parents.

Marriage Enrichment processes and other workshops in family communications enriched the curriculum.

It is hard for the historian to find a stopping place. I recently attended the retirement party of Arvella Curtis (and Frank Madaski).

I would hope that the next historian would record how Arvella solved the very real dilemma of the study group. Study group leaders were present at her party to join the administration in saluting Arvella for her success in making partners of the study group leadership.

The author is proud to be even remotely associated with the most capable, flexible and far seeing group of citizens on this earth.

It will be fun to see what future extension agents do with pollution, waste, and shortages of food, water and yes, even money.

In 1984 Lois Lund was new in the job as Dean of Human Ecology. She traveled to designated centers to execute "Interaction 75". Extension Home Economists brought recognized community leaders (men and women) to an all-day exchange of information and ideas concerning Extension's Family Programs.