

On May 10, 1924, thanks to the determined women and president of Dickinson College, the charter meeting of the Carlisle Branch of AAUW was held in Old West. Today we celebrate our 95th Anniversary.

As part of this celebration, a project was launched to compile oral histories from members who have influenced the branch and created the solid foundation for our current success.

These members continue to be active, giving their time, energy, wit and wisdom. Our wish was to collect their stories and impressions so that we do not lose their insights, and so we can learn and prosper from their experiences. Indeed, we are able to celebrate this milestone because of the dedication and insight of those who came before us.

Today, AAUW Carlisle is a recognized community organization with a growing membership of women attracted to the AAUW mission and making a difference in Carlisle. This success rests on the numerous decisions made by our past leaders and the dedication of the members who provided these oral histories.

I hope you enjoy their recollections and gain a deeper appreciation for the wonderful branch to which you belong.

Ann Pehle
AAUW Carlisle President
May 2019

Maria Bartoli, B.S., M.S.

I was born in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. It was a small town, pleasant, where Masland was the biggest employer. I had friends all over town, and met most of my friends through school. My father was an Italian immigrant, and during World War II, government agents would check on his activities. That was the nature of tolerance in the country at that time.

I graduated from Carlisle High School, and attended Dickinson College where I majored in Biology. I earned a master's degree in Education Science from Shippensburg University. There weren't as many women attending college when I went to school as there are today, and many of them did not major in scientific fields.

My first job was as a bacteriologist at Carlisle Hospital, and I taught Biological Science in both middle school and high school in the South Middleton School District for 28 years. While I don't think I did anything controversial for women, I did stand up for myself and for other women when we were told we couldn't do something just because we were women.

I first joined AAUW in 1980. I was about fifty years old at the time. I became involved in a financial investing group that was later disbanded because AAUW National and State did not feel women should be making money through membership in the organization. I did hold the office of Carlisle Branch Treasurer for a few years. I attended the monthly meetings because I enjoyed the speakers and topics.

The AAUW program that is most important to me is Pay Equity. When I first worked for Montgomery Ward, I was paid 50 cents an hour, but men were paid 75 cents an hour. The inequity has not changed, even though there are more women in all professions than when I started working.

During my membership in AAUW, it has gone from a social organization to becoming an organization that advocates more vocally for a variety of social issues. I, personally, would like to see AAUW bring racial and equality issues to the foreground. I also feel that AAUW should have programs to educate women on how to make financial decisions

Mary Brandt, B.S., M.Ed.

I had a wonderful childhood growing up in Mifflin Township outside of Newville, Pennsylvania. I was raised by my grandmother, and had two aunts who took me everywhere in their cars, sharing their experiences with me. We went to the movies, played games, and read books.

I started elementary school at the age of five. My grandmother had already taught me to read, and I spent many hours reading. I still love reading above all activities. I have a young friend who is in 3rd grade. We go to the Whistlestop Bookshop once a month to pick out a book for her to read. It is a delightful experience for me to encourage the reading habit in this little girl. We have wonderful times together!

I graduated from Newville High School (now Big Springs High School), and was lucky enough to go to Penn State where I earned a B.S. degree in Education.

After I married, my husband and I moved to Pittsburgh, where I taught elementary school for two years and studied for a master's degree. When we returned to Carlisle, I joined the staff at Moreland School as a first grade teacher.

I first joined Carlisle AAUW in the early 1950s as an elementary school teacher in my early 20s. Friends had encouraged me to join, and I loved the meetings! I met many wonderful older women who impressed me and had a great influence on my life. I was inspired to pursue a second M.S. Reading Specialist degree from Millersburg University, which led to permanent positions at Hamilton, North Dickinson, and Bellaire Elementary Schools. I returned to an active role in the branch in 1959 when my husband and I returned to Carlisle. One of the grand experiences was presiding at the tea table at the reception for branch women at Dickinson College at the college President's residence. The tea set was beautiful, and the residence was lovely. I served a term as president of the branch from 1962 -- 1964.

However, when I had two young children and a substitute teaching schedule, I dropped my membership in AAUW, only to return in 1996, serving first as co-membership vice president, and then co-program vice-president. I was also active in Bridge Flight and the Book Group. In 2005, I was honored as the branch's Outstanding Woman.

AAUW Carlisle has changed some since I first joined. It is much more political. For the most part, I'm happy that it is involved in advocating for women's issues. And I am very impressed with the young women who are recipients of our scholarships. They are so smart and dedicated and know exactly what they want to accomplish in life. I think it is wonderful that we are an organization that can help them with their education so they can reach their goals.

Kathleen Brennan, B.S., M.S.

I was born and raised in Jacksonville, Illinois in 1942. Jacksonville was a lot like Carlisle, a small town of 20,000. Its main industry was agriculture. My family was solidly middle class, and I attended the Catholic school in the area.

I'm sure someone must have mentioned AAUW when I was in college and urged me to join. In 1969, I was married with children, living in New Jersey, when I first joined AAUW. In 1978 we moved to Carlisle, and I sought out an AAUW branch. It gave me the opportunity to meet with and enjoy the company of educated women.

I started teaching in 1970, and continued my career teaching math in junior high school, high school, and as an adjunct professor at HACC, Dickinson College, and American University.

I graduated with a B.S. from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana; I later attended Monmouth University and American University, and received my M.S. degree in mathematics and computer science. I enjoyed teaching and mentoring young women in what is now known as STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. It is ironic that as a young woman I was advised not to get a chemistry degree because women would not be hired in that field!

During my years as an AAUW member, I participated by supporting many of the Carlisle branch projects, including arranging the May 2018 branch program featuring the STEM Girl Scout mobile van and speaker-coordinators. I have held the offices of branch President, Membership Chair, Finance co-Chair, and Program Committee co-Chair. Especially important to me is the branch effort to raise scholarship funding for young women seeking higher education credentials.

When I first came to Carlisle, the Board of Education had no women members--it really was an "old boy" network. In the 1990's, the children's reading program was observed by Governor Casey's wife; for the reception following the program, the female teachers brought and served the refreshments, but all the attendees were male. Still, I have seen a gradual lifting of the glass ceiling for women, many of whom are now employed in STEM jobs and are serving on school boards and corporate boards.

The Carlisle branch itself has become more political, urging members to be activists and advocating for a change in laws that affect women and girls. I've also observed that there is a greater diversity of employment among the branch members. Where once the majority were teachers, we now have business women, financial planners, and entrepreneurs among the membership.

Beth Bullard, B.A., M.A., Ph.D., Ph. D.

I was born in Chicago in 1939 and spent my early childhood in a western suburb of the city. It was a Polish and Eastern European neighborhood, with African Americans coming up from the south. Even though I left the Chicago area before I was nine years of age, the cultural richness of this diverse neighborhood stayed with me all my life. I am a mid-westerner at heart, and my early experiences have had a significant influence on my studies, education, and career.

I have always been academically inclined. My father was on faculty at the Chicago Theological Seminary, and my mother typed dissertations. My early vision of my mother was of her pecking away at the typewriter. I received a bachelor's degree in Music from Oberlin College in 1960, followed by a master's degree in Music History from Harvard in 1963. It took me a long time to get my doctoral degrees: a Ph.D. in the History and Iconography of Musical Instruments from the University of Pennsylvania in 1987 and a Ph. D. in Ethnomusicology from the University of Maryland in 1998.

As a young student, and later as a degreed professional, I always worked around the edges of academia. I was a library assistant, taught flute, and had several part time and adjunct positions teaching music at various colleges including Dickinson College in Carlisle. I finally got a full time position at the age of sixty-one at George Mason University as Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Music Studies. I retired in 2008.

I joined AAUW in 1981. I saw AAUW as an organization that best supported women, particularly supporting education, and I became a Life Member. One of the most important and emotionally satisfying experiences I have had with the organization was as a panel member reviewing applications for national and international fellowships. Reading the applications gave me a fascinating glimpse into the research these women had undertaken. I had benefited from a fellowship as I pursued my doctoral degree, and I felt that my participation on the fellowship selection panel was a way of giving back. Because of my patchwork of part time employment and my role as mother, I did not participate at the branch level of the organization. Following a trip to India studying Indian musical instruments and music, I gave a presentation on Indian Music at one of the Carlisle Branch meetings.

I have always concentrated on the role of gender and the importance of non-western or ethnocentric music throughout my career. I was often at odds with the more mainstream academic establishment. A notable example was when I taught a course on women's unique experience of music at Temple University. The Dean did not consider the things I was teaching, e.g., the role of women's body in music, as "music." I maintain that music is both gender-centric and ethnocentric at its core.

I find the current climate for women scary. Over my lifetime, I have witnessed young women's growing expectations of what they can accomplish, as well as their recognition of their value. My generation fought hard for our place in the world of education and work, and we were often hurt by prejudice. I see these gains being slowly eroded. There remain implicit prejudices that plague women, such as the tension between the roles of motherhood and paid professional. Women end up doing twice as much just to be considered equal. AAUW has been in the forefront of supporting the issues that underlie all that women have achieved.

Wendy Armour Dickinson, B.S.

I was born in 1959 in Meadville, PA, but grew up in Poland, Ohio, a suburb of Youngstown. It was the home of mostly professionals and company presidents, and not a diverse community. My family is from Pittsburgh, so working hard and getting a college degree was expected.

A graduate of Westminster College, I have a B.S. in mathematics. I have since taken additional courses at Wilson College and HACC. I had always wanted to be a math teacher.

I joined AAUW Harrisburg Branch in 1985 while I was still in my 20's. I was new to the area, and while I was a member of my sorority alumni group, I also wanted to meet other like-minded women. Through AAUW, I made many new acquaintances.

In the 1990's I served as Public Policy Chair. I have also served as President of the Harrisburg Branch and the Carlisle Branch of AAUW, and President of AAUW PA. I have been active in the organization, participating in book sales, advocacy efforts, press conferences, and talking with legislative representatives. I was the public pro-choice face of AAUW in the 1990's, interviewed by the press in print and on television. This policy has been very important to me, and I feel my efforts through AAUW have kept choice safe and legal in Pennsylvania. At this time I am Chair of Special Interest Groups for the Carlisle Branch.

I have been fully employed throughout my entire membership in the organization. Currently, I am an underwriter with Capital Blue Cross. For the previous seven years, I worked for a company that did retirement planning.

During my adult life, I have seen a gradual change in attitudes toward women. When I was going on my first job interview, my mother advised me not to wear my engagement ring because it could be a strike against me in getting a job offer. Women have made slow progress since then; there are now laws against asking personal questions on job applications. But young women today need to be vigilant; they don't seem to recognize that if they do not continue to advocate for women's rights, the gains made in recent years will be eroded.

During my membership, I've seen AAUW make many changes. It is less hierarchical. Members at all levels work more collaboratively, and are willing to learn new ways to do things, working with other community groups. The Carlisle branch used to be almost entirely social; there is still a good mix of social activities: Supper Club, Book Group, Bridge Flight, Breakfast Club, and small group activities such as Trivia Night at a restaurant, or an evening at a pub enjoying an Illusionist perform sleight of hand and magic tricks.

Dawn Flower-Webb, B.S., M.A., M.B.A.

I was born in 1960 in New Brighton, Pennsylvania, where my brother and I grew up. It was a small borough with a population of about 5000 in Beaver County near the Ohio border, about 30 miles from Pittsburgh. When I was growing up, it was a blue collar town with a pleasant main street, active service organizations, and a diverse population. The primary employers were steel mills and other industries. My parents owned and operated a print shop. My mother was also a community leader and a role model for me as a businesswoman.

I have a B.S. in Elementary Education with a certification in science and math from West Virginia University. I earned an M.A. in Personnel Administration and Industrial Relations from St. Francis University, and later, an M.A. from Penn State University-Harrisburg. My parents never went to college, but my mother stressed that I should go to college, graduate, and then obtain at least one advanced degree. She encouraged me to go into the sciences, and I am grateful for the drive and determination my mother demonstrated and instilled in me.

Between 1982 and 1987 I was employed by the Hemlock Girl Scout Council. I left that position to complete my master's degree. Following that, I worked in several businesses, including the sectors of senior care, personnel recruiting and record research.

I joined AAUW in 1990 when I was about thirty years old because I had many like-minded friends, including Becky Morgenthal and Marjorie Mowery, who were members at the time. I enjoyed my involvement in the AAUW Carlisle Branch, and held a branch committee chair position. For the 75th Anniversary celebration, I enjoyed getting oral histories from some of the older members. I also enjoyed doing presentation on the history of the branch. My most enjoyable experiences were with the gourmet group. When I first joined AAUW it was mostly a social organization. It later became more politically focused. Now I'm noticing another shift: AAUW seems to be balancing both its social and political functions.

I don't consider I've ever been involved in anything controversial. I've been "blessed to live in a time that has been supportive of my journey." My involvement with AAUW is part of my broad commitment to the Carlisle community. I was elected to Borough Council in 2012, and I believe that "getting more women elected at all levels of government makes an impact." After the 2017 municipal election, women held the majority of the seats on the Carlisle Council for the first time in the borough's history. I appreciate AAUW's commitment to developing and supporting women as elected leaders.

During my lifetime, I have witnessed greater equity for women in sports, the sciences, the military, and engineering. I see greater acceptance of women in executive level positions. Programs that encouraged women to go into science math and engineering were just starting when I was in high school. Advances in technology during the past few decades have provided new opportunities for women. Still, "defeating the old boy network" remains a challenge, and at times, women are not always supportive of each other.

Donald H. Mowery, B.S.C.E.

In 1951, I was born in Carlisle, and spent my growing up years there. Carlisle was a typical small town; conservative in nature, with a lot of families as long time residents.

I graduated from Carlisle high School, and attended Drexel University with a B.S. in Civil Engineering. I then earned an M.S. in engineering, and got my Professional Engineer certification.

I joined AAUW Carlisle when I was 55 years old. My wife, Marjie, was very involved with the organization at that time, and from what I had learned about the organization, it seemed like a good thing. One evening at an AAUW meeting at our home, Marjie and other AAUW members were discussing various ways to attract women to join as new members. I consider myself a conservative, but I also have progressive views on opportunities for women and girls, because I have a daughter and a granddaughter, and I believe they deserve to have equal chances for educational, employment and social success. So I spoke up and said that if they could sign up five new members, I'd join as a sixth. They did, and I joined! At present, I am the only male member of the Carlisle Branch.

I served as Financial Officer of the branch for five or six years, taking over during a sudden vacancy in the office. When the branch needed a Community Activities Coordinator, I stepped in for three or four years to engage members in activities that brought them out for more than just branch meetings.

I have seen the world of architecture, engineering, and construction gradually accepting more women into careers in these areas. When I was at Drexel University, there were only two women in a class of seventy. Anecdotally, there are now many more in these fields of study today. In my own construction business, I employ women in construction positions at all levels.

AAUW is now acting more aggressively at the Branch, State and National levels to advocate for women's issues. This has been a gradual change in the years since I have been involved in the organization.

Marjorie Mowery, B.A.

I was born in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1952. When I was growing up, Carlisle was a rural small town in south central Pennsylvania. I grew up on a farm in a very conservative social environment.

In 1973 I received a B.A. in Social Work from Shippensburg University, and did some work toward a graduate degree. In subsequent years I was employed as the Office Manager for Fisher Mowery Rosendale Surveying Company. I also worked for the CASD as a special education aide, and for RS Mowery. But my best job was raising my son and daughter. While I don't see myself as doing anything controversial as a woman, I did work for a surveying company and learned a lot about surveying.

I first joined AAUW at the age of 32 in 1984. At the time I was raising two small children and needed an intellectual outlet with other women. I saw an article in the newspaper advertising an AAUW Carlisle event. I attended, liked the organization, and decided to join.

As a member of AAUW I participated in several Candidates' Nights, and led the first news conference by the AAUW Carlisle Branch as part of a state project where questions on education and women's issues were asked of candidates running for State Representative. I participated in a Women's Symposium, a half-day conference planned for Carlisle-area women by women. We (AAUW) partnered with Carlisle YWCA to include a keynote speaker for this event, and to have break-out session on relevant women's topics, networking opportunities, and vendor sales. Other members on the planning committee included representatives from the community, Dickinson College and the League of Women Voters.

I held a variety of AAUW Branch and State level Offices. At the Branch level, I was a three-term President, Program Vice-President, Finance Officer, Newsletter Editor, Funds Chair, and Chair of various Interest Groups. At the State level, I was Communications Director, Two-term Administrative Director, Convention Registrar, Nominating Committee Chair, and Outstanding Woman Chair. I was also on the AAUW Carlisle 75th Anniversary Celebration Committee, and participated on the Scholarship Committee both raising funds and interviewing and selecting candidates. The Scholarship Committee was especially near and dear to my heart.

During my lifetime I have witnessed the growth of the feminist movement. Women began to be successful in previously male dominated careers such as business, politics, science and law. Still to come is ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, and Pay Equality.

At the national level, I feel that AAUW has greatly increased its lobbying efforts of women's issues. At the branch level, we have attracted more members and increased our community outreach through such programs as Tech Savvy and Work Smart. Our public policy efforts to register voters and lobby our local legislators are very strong and on point!

I love AAUW for lifelong learning and lifelong friendships. I urge others to become involved in AAUW whether as an interest group member, committee member or as an officer. Participation will give each member a chance to spread her leadership wings!

Becky Morgenthal, B.S.

I was born in Altadena, California, but my parents were from this area, so we moved back east to Annville in Lebanon County. We were a close family, with three brothers and a sister. Our parents stressed education as the number one priority for us

Initially, I attended a junior college, but was employed in a position where a bachelor's degree was required. I attended Wilson College's adult learning program which made it easy for an older, employed learner to be successful in a degree program.

I was first employed as Financial Coordinator for EDS Data Center, and later started my own accounting business. One of my clients was the *Cumberland Law Journal*, which later led to my employment with the Cumberland County Bar Association. I retired from my position as Executive Director of the Cumberland County Bar Association in 2018.

While employed at EDS, I did something considered unusual for a woman at the time. A new contractor was having too much physical contact with women, including myself. I realized I needed to report this behavior to my boss. My husband was a lawyer, so I felt I was in a better position to complain about this behavior than my women colleagues. I played the "husband lawyer" card, and two days later, the offending contractor was gone!

I joined AAUW in 1990, when I was introduced to the organization by good friends Dawn Flower-Webb and Holly Smith. I met many interesting women in the Carlisle branch, some of whom are no longer with us today. AAUW has always had strong women; Jeannie Bowers and, Marjie Mowery supported me through some tough times in my life. It was my honor to be Carlisle Branch President during the branch's 75th Anniversary Celebration. I had also served as Secretary, Treasurer and President Elect. Now that I am retired, I'm serving as Chair for the 95th Anniversary Celebration!

I feel that women's issues such as equal rights and equal pay are everyone's issues. I participated in selling items at the mall to raise money for teacher's tenure, and I actually hired lawyers at the National level for the Legal Action Fund. The most significant changes for women have come in the past ten years. When I first graduated from Junior College in 1967, I interviewed at Edward Jones; Even though I aced their tests twice, I didn't get the job offer because I was a woman seeking a job in the accounting field. Today, women are getting STEM jobs. Women are speaking up to ask for raises.

AAUW was vibrant in the 1990's. The Carlisle branch supported local issues more than those affecting the country. We partner today with community organizations like the YWCA. We now want to make sure that the community is a safe place to live, work and raise our families. There has also been a change in the membership. The majority of members used to be teachers; now the membership has more business women joining the branch. Women today are stronger than they have ever been. Nationally, they march on Washington. Here in Carlisle, we rallied on the courthouse square. We can help younger women to be successful, overcome difficulties and get through life. Education is the key to stability and security. A family with a financially secure woman will make it through hard times.

Darlis Simonton, B.S.

I was born in Lewistown, Pennsylvania in 1938. It was a typical small town. I remember milk deliveries as a child, and blackouts during World War II.

I graduated from Juniata Joint High School where I took academic courses and played softball and basketball. During my time on the team, we were softball champions. I attended Lock Haven College, where I majored in health and physical education, and played field hockey and basketball.

After I finished my college education, I taught health and physical education and general science in Gettysburg for five years, and then became a substitute teacher. I had met my future husband in high school. He was in the U.S. Army, stationed in Germany. In 1961, during my summer break from teaching, I went to Germany to get married, and we had a long distance marriage for a year before he returned to the States.

I joined AAUW in 1970 in Gettysburg. The Gettysburg Branch has since disbanded. At the time, I was teaching middle school in Gettysburg, and two teachers asked me to become involved with the organization. I was happy to join because I was new to the area and wanted to meet people. I had participated in an investment group in the branch, but it disbanded when AAUW National declared that it was illegal. I served on the AAUW Carlisle Scholarship Committee, and was Bridge Flight Chair in its first year. I was happy to serve on the local level, and never pursued positions at the state or national levels.

One of the things I did that I feel had an impact on women was participating in a tennis organization for women over 60, and starting a tennis league for women in Carlisle. In 1995, 2000, 2002, 2009 and 2011 teams went to national competitions. I was captain of a team that went to Nationals, winning 3rd and 4th place in the tournament. I also played on the Pickleball team from Carlisle, and served on the Recreation Board for North Middleton. These physical activity organizations gave local women a chance to gain proficiency in sports and engage in healthy competition.

For me the most significant change for women has been Title IX. Prior to the Title IX regulations, women could only play half-court basketball, could not play in the evening, and endured dress restrictions that made athletic play difficult. I feel that now Title IX has become the norm, and women are beginning to make strides in all sports.

I began to see changes in AAUW Carlisle around 2010. It used to be mainly a social organization. Now it is involved in social action and women's issues. President Wendy Armour Dickinson started this change. I do feel we are missing the women in the workforce who need self-esteem and education in financial planning. It would be useful to launch a program similar to Pay Equity for non-professional women.

Lillian Wong, B.S., D.D.S.

I was born in 1949 and grew up in Washington D.C. My family lived in an apartment above the family grocery store. We lived in a very diverse area populated by many lower middle class families with diverse backgrounds. The street was really cool, with alleys behind the houses and storefronts. My father learned electrical skills while serving in the army, and he repaired radios and televisions in a back room of our store. He also made house calls. My mother was not educated; she took English as Second Language courses when she came from China, but never really learned to speak English fluently. My sisters and I worked in the store after school, but my parents always stressed education as a way to improve our lifestyle and contribute to our community.

After high school, I enrolled in Pharmacy school. But I didn't want to be available to people 24/7 as pharmacists were in those days. I enrolled in the University of Maryland-Baltimore Dental School. Following my graduation, I moved to Oklahoma for a one year dental residency. In my day, chemistry, pharmacy and dentistry were not typical careers for women, and only men were dental instructors. Today, fifty percent of women are now instructors in dental schools. I have seen significant changes in the role of women in my lifetime. When I was a girl, women and female children were not to be heard. Then *The Feminine Mystique* and the feminist movement opened up opportunities for women. I encourage girls not to shy away from STEM subjects.

I was inspired to join AAUW Carlisle by an invitation to attend an informal social event, and have been a member for the past 15 years, with a break while raising my children. I participated as a member of the Scholarship Committee, and now chair this committee. I love meeting the young women who apply for the scholarships. They are comfortable with themselves and have clear ideas of what they want for themselves and the world. I also enjoy the company of the women in the Carlisle branch; they can serve as role models for our younger women and girls, and have a positive impact on the community.

The Carlisle Branch was quiet for a time, but is now an active branch, with strong Public Policy initiatives. I think it is sometimes hard to be a "supermom" and live up to the demands of the opportunities available. Perhaps more needs to be shared by family and friends to give active career and volunteer women a break!

In 2018, I proposed that AAUW Carlisle award a scholarship in memory of my mother. The idea came to me because an applicant wanted to pursue a third degree in the STEM field. My mother understood the way the world worked, even though she had no formal education. She was a symbol of someone who could do well and make sure her children would be educated and succeed in life. I was proud to award the Yuen Yen Lee Wong Memorial Scholarship in her honor.

I feel that every AAUW member is a leader who can promote the ideas and ideals of this organization, empowering women as individuals and as a community.