

Metro-Portland Chapter History

The early members of the Metro-Portland Chapter included Connie Soth of St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Lorraine Burson of Burlingame Baptist Church, and Pat Hayes of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church. Connie later became a writer, Lorraine was for many years the executive director of the Church and Synagogue Library Association (CSLA), and Pat became very active in the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer.

In those times, the minutes were handwritten and members were notified of meetings by a telephone tree. Later, meeting notices were sent out and mailing labels were typewritten. By the late 1990s we had a computerized mailing list and prepared flyers on the computer. For many years the meeting notices were sent by bulk mail to churches surrounding the meeting site. Taking the flyers downtown for bulk mailing became difficult, so we began sending first class mail to a much smaller mailing list.

Initially meetings were on Tuesday morning. Everyone brought a sack lunch, and the meetings adjourned in the afternoon. As more women began to work outside the home, one or two evening meetings were held each year. Eventually meetings were held on Saturday, with dismissal at noon.

At one time the chapter almost died, as the President did not convene the board or schedule meetings. Some of the members got together and brought the chapter back to life the following year.

A highlight was the joint workshop held in 1973 with CSLA at Lewis and Clark College in Portland and chaired by Rubye Slay. The chapter hosted other early workshops and conferences in 1982, 1989, and 1996.

Topics covered at meetings included publicity, weeding and inventory, book selection, cataloging, children's books, book reviews, policy and procedures, and guest speakers. The vertical file and making cutout letters for bulletin boards were topics of interest early in the chapter's history. When tape recordings became widely available, tapes were added to many collections, and then videos and music CDs. Computer programs and the use of the computers were a more recent "hot" topic.

The chapter planned and hosted several additional conferences in the 2000s. In the summer of 2000, Emi Koe chaired a conference at Multnomah University. The 2008 Conference was held at Cascade College, chaired by Doris Howard. St Joseph's Catholic Church in Vancouver was the host location in 2016, and Elaine Petersen chaired the conference. Each conference was unique and well-done.

Our chapter was honored to have three life members nominated and accepted by the PNAACL Board. Susan Reiver was longtime editor of the *Lamplighter*. She became a PNAACL life member in 2005. Next to become a life member was Bea Severson, in 2007. Bea held many offices at the chapter and regional level, always willing to serve. In 2016, Doris Howard was also awarded life membership. After serving as 2008 Conference Chair, Chapter Representative, and PNAACL President, Doris became Conference Coordinator for the PNAACL Board. We are proud to have these hard working librarians as life members of PNAACL.

At the chapter level, many librarians contributed with what they could do. From acting as host locations, to arranging field trips, to serving on the board of officers, our chapter has been a true cooperative effort. In fact, in the 2015-2016 program year we functioned quite well with no functioning officers, except our treasurer and chapter representatives. In fact, we feel we are a family, bonded and supportive, but open for newcomers to blend into.

Our chapter has also been privileged to enjoy many guest authors at our meetings. Some who stand out have been Jeanie St. John Taylor, Leslie Gould, Emily King, Karen Kingsbury, Robin Jones Gunn, Miralee Farrell, and Mesu Andrews. Standout field trips have included Multnomah University, Mt. Angel Abbey, Western Seminary, Concordia University, and Vancouver Public Library. Our book/media exchange table has always been a highlight, held whenever our location permitted. A big thank you goes to Becky Hartsfield for the many loads of books she delivered to Multnomah University, for them to use after we selected desired items from the exchange table. Thanks also to Elaine Petersen for picking up where Becky left off.

Mention must be made of those who have served as presidents: Rubye Slay, Marie Walters, Donna Steinmetz, Edna Jones, Lorraine Burson, Rachel Wheeler, Pat Hayes, Geraldine Mitsch, Becky Bishop, June Ruyle, Elaine Morgan, Susan Reiver, Florence Bell, Darlene Saunders, Sue Barrett, Jane Johnson, Dot Doty, Mary Steinbrenner, Myrth Williamson, Bea Severson, Mary Ellen Tipper, Becky Hartsfield, and Elaine Petersen. Brigitte Pulver has been invaluable as Communications Chair, maintaining our email member list and distributing our meeting notices and other communications. Shauna Moon as our chapter treasurer as well as PNACL treasurer has also been an invaluable part of our group. We have had many faithful members serve as Secretary, and we so appreciate them as well.

We who are part of our chapter have received a heritage and a trust from those who came before us. We have worked to honor that trust and advance the work of church libraries on behalf of the Kingdom of our Lord. While our numbers over have decreased with the changing times, we have remained strong and faithful to the mission of PNACL, and will strive to do so going forward into the future.