



Beginning and 1920s

Let's start on a trip through time from when BPW/OHIO began.

- BPW started in 1919 with a \$65,000 grant and Ohio organized in 1920.
- One of the outstanding projects of the Ohio Federation, the Florence Allen Scholarship Fund was originated.
- Blue and Gold were adopted as the State colors.
- For the first time Local clubs joined the State and National Federation in observing National Business Women's Week.
- A State song book was published, including the federation song OHIO.

1930s

The 30s were more than about flappers and prohibition. Ohio was a trail blazer in a new kind of convention.

- The 1931 convention preferences for a banquet speaker included Dr. Lillian Gilbreth, a leading engineer in the country, Eleanor Roosevelt and Mary Pickford.
 - The Occupational Assembly held on Saturday afternoon included short talks or in today's terminology these would be seminars:
 - The Attitude of the Modern Girl
 - Today Towards Business
 - Osteopathy as a Field for Women
- Ohio Governor George White was the first governor to endorse Business Women's Week.
- Ohio BPW strongly opposed the Minimum Wage Law for Women and Minors only; saying it was discriminatory, that it should be for men, women and minors.
- A bill was introduced in the state legislature that would prohibit married women from being gainfully employed. BPW Ohio opposed this bill but it marked the first of many times BPW Ohio would appear before a committee of the state legislature. The bill was defeated.



1940s

World War II had an impact on Women in general and BPW had to adjust to the many changes.

- As storm clouds for another World War gathered, women were feeling the pinch of being dropped from positions. Various state governments attempted to take from women their right to work.
- Within BPW, on recommendation of the resolution committee the membership approved the support of an Equal Pay Bill.
- The body fought for relaxation of certain provisions of the Ohio Female Labor Laws affecting hours and occupations of women.
- In 1944 a check for \$2,800, contributed by local clubs, was presented to the American Red Cross for Ohio's War Project for the purchase and partial maintenance of a mobile kitchen unit to be sent to the British Federation.
- At the request of the U.S. Government no meetings were to be held "that will involve the assembly of 50 people which required transportation and hotel facilities". The annual meeting (convention) was cancelled and the election of state officers was by mail.
- The name "Ohio Business Woman" affectionately called the OBW; became the official name of the state publication in 1946.

1950s

The music and dancing of the 1950s was something but that's not all that went on in that decade. BPW of the 50s should be labeled "Legislative Accomplishments"

- Membership reached 9,162 which placed Ohio 3rd in the nation.
- An Equal Pay Bill was presented to the State of Ohio General Assembly and the Senate Labor and Commerce committee. One member of the Senate committee said "I suppose we will have to hear the "Petticoat Brigade" again on their bill.
- 35 clubs sponsored 37 girls to the 11th American Legion Auxiliary Buckeye Girls State.
- The Ohio Federation wrote its own Equal Pay Bill. The bill passed.
- A Nursing Home Bill for the inspection and licensing of nursing and rest homes passed.
- 1,000 reservations had been received for the second all Ohio luncheon honoring women in state government. While floods were pouring into every crevice of the state, it took the Mayor of Columbus and the Governor of Ohio to keep these members from rowing into Columbus. Finally the rain, the mayor and the governor won, the meeting was cancelled.



1960s

Whether we lived it or learned of it in school, we've heard the Kennedy statement "Ask Not What Your Country Can Do For You, But What You Can Do For Your Country". What was BPW doing to contribute to that feeling?

- The slogan was "Woman Power, a Powerful Dimension in Democracy".
- A Personal Development Conference and Business Institute "Look At You" was held.
- The Federation received public recognition when the Secretary of State presented an award for "Meritorious Public Service" in participating in "Inform Yourself and Vote" program.
- Ohio received an award at the 1967 National Convention for the establishment of the Governor's Committee on the Status of Women in Ohio in 1966.
- The Governor by directive established a Women's Division with an 11 member Advisory Committee in the Bureau of Employment Services as recommended by the Ohio Governor's Committee on the Status of Women. 8 BPW members were on this committee.

1970s

What a time it was and Disco was one word to describe it! But BPW's one word for the 1970s would be "ERA".

- The process leading towards ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in Ohio had its beginnings.
- Jeanne Squire of Berea BPW was a BPW/USA National President. She traveled to Brussels Belgium for the NATO Supreme Allied Command inspection and briefing as a guest of the United States government.
- Statewide project "Profiles of Ohio Women" was completed. Survey findings were released. Testimony was given before the Ohio House of Representatives and made BPW/OHIO a recognized expert on the topic of working women in Ohio.
- And finally Ohio's ratification of the ERA was accomplished.



1980s

BPW Continued to support previous concerns but new ones came to the forefront.

- BPW members carried red purses symbolizing the pocketbook related workplace issues for women.
- Concept that BPW/OHIO though clearly non-partisan, was indeed a political organization.
- Implementation of BPW/OHIO's own Political Action Committee.
- Equal Pay for Comparable Work emerged as a key concern within BPW programming.

1990s

We moved into the 1990s with a focus on aiding women.

- Project Shelter was launched. Members pledged their time, talents and financial resources to help alleviate the pain, suffering and humiliation inflicted on victims of domestic violence.
- Safe and Sound project started. Members traveled across the state to promote the domestic violence shelters found throughout the state. The members traveled in a van donated by a Berea Ohio car dealer.
- The Clothes Line project.
- In 1995 membership was 2,838 across 96 locals.
- Dianne Studer of Twin Rivers BPW was a BPW/USA National President.



2000s

The world's biggest question was "Would our computers and digital equipment still work as we changed to the 2000's at the turn of the century". What had the attention of BPW?

Some would call the 2000 decade a time to focus on areas of personal importance.

- Social Security reform became a Number 1 priority.
- Womanomics forums were held nationwide. Results from these forums listed the number 1 concern of woman of all ages as health care benefits.
- We signed on to support the march in Washington to protect our Freedom of Choice.
- Reaffirmed our commitment to American Legion Auxiliary Buckeye Girls State.
- Supported the Ohio Minimum Wage legislative initiative by collecting signatures.
- Members were educated on American Heart Association "Go Red for Women".
- Held Policy & Action Day in Columbus Ohio.

2010s

Recent events covering familiar topics and addressing new concerns within our society is what has defined the past 5 years.

- Legislation continued to be first and foremost as the decade changed.
- Speakers informed our membership about Human Trafficking. In 2012, Governor Kasich formed The Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force to marshal the state's resources to provide wraparound services for victims and punish the perpetrators of this horrible crime.
- Johanna's Law, also known as the Gynecologic Cancer Education and Awareness Act, promotes the education of women to increase awareness of gynecologic cancer. It passed both Houses of Congress unanimously and was signed into law on January 12, 2007 by George W. Bush.
- We made Alice Proud by voting.
- WPEA - Women's Professional Empowerment Alliance Conference was held July 24-26, 2014 in Cleveland. Over 50 BPW members from 12 states attended.
- Once again we committed to American Legion Auxiliary Buckeye Girls State.
- We supported passage of the ERA Amendment with a financial donation to United for Equality in honor of Mariwyn Heath.