

ONLINE HISTORY JOURNAL OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

A Gathering of Earnest Women

The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)
Students' Conferences in Capitola
1900-1911

By Deborah Osterberg



Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History
705 Front Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
www.santacruzmah.org

August, 2022

© 2022 by Deborah Osterberg

A Gathering of Earnest Women

The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) Students' Conferences in Capitola 1900-1911

By Deborah Osterberg

When one first thinks of Capitola, teeming summer beach crowds come to mind. But it was an annual off-season event in the early 20th century which helped raise the profile of the small, seaside resort. Each spring from 1900 through 1911, hundreds of coeds from western colleges descended upon Capitola for the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) Pacific Coast Students' Conference. The week-long conference provided young women the opportunity for Christian study, leadership training, networking and recreation.

Taking up residence at F.A. Hihn's Hotel Capitola and supported by fundraising and the generosity of Phoebe Apperson Hearst, the annual Students' Conference at Capitola became the YWCA's most popular event. When the conference's popularity finally outstripped available accommodations, organizers formulated plans for their own, larger venue. In 1913 the YWCA officially opened the Asilomar Leadership Camp in Pacific Grove. The framework and eventual success of what became Asilomar, developed over the twelve years when earnest, young college women annually met in search of spiritual enrichment and fellowship in the charming seaside resort of Capitola.

Capitola by the seaside,
Capitola by the sea,
Where the dancing waves are
Singing welcome,
To Capitola by the sea¹

In the late 1890s the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)² began holding summer conferences for female college students in the Western states.³ The Pacific Coast YWCA Students' Conference provided a unique spiritual, educational, networking, and recreational opportunity for young, reform-minded Christian women of the time.⁴ The initial Pacific Coast Students' Conference held at Capitola in May 1900 was a ten-day event. The annual spring conferences were held at the famed seaside resort through 1911.⁵

The YWCA, a non-sectarian Christian lay movement for women, is the oldest and largest multicultural women's organization in the world. The YWCA became noted for empowering women by assisting them in obtaining housing, education, healthcare, civil rights, and pay equity. Its origin traces back to 1855 England when philanthropist Lady Mary Jane Kinnaird established the North

London Home for nurses involved in the Crimean War. In 1877 this support group merged with the Prayer Union and became the YWCA. The first YWCA in the United States was established in 1858. By 1900 there were several hundred regional YWCAs and a national organization was formed by 1907.⁶

The Pacific Coast Students' Conference was the first of the four nation-wide regional conferences annually sponsored by the YWCA. The 1904 program noted that the annual conferences were mounted by the American Committee which was aligned with both the YWCA and the World's Student Christian Federation.⁷ The scenery and resort attributes of the Capitola venue were quickly recognized.⁸ According to the April 10, 1902, *Santa Cruz Sentinel*:

Capitola is to the West what the gathering at Lake Geneva, Wis., Ashville, N.C., and Silver Bay, Lake George, N.Y., are to the East. Capitola is a beautiful little spot, a few miles from Santa Cruz, on the Monterey Bay. Its seclusion, and the inspiration of the great Pacific, make it an ideal place for a religious gathering of earnest women . . .⁹

Capitola's beautiful coastal setting guaranteed the conference's success. F.A. Hihn's Hotel Capitola



Students proudly displaying their school banners on Capitola Beach. Photograph taken by H.W.H. Penniman for the 1903 Y.W.C.A. souvenir booklet which F.A. Hihn commissioned as a gift for conference attendees. (Capitola Historical Museum)

hosted the attendees in the spring off season where “. . . [t]he young ladies are in entire charge of the hotel.” By year three, conference attendance tripled, and it was declared that “[n]o other conference of the YWCA has showed such a large gain.”¹⁰

It would be impossible to find a more delightful place for the Pacific Coast conference than Hotel Capitola. The hotel is easy of access as it is about one hundred miles south of San Francisco; it is well adapted to conference use, and it is delightfully located directly on the coast.¹¹



Postcard of Hotel Capitola. The hotel, built by F.A. Hihn in 1895, burned to the ground in 1929. (Capitola Historical Museum)

Conference attendees began referring to Capitola as “Guardamar” or guardian of the sea.¹² The name was likely inspired by the town of the same name located at the mouth of the river Segura in the Spanish province of Valencia. A popular feature of the conferences “. . . was the opportunity afforded to hold these sessions out on the sand of the beach where the breakers dashed and rolled back and forth cooling the warm air from off the verdant fields . . .”¹³

Several accounts noted miles of dazzling poppy fields between Capitola and Santa Cruz, some of which supplied decoration for the conference space.¹⁴

“The wild flowers of Capitola appeared in profusion in the great hotel today. There were poppies in the office and dining-room, while in the auditorium wild mustard and ferns added to the elaborate decorations of ivy festoons and clusters of oranges.”¹⁵

The coeds also enjoyed evening ocean views, fondly recalling how “. . . the full moon on the waves held us spellbound watching it, sometimes for many minutes after the lights were out.”¹⁶ Sometimes an evening concluded with a huge beach

bonfire accompanied by a chorus of college songs, speech-making and “general jollification.”¹⁷

The name Capitola was likely well known to many of the coeds before they arrived at the conferences. Though its origin still remains uncertain, some believe that the resort name was inspired by the fictional heroine, Capitola Black, who appeared in the thrilling novel, *The Hidden Hand*, by E.D.E.N. Southworth.¹⁸ First published in 1859 as a serial in the *New York Ledger*, the novel became wildly popular.¹⁹ In the late 19th century, Southworth was probably the most prolific and “the single most widely-read American novelist.”²⁰ With her sixty novels, she was at one time one of the nation’s best-paid authors. Due to multiple reprints and over forty theatrical adaptations, most well-educated young ladies of the era were well aware of Capitola Black, the adventurous tomboy heroine.²¹

The first Capitola conference in 1900 drew 115 delegates from 23 colleges and normal (teachers’) schools, with five Western states represented (California, Nevada, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon).²² The 1904 conference program noted that California delegates were “. . . granted the fare and a third rate for the round trip” and students from elsewhere would be provided financial assistance.²³ Delegates were advised to pack “walking skirts, tennis racquets, kodaks, bicycles, etc.” and assured that “. . . suits for surf bathing are furnished without extra expense.”²⁴ At Capitola the ladies were charged a \$5.00 program fee and board at the hotel cost them \$1.00 per day.²⁵



Phoebe Hearst,
c. 1915 –
Edmonston,
Washington
D.C., (Library
of Congress)

Mrs. Phoebe Apperson Hearst, who has the interest of college women so much at heart, is expected to visit the [1900] conference at Capitola before its close. She has done much to make the conference possible by paying the expenses of the programme, so that the conference can have the best speakers and lecturers, and so that all college women can attend the conference with no other expense than railway fare and board.²⁶

Mrs. Hearst, in fact, paid the traveling expenses of one representative from the largest colleges in the participating states because she “felt that a gathering of this kind would strengthen the intercollegiate spirit, would result in greater uniformity of methods and aim, and that it would do a great deal toward raising the standards of Christian life among the students of the coast.”²⁷ Hearst continued to be a major proponent and supporter of the conference, including later finding it a permanent home.

In addition to the coeds, the YWCA encouraged the attendance of “. . . all those young women holding responsible positions in Young People’s Societies, Sunday-schools, and home churches . . . and members from city associations.”²⁸ Throughout the years there were large delegations from the two major universities (Berkeley and Stanford), groups of students from smaller colleges, occasionally girls from Indian boarding schools “. . . and an increasing number of young business women from the cities . . .”²⁹ The initial participating institutions included the University of Southern California, University of Nevada, Pomona College, Dallas College, the University of California (then only at Berkeley), Stanford University, California College, Whitman College, and several Normal Schools.³⁰

In line with the association’s missionary work, guest lecturers spoke of their work in foreign lands and on Native American reservations. In 1905 two delegations included foreign students “. . . one from Japan and one from China, so that the mission field was clearly brought to mind.”³¹ Each conference also made available for sale the latest in missionary and religious literature.³²

Students from Indian boarding schools were encouraged to come, with their expenses often paid for by students from the larger institutions. The YWCA’s goal was:

. . . to prepare veritable home-missionaries from the Indians themselves, by getting as many as possible from the Indian schools to the Capitola

Conferences. The Associations of more favored students pay the expenses of these Indian girls to Capitola; there they are the inspiration of all because of their spiritual earnestness and joy. They are marked Christian leaders afterwards in their schools, and may readily become leaders in their Indian communities . . .³³

Annie Bidwell, women's rights and temperance activist, sent a substitute to the 1905 conference as representative of the Chico State Normal School.³⁴ She chose 23-year-old Maggie Lafonso, also known as So-Wil-Len-No, who was the daughter of Indian village leader Holi Lafonso.³⁵

Our Association met all expenses of her trip, her railroad ticket being \$25.00 One of our Normal School delegates wrote me from Capitola about the joy of our Maggie in this convention, and the blessing she was to it.³⁶

Bidwell described Maggie as her dear friend and the person who assisted her in leading worship services for the Mechoopda Indians of the Chico Rancheria (site of the village of Bahapki).³⁷ In her letters to Mrs. Bidwell, Maggie wished she were better able to describe the conference and what it meant to her. She asked, "Have I ever been to such a glorious place as Capitola? . . . I have [met] many lovely ladies here, but as you know none can ever take the place of my dear Mrs. Bidwell."³⁸ In addition to the Bible lessons and lectures on missionary work, Maggie also enjoyed a journey to see the Big Trees and her time spent at the seashore ". . . gathering shells for the dear little children" back home.³⁹



Portrait of Maggie LaFonso Mitchell (Close-up of SC31494) – Courtesy of (California State University, Chico, Meriam Library Special Collections)

As I sit watching the waves dash up against the large rocks, I can not help thinking and thanking you for all your kindness to me. I wonder if my life will always be like the waves dashing too and froe, never cease trying to lead others to Christ as I am taught here and as I sit thinking of you, dear friend. I can not but shed tears to think of you in your far off home. How I do wish you could be with me to see the living Christian faces of so many young ladies . . . I can not with pencil and paper relate all I have experienced. As you know dear friend that it means so much to be here . . . Oh what a change in life there is since I have been . . . here. I can see and feel the change and anxiety to do more work for my people and also to be able to become more active in our YWCA meeting.⁴⁰

Later Maggie reflected that her ". . . experience at Capitola is more to me than anything I have undertaken"⁴¹ concluding that she ". . . packed deep into my heart much to teach my people."⁴²

In 1905 Maggie also noted that there were three Indian ladies in attendance from the Sherman Institute in Riverside.⁴³ One of the Sherman Institute delegates ". . . gave a glowing account of the work among her people and said that a week ago Sunday 21 girls and 18 boys had united with the church. This was the cause of an enthusiastic waving of handkerchiefs."⁴⁴ In the hotel the Sherman delegates set up "... an exhibit of thread lace work and embroidery done by the pupils, some photographs of the athletic teams, the brass band of thirty-three pieces and views of its domestic science department."⁴⁵ A larger delegation in 1908 proudly displayed their basket work.⁴⁶ In 1911 sixteen-year-old Klamath tribal member Helene Kenney presented the Sherman Institute report:

It is a pleasure to report our Sherman work this year because our girls have been doing so well. The Association means so much to our girls that it is one of the most popular things in the school (with 90 members). A girl who will not join cuts herself off from real friendship with any of the best girls in the school. There are only seven girls who refuse to have anything to do with our Christian work.⁴⁷

Behind the enthusiastic accounts of missionary work lay a darker reality. For decades, Indian children were removed from their families and forced to attend boarding schools managed by Christian missionaries. Well intentioned Indian advocates had little understanding or regard for Native American culture or spirituality. Forced assimilation, including religious instruction, was

seen as the answer to the supposed “Indian Problem.” According to a July 22, 2021, *U.S. News* article, “U.S. Churches Reckon With Traumatic Legacy of Native Schools,”

U.S. Catholic and Protestant denominations operated more than 150 boarding schools between the [mid-]19th and [mid-]20th centuries. . . . Native children were regularly severed from their tribal families, customs, language and religion and brought to the schools in a push to assimilate and Christianize them.⁴⁸

This philosophy was encapsulated in the words of Colonel Richard Pratt, founder of the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania when he proclaimed “. . . all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, and save the man.”⁴⁹ Today the traumatic impact of boarding schools upon Indian culture is finally beginning to be better understood and acknowledged.

The Capitola conferences were quite interdenominational. The initial conference included addresses by representatives from the Pacific Theological Seminary, the First Methodist Church of Oakland, the Baptist Missionary Board, and the First Congregational Church of San Francisco.⁵⁰ Over the years lectures and sermons included such topics as “Christian Liberty,” “The Personal Call to Duty,” and “Choosing a Lifework.”⁵¹

The 1900 conference set the pattern of morning biblical studies and missionary sessions and recreation in the afternoon.

At fifteen minutes after eight in the morning came the missionary meeting, then the Bible classes and there were two of these. After that the student and



View of the Hotel Capitola lobby, c. 1903. (Courtesy of Robert and Mary Lincoln, Capitola Historical Museum)

city sessions were held at the same time and for three quarters of an hour before lunch the platform meeting was held when we were addressed either by one of the secretaries or by some minister from around San Francisco. The afternoons were given up to recreation. . . . In the evenings there was a general meeting, after which the representations from each college went to its delegation room where we talked and prayed together and this was a fitting close to each beautiful day.⁵²

On those free afternoons, the coeds indulged in walks, bicycling, and streetcar excursions to Santa Cruz.⁵³

[At] almost any hour from one until six girls may be seen climbing on the rocks, bathing, wading in the creek, sailing, rowing, playing tennis, sunning themselves on the beach, or swinging in the squeaky old swings on the sand . . . for an hour after dinner one has nothing to do but gather shells on the beach, or sit on the rocks and watch the spray from the huge breakers.⁵⁴

One young lady admitted that she:

. . . thought that a summer conference was only for full-fledged missionaries and they did nothing but have ‘meetings,’ . . . Doubtless many girls are kept away from a conference, because they feel that all study and no pleasure is scarcely attractive to a girl who has just finished, or is just beginning a year of academic work. Oh, girls, it is not so. The recreation plans of a summer conference are every bit as important in its curriculum as the ‘meetings.’⁵⁵

Another attendee felt that the “. . . frolics are by no means the least important part of the



YWCA conference attendees enjoying the natural amenities of Capitola, circa 1903. (Capitola Historical Museum)

conference program; they are as necessary as fresh air and sunshine.”⁵⁶

At a hillside playhouse each school put on entertainment such as a vaudeville show or circus.⁵⁷ Stanford coeds brought their song and hymn books, guitars, banjos, and mandolins.⁵⁸ The students sometimes entertained the local community. In 1901 the congregation of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Soquel “. . . enjoyed the song service of seven young ladies of the Y.W.C.A. from Capitola. The beautiful solo, ‘The Hills of Peace,’ sung by Miss Thomas, was well rendered.”⁵⁹

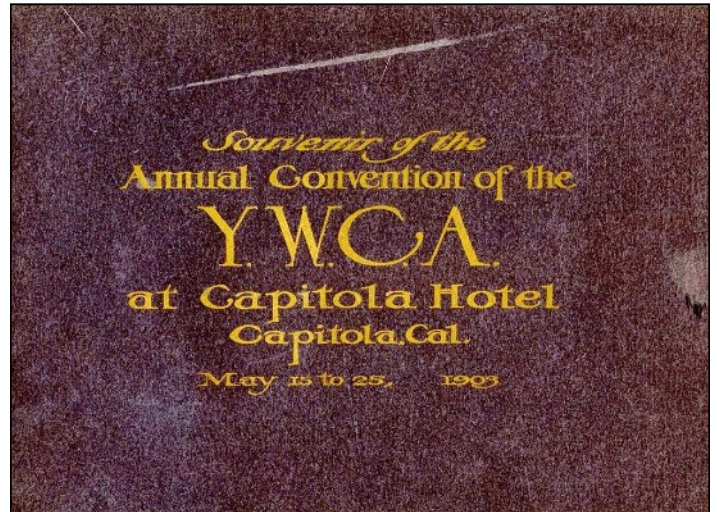
Since the conference began to draw such large crowds, and organizers wanted the ladies to get acquainted, all attendees were required to change their “seats in the dining-room every two or three days so that each girl may meet as many others as possible.”⁶⁰ The attendees were also put to work. Each year twenty to thirty young ladies served as waitresses at each meal.⁶¹ According to the November 1902 issue of the *Evangel*:

The account of the domestic plans at the Capitola conference may prove interesting since the kitchen department is entirely in the hands of association members. . . . The Capitola conference is the only one where the hotel management is in charge of young women appointed for the conference from association members, and is reported to have the best menus and service of almost any conference. . . . It does seem a bit appalling to the uninitiated to think of filling three hundred and twenty-five hungry mouths, three times a day, even though it is for only eleven days. The pans of potatoes, the great caldron of soup, the quantities of meat are astonishing, but what is more astonishing is the small amount that remains after meals, not even one basketful. . . . We exhaust all of the village supplies and telephone to the neighboring towns for more. The sea air at Capitola does all that it is advertised to do.⁶²

In 1903 Frederick Augustus Hihn, owner of Capitola and builder of the Hotel Capitola, communicated with conference coordinator Miss Harriet Taylor, General Secretary of the American Committee of the YWCA. Hihn rejoiced over the prospect of once again having Capitola host the conference. Virtually every inch of the hotel and its grounds were utilized by the coeds.

Aside from the main auditorium, the rotunda of the hotel was used for services. . . . The city conference was regularly held in the cliff room, against the

foundation of which the waves broke that would come rolling in across the broad Pacific. A sunset service on the beach, another on the cliff, were only eclipsed by the Saturday night beach service around



Cover of the 1903 YWCA souvenir booklet commissioned by F.A. Hihn. (Capitola Historical Museum)

a huge bonfire that lighted the faces of the earnest young women who thronged every meeting.⁶³

A parlor off the hotel’s foyer was sometimes used by the coeds as a “quiet room,” meant for individual Bible study.⁶⁴

In addition to providing the venue, Hihn also arranged with H.W.H. Penniman to take photographs of the YWCA conference⁶⁵ which that year was declared “[t]he largest gathering of young women ever held west of the Rockies.”⁶⁶ Hihn had 400 copies of a special souvenir pamphlet hastily printed in San Francisco and distributed a copy to each coed before their departure.⁶⁷ The photographs taken for this memento were both a kind gesture and an advertising opportunity for Hihn. He proposed also using the YWCA photographs “. . . in a brochure advertising Capitola.”⁶⁸

The coeds went to great lengths to decorate Hihn’s hotel.

The large reception hall presents an Oriental appearance, as in this place are the missionary exhibits. The walls have rich hangings of gorgeous silks, richly embroidered. The handiwork of the Turk and the skillful native of India makes an entrancing picture. The Chinese embroidery is brilliant in its coloring and adds exquisite charm to



YWCA delegates pose in front of the Hotel Capitola, circa 1903. (Courtesy of Robert and Mary Lincoln, Capitola Historical Museum)

the scene. The YWCA of Honolulu exhibits specimens of Hawaiian cloth and beautiful braided straw. There are also collections of bronzes, brasses and curios. The large cliff room of the hotel overlooking the bay is where the college scheme of decoration is carried out. The banners and posters from all the colleges of the Pacific slope have made it bewildering of color, but still very pretty. . . .⁶⁹

Hihn continued to host the annual conferences through 1911 and likely felt it was a good way to further promote Capitola which he dubbed “the gem of the Pacific Coast Seaside Resorts.”⁷⁰

The physical well-being of conference attendees was a high priority. In 1904 conference organizers secured a female physician for free consultations.⁷¹ According to the May 24, 1900, *Santa Cruz Evening Sentinel*:

The college girls are enjoying their vacation to the utmost. . . . Monday was the college field day. The girls ran, hopped or jumped for the honor of their different colleges. Each winner received a victor’s crown and some degree, as, for instance, when the degree of M.S. was bestowed upon the young lady who won the 250-yard dash. But this did not mean Master of Science, as Miss Taylor, the Chairman of the Conference, declared, but “Master of Sprinting.” Miss Taylor presented the wreaths and degrees, each with a neat little speech.⁷²

Every year saw basketball contests and baseball games held at the near-by camping grounds.

And the young ladies can play, you better believe, even to the fine point of mobbing an umpire. Gee, but that poor man had the time of his life. Once he was surrounded by so many players owing to a close decision that he had to blow his whistle and call out, ‘Police, police’. And they came from out of the ranks of the fans on every side, twenty strong, each displaying that star of authority, and the umpire was saved from a trip to the hospital.⁷³

One year the ladies’ championship Red Sox team was challenged by the local police. The final score—the men in blue three and the ladies four.⁷⁴

By 1905 the conference boasted over 350 attendees and representation from several additional states, with the largest contingents of students still coming from Berkeley and Stanford universities. “The young ladies have engaged the entire hotel, which has not yet opened for the season, and are caring for their own rooms, while engaging Mrs. Lewis as a caterer to provide their meals.”⁷⁵ The lady in question was Martha Jane “Patty” Reed Lewis, a child survivor of the Donner Party’s 1846 harrowing winter crossing of the Sierra Nevada. After her husband Frank Lewis died in 1876, the young widow became a hotel proprietor in the seaside retreat of Capitola. Though Mrs. Lewis became more well known as



Patty Reed Lewis, child survivor of the Donner Party became a famed landlady in Capitola and prepared meals for the YWCA delegates. (Capitola Historical Museum)

the operator of the Capitola Park Hotel (later the Lewis House), she also helped manage the much grander Hotel Capitola.⁷⁶ Perhaps Mrs. Lewis was responsible for the much-touted “Ye olden time banquet . . . with its witty toasts and clever songs and wonderful homemade orchestra [which] brought the conference to a delightful close.”⁷⁷

Another tradition which began the first year was an annual “Tallyho” excursion to Big Trees Grove, the original redwood resort located in Felton (now known as Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park).⁷⁸ A young lady in 1910 noted:

. . . [e]very minute of the time was enjoyed, and if one could have written down the exclamations of delight and the expressions ventured on the greatness and grandeur of the monarchs of the Fremont Grove of Redwoods, it would have been pleasant reading because of its amusing nature. Those who had never seen the Big Trees before were especially enthused with what greeted their eyes, and to those who before have stood under the shade of the giants, the pleasure afforded was as delightful as ever. . . .⁷⁹

At the grove it is likely that the young ladies made a point of seeing the YMCA Tree, which was dedicated to that organization on May 17, 1887.⁸⁰ The YWCA appears to have finally received the same honor in the grove with a near-by tree dedication by 1916.⁸¹

In 1907, Albertina Fox, a Los Angeles State Normal School student, expressed her appreciation for the conferences, saying that:

Capitola, to a girl who has never been there, is but a name, while to those who have had the privilege of going[,] it stands for all that is beautiful and noble in life, for inspirations and decisions for the future,

and for the highest type of American womanhood.⁸²

Many attendees were vocal advocates for the conferences. Miss Irma Bromley declared:

Go to Capitola! You will be repaid for the time and money spent. You need not stay the entire two weeks; many of the women go down for only a day, two days, or three. However short the time, it will be well worth while.⁸³

Enthusiasm for the conference inspired two members of the 1911 Stanford University contingent, Miss Harriet Park and Miss Ruth Sampson, to make a hike to Capitola over the Santa Cruz Mountains.⁸⁴

In March 1912 the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* lamented, “We miss the YWCA meet in Capitola this month.”⁸⁵ Mrs. Hearst, who played a key role in financially supporting the conferences from the beginning, offered her Pleasanton estate, Hacienda del Pozo de Verona, for the 1912 gathering. Some accounts erroneously claimed that the conference moved out of Capitola because the hotel burned down. The Hotel Capitola, longtime host to the conferences, did not burn until 1929. Perhaps the confusion comes from the fact that the Sea Beach Hotel in Santa Cruz burned in 1912. It is likely that the conference had simply outgrown the available space in Capitola. As early as 1908 it was noted, “that the big hotel could not hold all of the delegates, even when each room was crowded to its capacity” with up to ten girls assigned to a single two room suite.⁸⁶ Some conference organizers also felt it was time that the group purchase their own meeting ground. The Pacific Improvement Company was persuaded to deed the YWCA 30 acres of land in Pacific Grove. Famed architect Julia Morgan, who designed the association’s Oakland building, agreed to design the new conference center in the Arts & Crafts style. The new YWCA Leadership Camp opened in 1913. Today it is known as Asilomar State Beach and Convention Grounds.⁸⁷

Though the YWCA conferences no longer patronized Capitola, the resort town continued to play host to a wide variety of school, religious, business, and fraternal organization conferences, and annual outings. However, no doubt the springtime absence of the YWCA’s earnest young women was felt by locals for many years.

About the Author

Deborah Osterberg was raised in Capitola, but spent nearly thirty years working around the country with the National Park Service and the National Archives. She is the author of several articles on local history and the 2020 book, *Historic Tales of Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park – Big Trees Grove*. Deborah currently serves as Curator of the Capitola Historical Museum.

Notes

¹ “Capitola,” *The Daily Palo Alto*, April 22, 1903, 14:2-3.

² “Differences Between YMCA and YWCA,” by Aron, *Difference Between.com*, June 17, 2011. Accessed July 10, 2022. The YWCA is a different organization than the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA). The YWCA works for the promotion of young women’s leadership and justice. The YMCA’s principle focus is to put Christian principles into practice by developing a healthy mind, spirit, and body.

³ Ella M. Bunnell, “Young Women’s Christian Association,” *Report of the President of the University, November 1, 1900, Subsidiary Reports, Proceedings of University Societies, University of California Biennial Report of the President of the University on Behalf of the Board of Regents, 1898-1900* (Berkeley: The University Press, 1900), 103.

⁴ Accounts of the number, locations and spacing of the first several conferences differ according to the source: the first Students’ Conference was held at Mills College in either 1896 or 1897; or conferences were held at UC Berkeley in 1898 and at Inverness in 1899; or no regular conferences were held in 1898 and 1899 due to the large distances in California; or no conferences were held in 1898 or 1899 due to the Spanish American War. Three accounts, however, agreed that the third annual Students’ Conference was the one held in Capitola in 1900. To further add to the confusion, the 1904 Capitola conference program described itself as the sixth Pacific Coast Conference for Young Women.

⁵ “A Bit of Asilomar History,” *Conferences 1907-1951, YWCA Conferences of the USA*, p. 5, Microfilm Records, Record Group 11, Smith College Special Collections Box1, Series 1, Series 2, Reel 25.

⁶ “Young Women’s Christian Association – Christian Lay Movement,” *Encyclopedia Britannica, 2021, Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Young-Womens-Christian-Association>, Revised December 7, 1999. Accessed July 7, 2021.

⁷ Pacific Coast Conference Committee, ed. *Sixth Pacific Coast Conference for Young Women 1904: Capitola By the Sea*, Capitola, California, 1904, 1.

⁸ “The Students’ Conference at Capitola is Ended,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, May 27, 1902, 1:3.

⁹ “Capitola, 1902,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, April 10, 1902, 3:3.

¹⁰ “The Students’ Conference at Capitola is Ended,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, May 27, 1902, 1:3.

¹¹ “Notes,” *The Evangel*, Volume 12, Number 124 (September 1900): 11-12.

¹² Carolyn Swift, *Images of America – Capitola* (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2013), 47.

¹³ “Conference Holds Sessions on Beach,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, March 31, 1910, 1:6-7.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ “Capitola Conference – Dip in Surf at Capitola – Y.W.C.A. Girls Flock to Delightful Beach,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 2, 1908, 3:3, Accessed August 1, 2022.

¹⁶ Carmel Riley, “Y.W.C.A. Conference,” *The Crescent of Gamma Phi Beta*, Volume VI, Number 3, (June 1906): 128.

¹⁷ “Y.W.C.A. Delegates Visit Big Trees,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, April 2, 1909, 1:5.

¹⁸ Emma Dorothy Eliza Nevitte Southworth.

¹⁹ Frank Perry, “How Did Capitola Get Its Name?” *Online History Journal of Santa Cruz County - Capitola*, (Santa Cruz, California: Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, April 2021), 10, <https://d2kr105htw9szj.cloudfront.net/uploads/Naming-of-Capitola.pdf?mtime=20210429181719&focal=none> Accessed July 27, 2021.

²⁰ Linton Weeks, “5 Best-Selling Female Writers You May Not Have Heard Of,” *NPR History Department*, November 3, 2015, *National Public Radio*, <https://www.npr.org/sections/npr-history-dept/2015/11/03/453972045/5-best-selling-writers-you-may-not-have-heard-of>. Accessed July 27, 2021.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ella M. Bunnell, “Young Women’s Christian Association,” 103.

²³ Pacific Coast Conference Committee, 1904, 1.

²⁴ Ibid, 8.

²⁵ “Annual Capitola Conference,” *The Daily Palo Alto*, March 6, 1908, 4:1.

²⁶ “Sentinel Jottings,” *Santa Cruz Evening Sentinel*, May 26, 1900, 3:1-2.

²⁷ “Notes,” *The Evangel*, Volume 12, Number 124, (September 1900): 11-12.

²⁸ “Capitola – 1902,” *The Pacific*, (March 20, 1902): 6.

²⁹ Emma Hays, “The General and City Conferences of 1910,” *The Association Monthly*, Volume 4, Number 9 (October 1910): 382.

³⁰ “Students’ Conference – Capitola Enlivened by Over a Hundred Young Ladies,” *Santa Cruz Surf*, May 18, 1901, 4:4.

³¹ “The Capitola Conference,” *The Evangel*, Vol 17, No.173, (May 1905): 1-3.

³² Pacific Coast Conference Committee, 1904, 8.

³³ “Third Biennial Convention,” *Conventions*, third, 1911, *Daily Bulletin*, April 23-24, Third Biennial Convention of the Young Women's Christian Association of the United States of America, 54-55.

³⁴ One account claims Maggie was sent to the 1903 conference, yet Maggie’s letters are dated 1905. It is not known if Maggie attended both conferences or not.

³⁵ Julia H. Johnston, “*Indian and Spanish Neighbors*,” *Home Mission Study Course*, Fleming H. Revell Company, Third Edition (New York, 1905): 57-58.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid. According to the Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria, the name of the village relocated in 1868 was Bahapki, meaning *unsifted*, because people from several neighboring villages and tribes also lived there. “History,” *Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria*, 2021, <https://www.mechoopda-nsn.gov/history/>. Accessed July 9, 2021.

³⁸ Letter from Maggie Lafonso, Capitola, Calif., to Annie Bidwell, Washington D.C., April 8, 1905, Folders7-8, Box 78, Annie Ellicott Kennedy Bidwell Papers, 1842-1918, Collection 30-125-2024, California State Library.

³⁹ Letter from Maggie Lafonso, Capitola, Calif., to Annie Bidwell, April 6, 1905.

-
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Letter from Maggie Lafonso, April 12, 1905, Capitola, Cal., to Annie Bidwell, Washington D.C., April 12, 1905.
- 42 Letter from Maggie Lafonso, April 8, 1905.
- 43 “The Indian Girls at the Y.W.C.A. Conference at Capitola, Cal.,” *The Indian’s Friend*, June 1909, 5.
- 44 “Good Reports of Y.W.C.A. Work in this Territory,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, March 30, 1910, 1:6-7.
- 45 Delegates Hold Many Meetings,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 3, 1905, 3:3, Accessed July 30, 2022.
- 46 “Regular Work is Taken Up,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 31, 1908, 3:1, Accessed July 30, 2022.
- 47 “An Indian School Association,” *The Association Monthly*, Volume 3, Number 6 (July 1911): 234-235.
- 48 Peter Smith, “U.S. Churches Reckon With Traumatic Legacy of Native Schools,” *The Huffington Post*, July 22, 2021, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/us-churches-native-schools_n_60f9cd12e4b0158a5edeb723. Accessed July 24, 2021.
- 49 Charla Bear, “American Indian Boarding Schools Haunt Many,” *National Public Radio - Race*, May 12, 2008, <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=16516865>. Accessed July 8, 2021.
- 50 “Y.W.C.A. – The Students’ Conference Now in Session at Capitola,” *Santa Cruz Evening Sentinel*, May 19, 1900, 3:2.
- 51 “The Students’ Conference at Capitola is Ended,” 1:1-4.
- 52 Carmel Riley, “Y.W.C.A. Conference,” 128.
- 53 “Y.W.C.A. Conference at Capitola,” *Santa Cruz Weekly Sentinel*, March 31, 1906, 3:2.
- 54 “Capitola,” *The Daily Palo Alto*, April 22, 1903, 14:2-3.
- 55 Dorothy R. Fuller, “Recreation of a Summer Conference,” *The Association Monthly*, Volume 3, Number 4 (May 1909): 171-172.
- 56 “The Capitola Conference,” *The Association Monthly*, Volume 2, Number 5 (June 1908): 225.
- 57 Irma Bromley, “The Capitola Conference,” *The California Occident*, Volume LIV, Number 2 (March 1908): 36-37.
- 58 “Conference at Capitola,” *The Daily Palo Alto*, May 10, 1900, 4:1.
- 59 Shifting Sands,” *Santa Cruz Surf*, May 24, 1901, 4:1.
- 60 “The Conference at Capitola – Report on Y.W.C.A. Work Shows Interesting Facts,” *Santa Cruz Evening Sentinel*, May 21, 1902, 1:3.
- 61 “The Young Women’s Christian Association – A Large Attendance of Students Enjoy Interesting Sessions,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, May 17, 1904, 4:3.
- 62 “A Demonstration in Domestic Science,” *The Evangel*, Volume 14, Number 147 (November 1902): 16-17.
- 63 “The Capitola Conference,” *The Evangel*, Volume 17, Number 173 (May 1905): 1-3.
- 64 “The Convention at Capitola,” *Santa Cruz Evening Sentinel*, May 18, 1904, 3:4.
- 65 “Personal Splash,” *Santa Cruz Surf*, May 18, 1903, 6:3.
- 66 “Y.W.C.A. – Good Girls Coming to Capitola,” *Santa Cruz Surf*, April 17, 1903.

- ⁶⁷ Hihn, Frederick Augustus. (May 21, 1903). [Letter to Barnhart & Swasey]. University of California, Santa Cruz, Letters of F.A. Hihn & The F. A. Hihn Co (Book 50, Vol 2, page 179, Transcribed by Stanley D. Stevens, Letter 3892), 957.]
- ⁶⁸ Hihn, Frederick Augustus. (May 19, 1903). [Letter to R.M. Briare]. University of California, Santa Cruz, Letters of F.A. Hihn & The F.A. Hihn Co. (Book 50, Vol. 2, page 166, Transcribed by Stanley D. Stevens, Letter 3838), 929-930.
- ⁶⁹ “Melodies Echo on the Cliffs,” *Santa Cruz Evening Sentinel*, May 20, 1903, 3:2.
- ⁷⁰ Swift, 47.
- ⁷¹ Pacific Coast Conference Committee, 1904, 2.
- ⁷² “The Students’ Conference,” *Santa Cruz Evening Sentinel*, May 24, 1900, 3:3.
- ⁷³ “Delegates Indulge in Athletic Games,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, April 2, 1910, 1:1.
- ⁷⁴ Ibid.
- ⁷⁵ “College Girls Invade Quiet Capitola,” *Santa Cruz Evening Sentinel*, March 31, 1905, 1:1.
- ⁷⁶ Carolyn Swift, “Pincushions to Politics: Women in Nineteenth Century Santa Cruz County,” City of Capitola, Capitola Museum, <https://www.cityofcapitola.org/capitola-museum/page/pincushions-politics-women-nineteenth-century-santa-cruz-county> Accessed July 20, 2021.
- ⁷⁷ “The Capitola Conference,” *The Association Monthly*, Volume 2, Number 5, (June 1908): 225.
- ⁷⁸ “Capitola Conference Adjourns to Big Trees,” *San Jose Mercury-News*, March 29, 1911, 2:3.
- ⁷⁹ “National Sec, Hays Interests Delegates,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, April 1, 1910, 1:3-4.
- ⁸⁰ “From California – An Interesting Letter from a Vermonter at Santa Cruz,” *St.. Albans Weekly Messenger* [Saint Albans, Vermont], March 7, 1889, 8:3-4.
- ⁸¹ “Notes By the Way of a Trip to Pacific Coast and Return – Being the Memoirs of a Printer’s Journey to the International Typographical Union Convention in Los Angeles,” *The Morning Tulsa Daily World*, February 6, 1916, 30:1-7.
- ⁸² “Capitola Echoes,” *The Association Monthly*, Volume 1, Number 6 (July 1907): 273.
- ⁸³ Irma Bromley, “The Capitola Conference,” 36-37.
- ⁸⁴ “Capitola Conference Adjourns to Big Trees,” 2:3.
- ⁸⁵ “Out of Town Society,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, March 27, 1912, 6:5.
- ⁸⁶ Carol Coman, “Cranford,” *Alpha Gamma Delta Quarterly*, Volume VI, Number 3 (May 1915): 211.
- ⁸⁷ “Asilomar State Beach,” *California Department of Parks and Recreation*, 2022. https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=566 Accessed July 10, 2021.