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Chapter 5: Fourth Annual Conference or Newport Again? 1921

Frank Cole

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Fourth Annual Conference (or Newport Again?)
1921

The Program Committee met late in July, 1920, following the Third Conference, with a fond hope that a new location with ample auditorium and accompanying dormitories could be found. The first consideration was the ^{permanent} location. There is a report of this meeting in the February, 1921, issue of 'A Friendly Endeavor', "After earnest prayer we talked just as earnestly, dwelling principally on the Newport and Tillamook beaches. All the desirable and undesirable points of every available hotel in the good city of Newport were freely discussed...then in like manner was the character of the Tillamook beach put to the test. Everybody present wanted the right course taken, and the greatest desire was to have the permanent location where it would be best for all concerned and where the most good could be accomplished. All were aware that while many of our people would have Newport as their choice, others would prefer Ocean Lake Park. Finally, when the evening was far spent, and no conclusion had been reached, we decided to vote by ballot. The result was almost unanimous for Ocean Lake. Probably the greatest points in its favor were, first, it is new and increasingly popular; second, it can be easily reached either by auto or rail; third, a portion of land has been offered us free of all cost, by the Bozarth Realty Company, which means a great deal to us. We have a chance of a lifetime in getting a good Conference location, and during the summer season, renting it to three or four other conventions, such as the B.Y.P.U., the State C.E. Union, Presbyterian C.E. etc. We had an offer of that kind last summer with a rent of \$100. In a few seasons we could pay for our building, and better still, the influence of a series of conventions such as these would raise the moral tone of the community for miles around. If we look through the glasses of faith, we can even catch a glimpse of a monthly meeting being planted there."

Previously, a committee had been appointed by the Executive Committee of the C.E. Union to investigate the possibility of securing some ground near Ocean Lake. Members were Homer Cox, O.J. Sherman, Allen Smith and Chester Hadley. It was while conducting this investigation that the offer was made by Bozarth Realty whereby some property in the locality might be deeded to the C.E. Union for the specific purpose of becoming the Conference home. When the plot of ground was examined, it was discovered that a narrow strip of land, comprising eight lots, separated the proposed Conference grounds from the highway. Before the gift could be accepted, it would be necessary to obtain this strip. The owner, a Mrs. Minnie Swain, consented to sell the lots at \$10 each, or \$74.00 cash for the entire eight lots. The difficulty with which the money was raised is a commentary on the economic conditions of that period. ~~Bell G. Badley~~ The matter was circulated among interested people and Bell G. Badley offered what was then her entire bank account, a sum of \$45.00. Others completed the needed amount by small

contributions. Since this was the first purchase of ground by the C.E. Union, to Bell Badley goes the honor of having been the very first contributor to the future Conference home. (Quoted from a senior thesis by Walter C. Cook). The committee decided to accept the offer of the Bozarth Estate, though it carried a conditional clause relating to improvement of the property. This action confirmed the decision to make the Ocean Lake Park area (later Twin Rocks) the permanent home of the Christian Endeavor Conference.

the early 1920s.

Economic conditions were especially difficult in ~~1921~~ The country was undergoing a financial depression, unsettled business prospects and general uneasiness. Heavy rains in the Willamette Valley caused crop failures which involved many Friends. The treasury of the C.E. Union of Oregon Yearly Meeting was "emaciated." So the vision and hope of young Friends for a permanent home with a big auditorium and accompanying facilities for sleeping and eating had to be held in ~~h~~hinds and hearts while waiting for future developments. ~~P~~In the meantime, the next Conference needed specific planning.

The Program Committee reported the plan for the summer..."we will meet at Newport again August 2-8, unless someone can suggest some other place in Oregon that will accommodate 300 young people by sleeping them and feeding them. Since we can't have what we want, we will want what we can have and be happy. All who will do this, please make it known by saying 'aya.' The 'ay~~a~~es have it!" Plans were made during the spring, and the program with arrangements for accommodations were announced in the June, 1921, issue of 'A Friendly Endeavor.'

The Baptist Church was rented. It provided an auditorium, class rooms and facilities for meals. Tents and cottages were rented as near the church as possible. Rates for rooms for the entire week were "for two in a bed—\$2.15 each, for one in a bed—\$4.50. No charge for extra cots for children." The rooms offered springs and mattresses but each delegate must furnish bedding, pillows, towels and soap. For the meals, they were asked to bring "a common white plate, cup and saucer, knife, fork, and spoon, and if possible donate them to the Conference. This will save the expense to the Club of buying dishes" The Club plan was used again with the cost estimated at \$10.00 for the week with the usual discounts for children. Delegates were advised to bring warm clothing, auto blankets, porch cushions and heavy shoes or rubbers. They were told that arrangements would be made for private conferences with the various program leaders as may be desired.

The program was printed in "A Friendly Endeavor" and also in a printed brochure distributed in advance. This was the first separate printed program. The subjects offered in the morning classes indicate a broad span of interest and concern. The leadership was impressive, drawing from Oregon Yearly Meeting, Pacific College and North Pacific Evangelistic Institute. (A new area called "V^Socation^Sal" was added with capable speakers covering each.) William M. Kirby brought the inspirational messages for

for the evening services. It was reported that in 1920 these meetings were appreciated by the people of Newport and they were insistent that similar services be held in 1921 that would include both Conference attenders and the public. The afternoons were reserved for recreation, and we can assume there were similar activities to those enjoyed in 1920. Saturday night was reserved for stunt night again.

It is sad to read this announcement in the June, 1921, issue of 'A Friendly Endeavor,' This is the final issue of the third year...We regret greatly to announce that unless some unforeseen financial provision is made, this will be the last number published. We have prayed about the matter faithfully, and are convinced that the paper has been a blessing. However, it is not an essential, and owing to the financial conditions it seems impossible to carry it on at present. We hope, and think it probably, that in another year our societies will be able to publish it again..." Actually the next number did not appear till July, 1924, when a special number was published, called the Convention Issue. It promoted the Seventh Annual Conference at Twin Rocks. Publication on a regular basis resumed January, 1925.

Thus we ~~may~~ lack the usual enthusiastic report. A few nostalgic bits appear in the July, 1924, special number in a "Do You Remember?" column. For 1921 it asks, "Do you remember the beautiful water agate you hunted for and never found? The plain little yellow agate you never hunted for and always found? Olive Terrell's Conference song that we're still singing: "Glory, glory, hallelujah, Conference days bring blessings to ya, Chilly breezes blow right through ya, While ocean waves roll on." From the jingles rendered for Stunt Night on the beach: "And here's Mr. Hinshaw, L. Clarkson's his name, He may have been wild, but was easy to tame; His wonderful sermons Are built high and deep, If you don't get inspired, It's because you're asleep." and "Who is the boss? I, said Blaine Bronner, On my word and honor, I am the boss. Who pays the bills? I, said Chet Hadley. I rush around madly and I pay the bills." Another: "Here is Floyd Perisho, always the same. He's ready for any old kind of a game. He sings or he ~~p~~^t preaches, he lectures or preaches. To raise an endowment is always his aim."

There are in the files notes on the classes taken by two attenders. Dr. John C. Brougher comments; "Vacations were uncommon in the community of Scotts Mills, Oregon, where I attended the Friends Church. To attend a Christian Endeavor Conference was looked forward to with great anticipation." He wrote down notes on the three classes he attended. The second notebook has no name. These two wrote about the classes, indicating that Conference attenders were there as much for study and spiritual growth as for the recreational features of the vacation which were not mentioned.

The discouraging economic conditions of the time did not seem to dim the vision and enthusiasm of Christian Endeavorers who remained devoted to the summer Conference. The decision to make Twin Rocks the permanent home kept before them the future possibilities for development and enlargement. This constant vision did not change.

Shall we include program & leaders.