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## Chapter 17: Twin Rocks Conference 1934-1935

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## Twin Rocks Conference

1934 - 1935

A major development encouraged and excited Conference attenders in the two years ahead. The dormitory which had been a dream through the years was planned and built, adding a satisfying dimension to the Twin Rocks program. There were other changes but this was especially significant. Two major factors galvanized the dreams into action. For several years various religious youth groups had inspected the grounds with the purpose of renting them for their conventions. Appreciation for the beauty of the setting was always expressed, but in the end most went elsewhere because of inadequate sleeping accommodations. This meant the loss of revenue which could finance added facilities and improvements. Sydney Alexander was making strides on the grounds. Stumps were being cleared off and progress made in preparing areas for camping and Conference activities, but the need for a building became increasingly apparent. The second stimulant to action was heavy rain during the Conference of 1934.

There was a change in attitude toward the age of Christian Endeavorers during this period. In his report to the Yearly Meeting Walter Lee had noted some drop in total membership in the C.E. Union. In the "Friendly Endeavor" of July, 1934, he explained a possible reason. "Time rolls on and we grow older. If you are nearing thirty or have passed it, let us have a little chat...Last year a group of us young people (ages 25 to 31) did something startling. We had been having a fairly good C.E. but eventually we discovered that the younger set who came to C.E. and sat and listened to us talk were not getting much out of the meetings. So we held a council to discover how we could be the most help...and this was the answer-get out! Now that is a hard thing to do for folks who had been in Christian Endeavor as long as we had. As a result we organized an Alumni Society and invited all older than we were to join us. We pledged ourselves to support the Young People's C.E. with our prayers and money, appointed a senior advisor for it and left it alone. Would you believe it—they managed to get along without us; in fact, they are doing better without us! Now, older young people, try organizing an Alumni C.E. for yourselves. Do not wait until you are asked to, but beat the young people to it and do it on your own initiative. It will be good for both your group and the younger group. If I can help you, write to me as Alumni Superintendent." Walter Lee resigned as president of the C.E. Union to assume the new assignment.

Milo Ross was elected the new president. His appointment underlined a significant development of leadership through the Conference program. He had grown up attending the summer gatherings and now he not only assumed the leadership, but was asked to teach one of the Conference classes. He reported to the next Yearly Meeting that membership in C.E. had increased by 178 during the year. Edward Harmon, another long-time Conference attendee was asked to lead a class. From this year on, many leaders in the Conference programs



were recruited from the ranks of former attenders.

Promotion for the 1934 Conference continued with enthusiasm and spirit. In the spring a challenge went out across the C.E. Union. "Do you want board and room at Conference and banquet ticket free? All these will be given to the person who is the winner of the big Twin Rocks Essay Contest. There is also a second prize—a ticket to the banquet and one-half board and room at Conference. The subjects for the essays are: 1. Why I like to go to Conference. 2. What Conference means to Oregon Yearly Meeting. 3. Why the combination of recreation and religion at Conference is desirable. 4. How shall we continue to improve Conference? The contest is open to anyone of eighth grade or high school age. The four best will be chosen to be delivered orally by the authors at the Annual Banquet."

The banquet was held in April at First Friends Church, Portland. An invitation in rhyme appeared in the "Friendly Endeavor" and 345 Christian Endeavorers attended. Allen Hadley and Eugene Coffin led the lively singing. The essays were read to an eager and attentive audience. Marie Ellis of First Friends and Dorothy Choate of Lents wrote on the first subject. Keith Macy chose the third subject and Thelma Rose presented an essay on "Conference." After pondering these excellent presentations, the judges awarded first prize to Dorothy Choate and second to Keith Macy. The other finalists were given two days free board and room at Conference. A special surprise dessert was squares of vanilla icecream with chocolate Twin Rocks in the center.. Walter Lee concluded the evening with a challenging message on "Builders," emphasizing the importance of a strong foundation and finishing a structure once begun. The report concludes, "Coming home we heard comments like, 'when they were talking, I could almost seem to hear the ocean roaring and smell the straw ticks...'"

L. Dell Lamb wrote a stirring piece for the July, 1934, issue urging one and all C.E. members to plan for the next Conference. "Reports drifting in...from the western section of the Yearly Meeting show that Endeavorers are talking, eating and sleeping Conference. Once a person attends the first time, he just can not help but pass the invitation along. In fact, the Twin Rocks joy bug bites him and the 'fever' remains for life." He outlined the program, activities and leaders.

The 1934 Conference was blessed in many ways. Attendance remained high. There were some new features. A Youth Council was named by the Executive Committee to cooperate with Miller and Hazel Porter, Conference father and mother, in developing general guidelines relating to behavior and conduct during Conference. Paul Ashteford, Newberg Quarter, Mary Collver, Portland Quarter, and Esther Cammack, Salem Quarter, were named as starting members. A mimeographed daily bulletin called "The Twin Rocks Daily; Conference Times" was published six times. This sheet provided the means of informing attenders helpful



suggestions and rules. Surf bathers were cautioned about safety and the tides printed. Activities were announced.

On Wednesday afternoon Dell Lamb and Eugene Coffin, recreational directors, led a pep assembly, with attenders sitting in groups according to C.E. Societies. Songs and yells of the groups were judged. Newberg won first place, Sunnyside second and Lents third. The "ultra-modern" recreation theme was announced, "Rocketing to Mars." Through the facilities of professional equipment provided by Paul Lewis of Tillamook, a radio broadcast was given from "KERC" and continued nightly, telling of the ship's journey to Mars. Team captains were: Comet, Walter Williams; Bullet, Paul Astleford; Arrow, Sherman Hadley; and Zenith, Keith Macy. All types of sports, star chasing, swimming, horseshoes, boating hikes, cycling, deep-sea fishing, counted for millions of miles on the jump through ether, culminating with a track and field meet on the beach, a water carnival and four stunts presenting life on Mars.

Byron Deshler, pastor of Fresno(California) Friends Church was the evangelist. He was the son of George Deshler who had served in the same capacity for two former Conferences. He used the Conference theme, "On for the King." His ministry spoke to the hearts of attenders and each service saw seekers at the altar. Fred Baker had been appointed chairman of the Sunrise Prayer Meetings, held at 6 a.m. on the beach. The undergirding of these times devoted to intercessory prayer for the Conference supported the evangelist and his message. The spiritual enlargement and growth in the lives of so many young people was a rich fulfillment of the original vision.

A new feature in 1934 was a helpful "pastor's retreat" held each morning during the chorus class period and led by Chester Hadley. During the first class period, Milo Ross led a class on the problems of witnessing for Christ, based on the International Christian Endeavor Convention motto, "I will be Christian." Edward Harmon presented thoughts from the Gospel of John. Sophia Townsend reviewed the epic story of the Bible itself. Eileen Kenworthy and Josephine Fich held children's classes for those up to second grade about the different lights for Jesus from the theme song, "Brighten the Corner." During the second period Charles Beals used study sheets for a study of Isaiah. Ida J. Lee gave her ever-popular story on Quaker Backgrounds. Mildred Hadley directed the study of "You and Your C.E.", thus continuing the training of young people for organizing and presenting C.E. Work and programs.

On Wednesday and Thursday the rain poured down in torrents, drenching sleepers, bedding and clothing. The discomforts and inconveniences that resulted started a cry for a dormitory. Milo Ross wrote in the daily bulletin, "Do we need a dormitory? What an unnecessary question. Drip, Splash, Splash, Drip. Did you know that every one of us is partially responsible for the unpleasant conditions of last night? We haven't made possible a dormitory! If we could all back up the C.E. Conference expansion program with our pledges on Sunday, and with our Chart work next winter, it is possible that a dormitory can be built by next summer. So let us get behind this need." ~~The matter was dis-~~



The Executive Committee was called into session and reported to the Conference that they would appoint a committee composed of an architect and men of business ability to ascertain the cost and plan the structure. They hoped to have a new dormitory ready by next Conference time. On Sunday afternoon after the sacred concert led by Gertrude Cook, the subject was explained and \$420 in cash and pledges raised.

Another challenge from the Executive Committee during Conference in 1934 was an expanding chart program. Named "Courageous Campaigners for Christ", the program gave C.E. members encouragement and instruction for their C.E. work in their local societies, and for the Quarterly Meeting and Yearly Meeting activities. Each society was given an attractive chart to hang on the wall of its prayer meeting room. Suggestions were outlined for meetings, study classes and projects. Interest in missions, home missions and expansion, increasing membership and attending various rallies and gatherings was emphasized. The Junior and Intermediate Societies were also challenged to grow and learn. Of major interest during the year was the plan for a new dormitory at Twin Rocks for the annual Conference.

In January a committee composed of Chester Hadley, Worth Coulson, Kester Mendenhall and Milo Ross announced that the grounds had been surveyed and tentative plans drawn. They said that \$700 would be needed by June if the dormitory could be available for Conference. The February issue of the "Friendly Endeavor" carried pleas from Conference attenders,. Carl Voget of Portland wrote, "Anyone who witnessed last summer's rain dripping down his neck, on clothing and books wouldn't hesitate to do what he could to keep such from happening again. Build a dorm!" Dell Lamb wrote, "A tidal wave is sweeping ~~the~~ Twin Rocks—not from the pounding Pacific but from the increasing interest across the Yearly Meeting for a new dormitory. A blanket of stars proved sufficient shelter in the past, but a drizzling downpour last session started a demand for better housing...one denominational youth group has already inquired as to possibilities of renting the grounds for this summer but with a dormitory a necessity." Paul Cammack summed <sup>up</sup> his convictions asking, "we have been tantalized long enough with dreams of a dormitory, now is the time to erect it. Hasn't God blessed our Conference as we have sacrificed to maintain it?"

Promotion for the 1935 Conference centered on the dormitory project. On March 9th 245 enthusiastic Christian Endeavorers gathered for the annual banquet in Portland. Decorations were Conference tents and gay balloons. The big event of the evening was the unveiling of a true-to-life model of the proposed dormitory which had been covered with a blanket during the first part of the evening. At the proper time, Chester Hadley and Milo Ross took off the blanket to display the lighted building, with 245 "ohs" and "ahs" of appreciation and anticipation. The building committee allowed all outstanding pledges to be remade and brought up to date. In a short time over \$500 was pledged. This insured the beginning of the building "which will cost at least \$1,400." At another anticipated



moment, the balloons were broken and to the surprise of all, were seen to contain the names of the leaders and faculty of the next Conference. All were glad to learn that Joseph Reece of Yorba Linda, California, would be the evangelist and choir director.

Promotion continued with input from enthusiastic Conference attenders. Gerald Morrison of Portland wrote a parable. "Behold in a certain country there lived a young man, who from his youth had been wise and prudent. He, having much ambition, did, after school, earn small moneys from time to time and did then say to himself, 'I will not spend my substance for candy or gum, nor yet for icecream cones. Behold, I will place this money away and peradventure when Conference time rolls around, I will have something of my own to pay my registration fee and board.' So saying, he made for himself a small box wherein he didst deposit his nickels, dimes and yea, even quarters, against that day. Then, when it came to pass, even as he had planned, he had enough and more to pay his own way and exceedingly great was his joy. Now in this same country there was also another young man whose way was made very easy. His parents unwisely giving unto him much silver and small change which he didst spend without thought. He did in evenings spend much time in the company of companions who helped him squander the money he had so easily obtained. And so, it came to pass that the time of Conference was not many days hence, and he didst bestir himself and say, 'Lo, I now have no money and I will have to borrow above which I now owe if I am to be among those present.' And exceedingly great was his sorrow. Now, of these two young men who attended Conference, which thinkest thou most profitted by his investment?"

The essay of the 1934 banquet by Keith Macy, "A Spiritual and Recreational Conference is Desirable" was printed in the "Friendly Endeavor." C.E. Society members were reminded of the blessings of past Conferences and urged to plan to attend the next in 1935. The theme was to be "I Choose Christ." Miller and Hazel Porter were to be Father and Mother again. Dorothy Choate was named registrar. Grace Hadley, Bessie Gardner and Bertha Heacock were cooks, Walter Lee dining room manager, Worth Coulson general manager with Russell Strait his assistant.

There were 350 registered with 500 on Sunday. The high point for most was reported, "who of us but had difficulty keeping our bounding hearts cold and still as we rounded ~~the~~ the last curve on Highway 101 and saw the stately roof of the new dormitory towering among the majestic firs and spruces. Replete with splendored fireplaces, social hall, nurses' quarters, and three stories of sleeping rooms, to say nothing of that romantic balcony, the new dorm met with instantaneous and lasting favor. It seems to fill a great gap. It goes without saying that the Conference this <sup>YEAR</sup> was the best ever..."

The daily bulletin, "The Blue Print", reported, "Idaho Arrives! Compressed and im-pressed but far from depressed! Leaving Nampa at 11:15 P.M. we looked like ol' Father Porter going on his vacation with his 50-11 kids sticking their heads out every crack and



crevice...were we flattered and our spirits cheered when we drove onto the Conference grounds and the crowd of webfeet standing around to welcome us! But imagine our chagrin when we awoke to the fact that they were only dedicating the new fireplace! Anyhow, soaks, we're mighty pleased to be here and help break in your fine new dorm, because we were afraid of the big, bad rain...? The dedication of the outdoor fireplace was the first activity of the week.

The Youth Council was composed of Paul Astleford, Mary Collver and Esther Cammack with some new members. Marguerite Heacock from Portland, Jean Gardner from Newberg and Richard Brown from Salem were added. The Council met with Miller Porter to plan for the interests of the camp. They reported "Our aim is not to discipline but rather to bring about a feeling of cooperation in the behavior typical of Christian young people." They issued the following requests: 1. Everyone is expected to attend classes and church services. 2. The grounds are to be quiet at 10:30 pm and all in their quarters. 3. After night services, noone may leave the immediate grounds. 4. Wearing apparel to and from the beach and at other times is to be in acceptance with C.E. standards as in previous years. 5. Take part in the recreational program. 6. Observe rest period from 1 - 1:30 pm in quiet and in your tent. 7. Go out of your way to make others happy.

The messages of Joseph Reece in the evening evangelistic services were greatly appreciated. Phyllis Cammack ~~LED THE SINGING WITH BETHEL MAYES~~ <sup>led</sup> the singing with Bethel Mayes at the piano. About 75 knelt at the altar for prayer. Chester Hadley continued the pastor's retreat. After many years as a C.E. Union leader and Conference manager, Walter Lee led a class this year on "Problems of Quaker Youth." Denver Headrick presented Old Testament character studies, Edgar Sims a Tabernacle study. The Missions class was led by Howard and Julia Pearson, missionaries to Guatamala, Central America, under California Yearly Meeting. Milo Ross led the C.E. training class and Paul Cammack the Symposium. Eilene Kenworthy and Margaret Coulson held classes for the children.

The "Friends Federation of Labor" controlled by "Contractors" Elizabeth Ott, Paul Astleford and Mary Collver directed the recreation program. They used the theme of "Builders" in deference to the construction of the new dormitory. The bosses of the labor teams were Jack Laughlin, Bricklayers; Louis Coffin, Paper-hangers; Howard Campbell, Plumbers; and Don Strait, Carpenters. Activities were given points. The annual competitions were engaged in by many "construction workers" and awards of satin ribbons given winners. A jolly program of recreation was enjoyed by enthusiastic participators.

A moving highlight of the 1935 Conference was the dedication of the new dormitory. The ceremony was carried out in connection with the sacred concert, directed by Joseph Reece, with Esther Miller at the piano, on Sunday afternoon. Though much remained to be done to complete the new building, the joy of a dream come true was reflected in the faces of those who had waited so long for the moment. The vision of future expansion and improvement caught the imaginations of both the leaders of the past and the younger attenders who were finding recreation and spiritual renewal and growth a satisfying vacation experience. The vision did not change. The Conference at Twin Rocks was becoming a dynamic force in Oregon Yearly Meeting.