

Inaugural Speech
Lorna Truck, DMWC President-Elect
May 5, 2010

I've been told that officers used to wear formal dresses for this event, and the President Elect delivered a lengthy inaugural address, so I was tempted to bring back that tradition, but you will be happy to know that reason has prevailed.

I am really excited to begin our new Club year and the celebration of our 125th anniversary! I am so grateful to Marilyn Kramme, our current president. Her gracious personality and hard work have carried our Club through another rewarding year. Thank you, Marilyn.

I would also like to thank our club treasurer, Carol Beth Jeske, who has spent countless hours over many recent years keeping our club finances on track. She has been our club treasurer for longer than I have been a member, and we are all grateful for what she has done for the Club. Thank you, Carol Beth.

And I'd like to thank all the outgoing and officers and board members for their hard work and incoming officers and board members for saying "yes" to leadership positions.

Next year we will embark on our celebration of our past and of our future. Our theme, *125 Years of Making a Difference*, will set the tone. Corky Classen, and her 125th celebration committee are planning many delightful events for us to enjoy. We hope that our celebration will also increase our visibility in the community and help us recruit more members to enjoy our Club.

Next year I want to support and cherish the traditions of the Club and continue to emphasize membership growth. During my presidential year I hope to

- continue our work on the Club archives,
- increase membership recruitment and retention,
- improve Club leadership development,
- update our graphics, and website,
- and increase our social networking opportunities.

This is a very fitting time to begin work the club archives preservation project. We have a very valuable resource both for the club and for scholars of women's history. It is a treasure trove of information about the lives of women over the past 125 years.

This year I also hope to update our virtual image. When you look at our club website, you will see an up-to-date club calendar and a new leadership handbook for officers, committees and departments. And, as some of you know, we have a facebook page to increase our community exposure.

And now, to get us in the mood for our 125th year, I'd like to read the story of the 10th anniversary celebration from the Iowa State Register, October 26, 1895:

Tenth Anniversary of the club was made a fashionable social event last evening.

The reception at Circle Hall last evening commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Des Moines Women's Club proved an exceptionally brilliant affair as might have been expected. The attendance numbered several hundred and the dress suits of the gentleman and the bright evening gowns of the ladies gave a very stylish tone to the assemblage. After checking wraps the guests were announced at the parlor door. A number of pretty gowns in colors brightened the more somber black silks.

Yellow chrysanthemums adorned the hall mirrors at either end of the parlors and on the table was a jardiniere of great red roses. The seating of the entire receiving party on the stage signaled the opening of the programme; the stage itself was handsomely decorated with tall palms and begonias. The doorway from the assembly room into the hall was closed by a rope of ferns. The programmes were especially pretty and will be preserved as souvenirs of a noted event in the club's history.

Following a pretty violin solo by Miss Rose Reichard, was the presidential welcome. Mrs. Cummins said that with one decade behind them and standing at the very threshold of the second, she feels like a very new woman, not knowing which of the many paths before them to take, for the best good of the club...

Mrs. Carrie Hawley affirmed she could not say why she had been asked to prophesy "The Outlook" unless because she was a new member and had witnessed no defeat of expectation or hope. She firmly believes there is a bright future for this club of 175 women following various occupations and lines of thought, including some of the brainiest women in Iowa...

Mrs. Elizabeth K. Matthews presented greetings from the non-resident charter members. Greetings were received from the first club president, Dr. Margaret Cleaves, also from the first secretary, Julia S. Hunting, both residing in the far east; from the second secretary, Mrs. J. W. Mills from Oklahoma; from Mrs. Galusha Parsons, ex-president from Tacoma.

"This evening," Miss Matthews continued, "the past has been unveiled and the future revealed. Let us pause at the threshold. Today—a link between the yesterday of time and the tomorrow of eternity: the news gatherer of the one and the bearer of dispatches to the other. May its messages always be of prosperity to the Des Moines Women's Club."

“Auld Lang Syne” joined in heartily by the entire assemblage, standing, closed the formal programme. The chairs were removed from the hall and a general good sociability held sway. Beyond the serving of orange frappe, no attempt was made at refreshments. The entertainment was altogether a brilliant social success in the club history.

As I begin my presidential year, I would like to paraphrase the words of Mrs. Albert B. Cummins, our 10th club president, wife of former Iowa Governor, and then U. S. Senator Cummins, “with 125 years behind us and standing at the very threshold of a new era for our club, I feel like a very new woman, not knowing which of the many paths before us to take, for the best good of the club.” With your help I hope we will choose wisely.