

Whispers from the Past Influence the Future

Vignette by Melanie Smith-Yearack

I personally believe that my life or most certainly the world I live in is a result of those women who have gone before me. Sometimes I can almost hear some of them whisper over my shoulders.

They are still alive in my mind, as they are in the lives of those who reflect them and their actions.

We, as Illinois women, more specifically, Illinois Woman's Missionary Union, have been fortunate to celebrate 100 years of serving God, serving others, and serving each other.

I will turn 50 years old this year. What a wonderful vantage point that provides me. I can look back and appreciate all the women who gave of themselves so that I could learn and grow: GA leaders, Acteen leaders, associational leaders, camp staff and state directors. Because of their tireless devotion, I understand the importance of missions. I have gained the knowledge of what it means to be a member of Illinois WMU. I hold within my heart their words of encouragement and love.

But I also understand that with that blessing, also comes responsibility. It is my responsibility to whisper over the shoulder of the young women who will come after me.

How do I do that? Well, I'm still learning ... times have changed since I was a young girl, but I do know that the bits of wisdom given to me from those who walk ahead of me are spilling out into actions with those who follow me. It's exciting!

I'm proud to be a product of Illinois WMU. I'm honored to take my place as a mentor to those who follow. And perhaps, if you listen very closely, you too will hear the whisper of those special women who went before you.

Make them proud ... pass the torch.