giene, gardening, and ethics, and talks by general authorities and Young Women leaders. It also printed recipes and patterns for sewing and handiwork, as well as short stories, poems, and lesson guides.

At the June 1929 conference, the decision was made to combine the Young Woman's Journal and the Young Men's Improvement Era into one publication to serve both youth organizations. Elsie Talmage Brandley, the last editor of the Journal, became an associate editor of the Improvement Era.

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PETREA GILLESPIE KELLY

YOUNG WOMEN

The Young Women program of the Church in 1990 reached an international membership of one million young women between the ages of twelve and eighteen. It sponsored weekly meetings and classes with prepared manuals. It extended a full range of activity programs for young women that relate to their intellectual and spiritual growth, physical fitness, speech, drama, music, dance, vocational and homemaking talents, outdoor and camping skills, and leadership development.

The Young Women organization began as the Cooperative Retrenchment Association in November 1869. President Brigham Young organized the society in the Lion House, his official residence in Salt Lake City, with his daughters as charter members. He challenged them to grow spiritually, to resist idleness and gossip, to retrench from the styles of the world in dress and deportment, and thus to be proper examples of Latter-day Saints. They were not to give in to rude or harsh frontier ways. The poet and Relief Society President Eliza R. Snow became the supervisor of the new association, and Ella V. Empey, age twenty-three, was chosen as president.

The leaders designed a retrenchment costume, conservative in comparison to the high fashion of the day (no furbelows, flounces, or ruffles), with skirts to boot tops, pantaloons beneath, and necklines to the base of the throat.

By 1870 each ward in Salt Lake Valley had its own similar young women's organization with its own stated resolutions. The "one central thought" in all resolutions was "electing a greater simplicity of dress and of living; and . . . cultivating the mind rather than ministering to the pleasure of the body" (Gates, pp. 60–61). For example, the Fourteenth Ward resolved: "Feeling that we have worshipped at the shrine of fashion too long [we] do solemnly pledge ourselves to retrench in our dress, and to wear only that which is becoming to women professing to be Saints" (Gates, p. 61). And the Eighth Ward resolved: "Inasmuch as order is the first law of heaven, we will endeavor to learn the law by making ourselves acquainted with the principles of life and salvation. We will study the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and all works pertaining to our holy religion. . . . We will also study all literature that will qualify us to become ornaments in the kingdom of God, that we may merit the approbation of our brethren and sisters and of God. . . . We will not speak evil of anyone, but will be kind to all, especially the aged and infirm, the widow and orphan. We will en-

Ardeth G. Kapp, from Alberta, Canada, was sustained as general president of the Young Women in 1984.
deavor to become acquainted with the laws of nature, that we may become strong, healthy and vigorous” (Gates, pp. 64–65).

In 1871 the leaders renamed the society “YL,” short for Young Ladies Retrenchment Association. They focused on the teenage girls by sponsoring weekly meetings, charitable deeds, instruction in public speaking, and lively discussions of the gospel and current events. A modest exercise program consisted of ball bouncing and throwing, knee bends, and side stretches. Later they introduced croquet.

The program expanded and flourished. Eliza R. Snow and her women companions traveled throughout the territory of Deseret in wagons pulled by oxen, and usually acted as their own teamsters. Fervent prayer, a few candles, baskets of bread and molasses, and personal enthusiasm for the cause kept them going.


In 1875 an organization similar to YL was established for young men. It was called The Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association, and the goal was “personal improvement rather than entertainment.” The two organizations soon began monthly conjoint meetings. In 1877 the YL name was changed to Young Ladies National Mutual Improvement Association to correlate with the Young Men’s group and to reflect the growth of many units in many places across the nation. The first general conference for the YLMIA was held April 4, 1880. Leaders admonished those attending to find new ways to teach girls how to develop every gift and grace of true womanhood.

Supportive efforts were developed. Susa Young Gates had personally published a magazine called Young Woman’s Journal and now gave one-third of its space to the YL organization. A guide for all YL groups was printed, containing lessons and instructions for the girls and leaders and even ideas for beautifying the meeting places with pretty cloths and flowers. Typical lesson outlines included “What is the meaning of the word ‘Chastity’?” and “Why have you not the right to take the pin comb out of your sister’s drawer?” A favorite couplet became: “One cheerful face in a household will keep everything bright—put envy, selfishness, despondency to shame and flight.” Tuesday night became “Mutual” night for both boys and girls. The weekly talent programs, preceding separate lesson sessions for Young Ladies and Young Men, attracted large groups of young people, including many of other faiths.

In 1880 several prominent Utah women attended the first National Suffrage Convention in Washington, D.C. Church President John Taylor sent them with his blessing and the reminder that the Mormon women enjoyed voting and other rights afforded few other women in the country. Both the YL and Relief Society organizations became charter members of the National Council of Women of the United States and of the International Council of Women.

In 1886 and 1887, semi-annual training conferences for YL were held at the time of general conferences of the Church in April and October. In 1888, the first annual June Conference for young Women and Young Men organizations was held. Leaders provided special training in physical activity, story-telling, and music and class instruction. Four decades later, in 1929, they launched a new camping program for girls. In 1929 they combined Young Woman’s Journal and Improvement Era, to make one magazine for young men and young women. President Heber J. Grant was editor, with Elsie Talmage Brandle as associate editor and Hugh J. Cannon as managing editor. During this period they introduced the hymn “Carry On” as the anthem for LDS youth. Ruth May Fox wrote the words and Alfred M. Durham the music. They adopted the scriptural statement, “The glory of God is intelligence” (D&C 88:36) as the motto for both groups.

The Lion House, birthplace of the retrenchment association, became a cultural and social center for many young women. Young women received cultural enrichment through reviews and lessons in charm. Their service projects included wrapping bandages for soldiers and knitting baby clothing and shawls for the Primary Children’s Hospital. At the National Council of Women exhibit at the Century of Progress Fair in Chicago in 1932, LDS Young Women leaders gave a demonstration on the monumental accomplishments of women in the previous one hundred years.

In the 1930s, leaders gave new emphasis to music, dance, and the performing arts. They pub-
lished a recreational song book, and sociable singing became popular. They sponsored ten-minute musical programs or “road shows” that were locally created and rehearsed and then presented in successive wards in each LDS stake. They sent instructions in music and dance from Church headquarters to all MIA units, many of which then participated in an annual June Conference dance festival, a spectacle of choreography with up to 2,000 participants each year. Social dancing was also featured in the ward and stake houses, and “Gold and Green Balls,” featuring the MIA colors, became popular events throughout the Church.

In 1937 Lucy Grant Cannon became president of the YWMIA. She organized the youth according to age and interest, with special manuals, incentive programs, and symbols that fostered development and recreation for all girls twelve years of age and over. She introduced an annual theme to be memorized and recited at every MIA meeting throughout the world. For example, in 1941 the theme was, “I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say, but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise” (D&C 82:10). Manuals were written in Salt Lake City but adapted to the needs and customs of non-English speaking members of the Church. By 1948, during the administration of President Bertha S. Reeder, coordination, translation, and communication with the youth presidencies worldwide were a great challenge and new programs were created. Increasingly general board members were sent on weekend convention tours to present programs in activities, dance, drama, music, athletics, and camping.

In the late 1940s and 1950s, the First Presidency turned over to the YWMIA the girls enrollment incentive program that had been previously administered by the Presiding Bishopric. It was designed to increase attendance at all Church meetings. Individual awards were presented annually to qualifying youth at ward sacrament meetings.

In this period the Young Men and Young Women leaders initiated stake youth conferences that grew into major events. Sometimes they combined youth from multiple stakes for workshops, discussion groups, or meetings with keynote speakers from Church headquarters. They reinforced dress and dating standards and stressed morality. They generated a series of posters with full color illustrations called “Be Honest With Yourself.” These included such admonitions as “Virtue Is Its Own Reward,” “Great Men Pray,” and “Temple Marriage Is Forever.” They distributed wallet and purse-size reproductions to the Church youth. In 1960 they launched Era of Youth, an insert for youth in the monthly Improvement Era, with Elaine Cannon and Marion D. Hanks as editors. They prepared and announced musical productions from Church headquarters. In 1960 hundreds of stakes sponsored and produced the musical pageant “Promised Valley” by Crawford Gates, which celebrated the 1847 trek of the Mormon pioneers across the plains and into the Salt Lake Valley.

By the 1960s work for sixty or more women on the general board became a full-time Church assignment. Subcommittees prepared new manuals, programs, leadership training, and special youth conferences.

Youth leaders sponsored the restoration and full renovation of the Lion House for the centennial celebration of the organization of the first Young Ladies’ group, November 18, 1869. The new Young Women general president, Florence Smith Jacobsen, placed a prayer bell in a niche in the front hall of the Lion House with a brass plaque describing how Brigham Young used it to call his daughters together to form the Retrenchment Association. A historical publication, A Century of Sisterhood, was also prepared. New full-color manuals were introduced to lead the girls forward from Beehives, named to symbolize industry and dedication, to Gleaner Girls, whose biblical model was Ruth. Girls sixteen to eighteen had been named Junior Girls, but were soon called Laurels with appropriate symbols, songs, and motto.

An elaborate June Conference was held in 1969, with many foreign countries represented. An early morning reception on Temple Square was followed by banquets, dance festivals, musicals, dramatic readings, road show presentations, camp training in the nearby mountains, athletic seminars, and testimony meetings. The final general session was held in the Tabernacle on Sunday.

Church President Harold B. Lee in the early 1970s introduced a correlation program designed to integrate many Church programs for youth. The new Young Women president, Ruth H. Funk, and the general presidencies and boards of other Church auxiliary organizations began to meet with priesthood leaders to formulate and initiate the best possible spiritual and social experiences for youth. Coordinated with departments of instructional development, audiovisual materials, library resources, and translation, they subordinated all
other activities to the quest for spirituality. From this effort came the personal progress program and the young womanhood achievement awards. June Conference was replaced by regional training meetings under the direction of the priesthood. Under the aegis of Church correlation, a special magazine was introduced: *New Era*, a magazine for youth twelve to eighteen.

Elaine Anderson Cannon, as Young Women president in 1978, called twelve women with daughters between the ages of twelve and eighteen to serve on a governing board. Young women were encouraged to “prepare themselves to perform” to develop a personal testimony of Jesus, study the scriptures, and share the truth. They were to keep personal diaries, gather family histories and genealogy, set educational goals, and strengthen their families.

In 1980, at the Church’s sesquicentennial celebration, a Days of ’47 parade opened with 1,500 Young Women in white dresses forming a phalanx a full city block long and marching to the beat of 100 young trumpet and drum instrumentalists. Each girl carried her own three-by-five-foot banner mounted on a tall staff. Each banner was embroidered, quilted, appliqued, or painted to depict the girl’s personal goals. This activity was repeated by other young women across the world in local celebrations.

During this period Sunday classes for Young Women began to be held at the same time as priesthood meeting for Young Men. This focus on gospel principles was carried into activity programs on weekday evenings. The consolidated schedule of all Sunday meetings required new manuals that featured units of study and in-depth training on principles and practices relevant to a girl’s life. Preparation for the temple endowment was stressed for Young Women. Teachers of Sunday classes applied the manuals to timely local needs. Leadership training was conducted through special prototype discussion groups. “Open house” displays during general conference allowed for one-on-one conversations between stake Young Women leaders and priesthood leaders across the Church. Special helps were given leaders to assist in spiritual presentation of Sunday lessons. General board representatives held area conferences combining many stakes and regions in two-day sessions, and training sessions were given for Young Women and Relief Society leadership.

In this same period the presidency introduced semi-annual General Women’s meetings. Under the direction of the First Presidency, these meetings were held shortly before general conference week. Representative women leaders and General Authorities spoke. Women and girls from age ten were invited to attend, and some participated in special choruses. The meetings were held in the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City and were broadcast via satellite.

President Ardeth Kapp introduced the Young Women motto, “We stand for truth and righteousness.” She made a presentation to the U.S. Attorney General’s program against pornography and continued this effort as a member of a national task force. In the tradition of Brigham Young’s challenge, she encouraged girls to become “hell-ringers” or special examples to others in word, conversation, charity, faith, and purity. Her presidency focused on seven values for the Young Women program, each with a symbolic color and definitive direction: Faith, Divine Nature, Individual Worship, Knowledge, Choice and Accountability, Good Works, and Integrity. On the same day and at the same time, a special program sponsored Churchwide the release of helium-filled balloons carrying the testimony and commitment to these ideals of the young women of the Church.

Over the years, whatever the variations in programs and organizational structure, the emphasis among young women on being true daughters of God in appearance, demeanor, and testimony has not changed. Young Women units worldwide welcome nonmembers to participate in the personal progress program, to draw closer to Jesus Christ, and to increase their knowledge of eternal principles and appreciation for the worth and potential of their own souls.

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**ELAINE ANDERSON CANNON**

**YOUTH**

The Church defines “youth” as all men and women ages twelve to eighteen. Church policies and programs for youth are designed to help them make the transition from childhood to young adulthood