

What is the W.O.S.A.?

This question is often hesitantly asked by students still in school and even by new faculty members, which makes us feel that an explanation of these four intriguing letters is in order at this time, when we are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the W.O.S.A. as an organization.

Woodstock is proud of its history and traditions. As we dip into the record of its "First Century, 1854-1954" and read of those wonderful years of change and growth, we find the name of *Edith M. Jones* recurring many times. She was the leading spirit in starting the W.O.S.A. (Woodstock Old Students' Association) when she was a member of the Staff in 1910. We read that cards were sent out to alumni of that day, inviting them to enrol as members of the Old Students' Association, and by December 1910 there were 101 members enrolled (all girls). Co-education as we know it in modern Woodstock was unheard of in those far-away days! Following up on this, a message was sent out by Miss Jones (herself an old student): "We formed the W.O.S.A. in the hope that such an Association might prove a helpful link between those who were once students at Woodstock. The only condition of membership is the payment of a small annual fee, which entitles each member to our magazine the "Woodstock Quadrangle". We would urge you not to excuse yourself from joining the W.O.S.A. on the score of being no longer in touch with your old school: our very object is to try to re-unite former students with Woodstock, its Past and its Present. . . . In Union Is Strength"

This was written by a woman of vision fifty years ago, and even though she has passed on, the W.O.S.A. is very much alive today in many parts of the world. The first Reunion of Old Students was held in Woodstock in September 1911. The London W.O.S.A. came into being the same year and has a Reunion every spring. The Calcutta Branch was formed in 1915 and tries to hold its meeting in February of each year. These three branches—Woodstock, London and Calcutta—are the parent associations, and we also have a branch in New York City, whose records are ably kept by Miss Catherine Forman, but which does not hold a Reunion every year. This year's Quadrangle has records of 7 of these W.O.S.A. reunions held in different parts of the world—4 in the U.S.A., 2 in India, and 1 in London.

The first Constitution of the W.O.S.A. was printed in the "Quad" of December 1912 with rules pertaining to membership and presiding officers. From time to time certain of these rules have been amended and the alterations have been published in the "Quad". The Staff were referred to as "Associate Members" and were admitted to W.O.S.A. membership on the same terms as student members. Clause 2 of that early constitution reads: "That the 'Woodstock Quadrangle' be the recognized means of communication between the various generations of Woodstock students, and that the W.O.S.A. members be urged to help in keeping up the interest of the magazine by contributing articles to it (any items of personal news being specially welcomed by the Editors)"

"We all should feel that the memories of a happy past are among the truest and surest encouragements for the present and the future."

VERA I. MARLEY, Alumni Secy.