



## BWA Women's Department History

1905-

For many years Baptist leaders had been making suggestions for a closer fellowship of Baptists around the world. Baptist of the world were invited by the British Baptists to meet in London, England in July of 1905. It was here the BWA was born.

1950-

At a meeting held in conjunction with the Executive Committee in London, the European Baptist Women's Union was formed to express their faith in Jesus Christ by showing that they could bridge the chasms created by war. Inspired by this initiative, the leaders of the new Women's Committee were instructed to organize unions on every continent. For the first time in 39 years, women met on a firm foundation. Women from 29 countries attended the sessions set aside for them. These women penned what became the foundation of the statement of purpose of the future Women's Department.

1955-

The women's work progressed from a committee to a department, and the name "Women's Department of the Baptist World Alliance" was established. The first Women's Department emblem was approved (top of page) and the current emblem is found at the bottom of the page. It signifies women of all races beneath the cross of Christ taking His message of salvation to the world.

### Women's Leaders Through the Years:

Women's Department Presidents: 1. Mrs. Edgar Bates, 2. Mrs. Marie Mathis, 3. Mrs. Kerstin Ruden, 4. Mrs. Edna Lee de Gutierrez, 5. Mrs. Catherine Allen, 6. Miss Mercy Jeyaraja Rao, 7. Audrey Morikawa, 8. Dorothy Selebano.

### International Office:

The plan for changing of the officers every five years created the need for an international office to give the women of the Baptist world a focal point and a sense of continuity. Establishing an office of the Women's Department was a great step of faith. It has, since its opening in July 1982, proved that it was really needed. There have been 4 Executive Directors of the Women's Department and they are 1. June Totten, 2. Beth MacClaren Echols, 3. Willene Pierce and 4. Patsy Davis.



Continental Unions: The Women's Department's Strength.

## BWA Women's Department Continental Unions

