

PORTLAND PORTIAS UNITE:
Early Years Of Queen's Bench

by

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My subject is "Portland Portias Unite" - nearly 70 years of history and pre-history of Queen's Bench - history from 1948 on; pre-history from the 1920's to 1948.

"Portland Portias Unite" - is that a statement or a question?

Shakespeare gave us Portia, the Renaissance woman lawyer disguised as a man. But the early part of QB history reminds me more of the words of another English poet - Shelley - who wrote "...the hour is ill, which severs those it should unite".

When I was admitted to the Oregon bar in 1945, there was no Queen's Bench under that or any other name. Some of the women lawyers and law students were members of one or the other of two women's greek letter college legal fraternities - Phi Delta Delta and Kappa Beta Pi. But their membership was restricted. There was then no organization such as QB, open to all women lawyers. However, from what I later learned (by word of mouth and very old minutes of meetings) Portland metropolitan area women lawyers had met frequently in the 1920's. Their number had been increasing. From 1920 to 1925, for example, usually one or two new women lawyers had been admitted to the Oregon bar each year.

But dissension arose. A national organization had been formed - the National Association Of Women Lawyers (NAWL). Some wished to affiliate with that national organization; others didn't. Some had said uniting nationally would strengthen the position of women lawyers; others had argued that when, as in Oregon, women lawyers were accepted as members of bar associations, it would be inappropriate - even folly - to affiliate with a separate women's bar organization.

Accordingly, almost twenty years had passed without a Portland area women lawyers association open to all women lawyers, when in 1948 Cecilia Gallagher Galey wrote to each Portland woman lawyer, inviting her to attend a general meeting with a view of forming an association. It was a dinner meeting at the Benson Hotel. Between 25 and 30 attended. Gladys Everett was the speaker. She had just returned from the farthest reaches of China, where she had fulfilled an adventurous assignment with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Association (UNRRA). It was an exciting and stimulating evening. The consensus was to form an association and to continue meeting regularly - at least monthly. But the old controversy arose. A committee was formed to draft a constitution. I was on that committee.

The biggest problem appeared to be agreement on a name. Those against affiliation with the N.A.W.L. opposed any name that would suggest such affiliation to the public, even if we weren't affiliated. It was understood that almost any name using the words "women" and "lawyers" would imply affiliation.

I was then law clerk to United States District Judge James Alger Fee. I had just returned from San Francisco, where he had been assigned to try a complicated and month-long criminal anti-trust case. There I had become acquainted with San Francisco women lawyers, and learned that their local organization was (I thought very cleverly) called "Queen's Bench".

My suggestion of "Queen's Bench" as a name was unanimously and happily received - although the more conscientious insisted we should use "Queen's Bench Of Oregon" so as not to appear to be imitating. The constitution drawn by the committee was adopted, as well as the By-Laws.

Here are two somewhat tattered carbon copies of that "Queen's Bench Of Oregon" constitution and By-Laws adopted in 1948, which I found in my personal files.

Notice the dues: \$1.25 a year for active members - 50¢ a year for associate members. Provisions are made for various committees, including a nominating committee to report to each March meeting, nominations for President and Vice-President, as well as a Secretary and a Treasurer.

Required as standing committees were Membership, Program, Hospitality, Education and Legislation, and Public Relations. The fiscal year began April 1st of each year. Election of officers was held at the March meeting.

Likewise, I found two carbon copies of an April 22, 1949 Resolution conferring honorary life membership in Queen's Bench Of Oregon to Judge Genevieve R. Cline of the United States Customs Court, who had served over 20 years. The resolution recognizes her achievements and is further in appreciation of Judge Cline's courtesies to members of Queen's Bench of Oregon when in Washington D.C.

Queen's Bench did not affiliate with the national organization. It was agreed we would be primarily a social association. However, our constitution did state our purposes as the "promotion of professional advancement" as well as "comradeship and good fellowship among women members of the legal profession".

The Oregon State Bar had been integrated by statute in 1935, making membership compulsory. In Oregon, women lawyers were likewise eligible for membership in voluntary bar associations, such as Multnomah Bar Association. This was certainly in sharp contrast to situations in the Eastern states, where women lawyers were frequently excluded from voluntary bar associations.

For example, Karen Berger Morello, in her 1986 book "The Invisible Bar", which traces the history of women lawyers in the United States, notes that it was not until the 1960's that the Queen's County Bar Association in New York City, admitted women lawyers, and "it took a lawsuit to bring that change".

But notwithstanding this greater tolerance of women lawyers with respect to admission to voluntary bar associations in the West, in 1948 women lawyers in Portland were still, by and large, an "invisible" part of the bar. Karen Berger Morello's title was very apt.

I've had my own experiences in regard to visibility. In the early '50's, as an associate of a large Portland law firm, I remember when the managing partner seriously asked me for my middle name. Obviously disappointed with the very feminine "Florence", he said he had consulted with Martindale-Hubbell, and had been advised that it was that directory's policy not to allow a lawyer's name to be deceptive as to sex. Accordingly initials in lieu of a given name were not allowed. But although my full name would thus necessarily appear in the directory, he advised me that the firm would prefer that my name appear on letterhead and doors with my initials - as H.F. Althaus. Without apology, he explained that the firm felt that a woman's name might alienate clients.

I did not protest. At least the firm did not require that I follow Portia's example, and assume a disguise as a man! I had been working for the firm six months, and through conferences and such, a number of their important clients were actually aware of my existence.

It was at least some advance to have my name on the stationery even though abbreviated to initials! This may sound strange to you young women lawyers of today, but most of those of my generation were not so concerned with visibility as with the practical matters of making a living and having an interesting job as a lawyer.

And there was some progress toward visibility. Five years after, when the firm hired another woman lawyer, we did become more visible - both our full feminine names appeared on stationery and door.

But back to Queen's Bench. We certainly were enjoying meeting monthly , but it was frequently emphasized that we were not political - we would not attempt to take any stand on issues, nor become involved in lobbying activities, nor seek publicity.

Notwithstanding this policy, we did become involved in one issue. Quite inadvertently, sometime in the 1950's, we became aware of an old Oregon case, then still the law, which held that there could be no dower right in an equity interest, notwithstanding that there was such a curtesy right. This seemed an outstanding injustice which should be remedied by the legislature and the legislature was then in session. One of our more politically influential members undertook to see quietly that remedial legislation be introduced and passed.

But in the process we did acquire some very undesired publicity - our name "Queen's Bench" was mentioned on the floor of the Oregon House of Representatives as urging and sponsoring the legislation - which did pass! We laughed about the violation of our policy, but espoused no further causes nor did no further lobbying.

However in the 1950's, Queen's Bench attained high visibility of another kind. The bar had commenced concluding the annual bar convention with what became known as the "tent show" consisting of skits and songs and much entertaining foolery. The show had an especially talented writer - Roy Shields of the distinguished Portland corporation law firm, Maguire, Shields & Morrison. Roy Shields could no doubt have attained fame on Broadway - an American counterpart of the famed Gilbert of the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta team.

(W.S. Gilbert was also a lawyer, an English barrister who practiced law until he was 34 years old, in 1870 , when he met the musician and composer, Arthur Sullivan.)

In 1953, Queen's Bench discussed the idea of doing its part in adding to the fun of the annual "tent show", by performing some kind of a skit as women lawyers.

The obvious theme of course, was the Shylock and Portia story of Shakespeare - the "pound-of-flesh", "no drop-of-blood" case. At a meeting at Gladys Everett's house, we bandied ideas around. Gladys, who knew Roy Shields better than the rest of us, promised to discuss the ideas with him. Some months later, when we thought all forgotten, we were presented by Roy with a 45 minute skit about Queen's Bench, complete with a Queen, and key characters, such as Portia, Scrolia, Sulfuria (the "fuming feminine proscutrix"), Barbia and Arteria (who signed the blood bond). Time was short, so we took up a collection, and hired a civic theatre coach. All women lawyers who planned to attend the 1953 bar convention at Gearhart were cast, and there was a chorus which could and did include those new women lawyers admitted to practice in September just before the convention.

Our beloved Manche Langley, wittiest member of all, was of course Queen - Neva Elliott, Portia; Marian Rushing, Sulfuria; Pat Young Braun, Barbia; Gladys Everett, Arteria; (who signed the "blood bond"). I played Scrolia, whose role entailed reading the "blood bond". Roy Shields in his old Union Pacific Railroad cap, narrated the show most delightfully.

The performance of the Queen's Bench skit was greeted with great applause and acclaim.

This show indeed made Queen's Bench visible!

Many indeed expressed astonishment that there were that many women lawyers - at least a dozen on stage at once.

Roy Shields collected all copies of the script after the show, saying he planned not only to copyright it but to develop it further. However, this never happened.

But when I was desperately looking through old briefcases and packing boxes for Queen's Bench memorabilia to prepare for this talk, I found the "blood bond" itself - I had forgotten that we were allowed to keep our "props". So here it is - the "blood bond" that Roy Shields himself had created for our play:

Scrolia is asked by the Queen to read the "blood bond": -

"Tis written deep in colors red
And this, your Grace, is what it said:

"Whereas, when-as, what-is and to wit:
Pale men off as judges sit
Scarce fit to stand judicial strains
With sluggish blood in pallid veins
And whereas again, and wherefore once more
Our judges process thus gets slower
Unless their vim we can restore
By fresh supply from those with more.
Now therefore, wherefore, what-for and viz;
The condition of this parchment is
That I am hereby pledged to part
With a pint of blood from next my heart,
To constitute my blood bank ration
For fading judges rejuvenation.
And I do warrant and assure
That all my blood is fresh and pure
And has whatever it may take
To keep a judge young and awake.
And as and for my solemn seal
I hereto set my toe and heel.
DATED (yes, and frequently,
For I am still' but' twenty-three)
This April 1st of thirty-three"

Arteria

Another of my "props", known as the "Latourette letter",
I have not found. But I remember part of it. Justice Latourette
was in 1953, Chief Justice of the Oregon Supreme Court.

The Queen's Bench was alarmed at the arrival of a stranger,
Portia, demanding to be admitted to the Queen's Bench bar.

Barbia suggests a solution:

"I have a method to suggest:
Subject her to a bar board test,
Like those they give in courts of men
To keep fresh blood from coming in."

I can't remember all the bar questions, but they involved various issues such as "fishing rights in the bulrush pool", and "Judge Fee's federal rules". Portia unfortunately finishes with a "zero score". She appeals to the Oregon Supreme Court. The ruling comes down in the form of the "Latourette letter" addressed to the Queen, in which Judge Latourette states that Portia "...hath brought to me a sweet appeal - Wherein she states in verse and song - That your bad board has done her wrong. I did, of course, review her case, And also viewed her form and face. On points of form in this review, She did reform my point of view!".

From the success of the QB skit, came the Man-of-the-Year tradition. At the same 1953 bar convention, some of our cleverer and wittier members - Manche Langley, Alys "Red" McCroskey, Gladys Everett, Doris Keeler - wrote clever verses and devised a Man-of-the-Year ceremony to honor Roy Shields at our Queen's Bench bar convention breakfast.

We never intended to honor a man every year, just once in a while, when a qualified candidate appeared - a lawyer who aided women lawyers in some significant way.

Roy Terry was the second man honored - a sole practitioner who had always been a great friend of women lawyers.

The third Man-of-the-Year was federal Judge James Alger Fee. Although we had a rule not to choose judges unless they were retired, it was felt since Judge Fee had been (in 1953) elevated to the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in San Francisco, (a huge court sitting in panels of three) he was far enough removed from our practice and Portland, to be eligible.

Sometime in the middle 1950's we learned that Judge and Mrs. Fee were planning to come back to Oregon to attend the bar convention.

We arranged for the breakfast at the old Gearhart Hotel - our usual procedure was to extend the breakfast invitation to the wife, swearing her to secrecy, so the honor would be a surprise.

Here is a photograph of the Queen's Bench breakfast table that year - you can see Judge and Mrs. Fee, and the earlier Men-of-the-Year, Roy Shields and Roy Terry. Frances Schulte is presiding as President of Queen's Bench. I remember Judge Fee was told in the presentation speech that a rule had been broken in honoring him. Before he was chosen, it had always been considered necessary that the Man-of-the-Year be named Roy.

Judge Fee immediately responded (in his acceptance speech) that he felt the rule had really not been broken, for since both Roy Shields and Roy Terry had frequently appeared in his court, he could easily be known as "Rob Roy"!

In my recent frantic search for copies of Queen's Bench papers I might have retained, I did find copies of some items in addition to the constitution and By-Laws.

One was a copy of a list of Men-of-the-Year, clipped to a copy of a letter Gladys Everett dated October 16, 1973, in regard to arrangements for the 1973 QB bar convention breakfast. In 1973, two new Men-of-the-Year had been honored - Dean Orlando John Hollis for 1972, and retired Multnomah county Judge William L. Dickson for the current year 1973.

This carbon copy list of Men-of-the-Year has 10 names in all - 8 names prior to Hollis and Dickson - the two Roys, Judge Fee, four retired state Judges James Brand, James Crawford, Donald Long and Robert Thornton, and General Lamar Tooze.

Thus for the 20 year span from 1953 to 1973, there had been few Men-of-the-Year. I do not know whether any have been chosen since 1973.

At the end of the 1950's - September 20, 1959, Queen's Bench was the subject of a feature article in the Oregonian by Ann Sullivan. The picture shows the luncheon meeting of 20 some lawyers in one of the wonderful old round-table rooms at the old Chamber of Commerce building. Ann Sullivan interviewed Queen's Bench members about the nature of their organization. She quoted numerous comments, characterizing Queen's Bench as a "unique" association, with "no constitution or By-Laws", "scarcely any officers" with just an "unofficial president"; "a luncheon group, but meeting irregularly"; adding "there are never any speakers". "On rare occasions", the article goes on, "a male is honored by the membership for spur of the moment reasons announced at the Oregon State Bar convention".

One member is quoted as saying "the Queen's Bench reason for meeting is to subdue what frictions their competition and disagreements in public life might bring", and then asking "if that is not the same purpose for many men's meetings, too?"

Many paragraphs are devoted to descriptions of various public positions held by members, both in Oregon and away - as Dorothy McCullough Lee in Washington D.C. - There were many deputy district attorneys - Two had been elected District Attorneys - Grace Williams in Grant County and Hattie Bratzel Kremen in Marion County, one deputy city attorney, several legislators, solo and other private practitioners were noted.

However, I remember at that time that there were two of us, still associates of a large downtown Portland law firm, who deliberately avoided contact with the reporter - it was only one year after my full name had replaced my initials on the firm stationary - and we felt it not politic to become too "visible" to the public - that perhaps it could be damaging to the firm's public image.

This Queen's Bench story appeared in a special Oregonian section celebrating the Oregon State Bar's 25th year as an integrated bar. This Silver Anniversary was about to be memorialized at the 1959 convention in Bend.

Queen's Bench was becoming more and more visible!

And despite those 1959 vociferous denials of ever having luncheon speakers, I definitely recall two occasions when we did entertain fascinating speakers - both women lawyers from the middle East - one from Turkey, one from Israel.

Among my discoveries last month was an interesting newspaper clipping about one of those meetings. Showing it proudly to friends, I somehow stupidly lost or misplaced it. It had been clipped without the date, but I remember the meeting as most delightful. The guest was a very attractive young lawyer from Israel, who was undertaking an intensive study of American law. She was scheduled to enter Harvard Law School in the fall. She discussed the law of Israel and other interesting topics.

During the same period (between 1958 and 1968) a young Turkish woman lawyer, Yuksel Aykor, sought us out. It was her husband's trip - he was an electrical engineer visiting Bonneville and other hydroelectrical projects. Yuksel had gone to the Multnomah county courthouse and there a court reporter referred her to me. Hastily we arranged a luncheon. About twenty attended. Yuksel was an attorney with the Turkish Electrical Administration, where her husband was an engineer. Stunningly beautiful and fashionable - an intelligent and liberal moslem, she spoke about her country, its law, culture and history. As an aftermath, two of us exchanged winter holiday greeting cards with her for a few years, until the year of the big earthquake in Ankara. Unhappily, we have not heard since.

Queen's Bench had developed two traditional, annual occasions - the Christmas party - often a New Year's party instead, - and the summer picnic. For years and years the summer picnic had been arranged by Gladys Everett on Sauvies Island, by the banks of the Columbia River, on property then owned by her brother. Subsequently the picnic was often held in the Arboretum in Washington park. I remember one delightful Queen's Bench picnic held at the lovely hillside home of Cheryl Lee Ho, now with Oregon Liquor Commission Hearings Division. The Christmas or New Year's party usually took place at a member's private home. I remember well one impromptu Queen's Bench evening party held at Gladys Everett's spacious and always hospitable house in Irvington. This was after an all day CLE session in which Barbara Ashley Phillips had come up from San Francisco to be a principal speaker, along with federal Judge James Burns. The subject was the law of sex discrimination in employment. Barbara - "Bonnie" - had been a member of QB when she practiced in Portland. In San Francisco she had won a monumental settlement in the landmark federal discrimination case against the Bank of America. This Queen's Bench party was indeed a very special one.

In 1963, the fabulous, remarkable, incomparable Manche Langley died. Manche, the widely loved "Queen" of our Queen's Bench "tent show" skit had been admitted to the Oregon bar in 1909. She died, as they say, "in harness", at 79 years of age, still vigorously practicing law as a chief Deputy in Multnomah County District Attorney's office, then in charge of the Domestic Relations Department. But her practice had been wider than that field - she had often served as special legal advisor to the County Commissioners, particularly in real estate matters. Editorials in Portland newspapers marked her death by hailing Manche as the true pioneer Portland woman lawyer. Manche's personality can be epitomized by a comment I read long ago, in a very old set of minutes: "Manche came in from Forest Grove and kept the meeting from being dull!".

Queen's Bench was shocked into action. A memorial fund for scholarships for women law students - the Manche Langley Scholarship fund was immediately established by Queen's Bench.

This scholarship fund was mentioned in an October 20, 1964 news item about Queen's Bench in the Oregon Journal's "Women's World" section, headlined "Lawyers Organize". The item also noted the election of Queen's Bench officers for the year, and mentioned that Queen's Bench held monthly luncheon meetings.

In 1965 Queen's Bench joined with the two women's college legal fraternities - Phi Delta Delta and Kappa Beta Pi - in sponsoring a banquet honoring women juvenile court judges from all over the nation, who were convening in Portland.

Queen's Bench was certainly becoming more visible.

The 1960's were in full force upon us - the years of protest and controversy. Queen's Bench members continued to thoroughly enjoy regular monthly lunches together, but as to the turmoil of those times, in my recollection we did not take a stand as a group.

Individually, some of us protested and worked with activist groups, civil rights groups, women's rights groups, anti-Vietnam groups. Some marched and protested, some watched and criticized; some were neutral. In the 1960's one of the big issues that ignited women's rights groups in Portland, was the exclusion of women from the City Club. I don't remember any involvement of Queen's Bench as a group in that struggle. One of my very best friends, a staunch Queen's Bench member, joined a new sort of counter group to the protesters. The "Women's Metropolitan Club" was formed by business and professional women who had decided that they didn't need or want to join the City Club. They decided to have their own club.

I didn't join the Metropolitan club, nor did I join the picket lines protesting City Club discriminatory policy. But my mother and I did make formal application for membership in the City Club, sponsored by a gallant young friend, Paul Meyer. Paul was a City Club member who contended the City Club constitution need not be amended by the required two-thirds majority, but that it could be reasonably interpreted to allow women as members. The effort failed - after some weeks the City Club secretary returned our checks.

Then, later, when Sid Lezak became President, he held a series of evening hearings all over the city. I was one asked to testify at one of these hearings; I recall I represented the "Council for Women's Equality". This was one of the groups forming the coalition for women's rights. Under Sid's leadership, the 2/3 City Club majority was achieved, and I enjoyed Portland City Club membership until I moved to Ashland in 1985.

In the early 1970's, Queen's Bench had more coverage of its meetings both by the press and by a Queen's Bench newsletter. The Oregonian on June 21, 1971, under the caption "Attorneys Elect" noted that Constance Jarvis had been elected the new President of Queen's Bench. On July 24, 1972, an Oregonian item stated Virginia Parkinson had been chosen Queen's Bench President, under the headline "Queen's Bench elects officers". Virginia Parkinson, a transplanted Washington D.C. lawyer, wrote and edited Queen's Bench monthly newsletter. In my personal files I found copies of six issues of the newsletter during the period July 1972, through April 10, 1973.

On February 13, 1973, the Queen's Bench newsletter shows in its Treasurer's report that there were then 28 dues-paying members - the annual dues had been raised to \$2.50. That 1973 newsletter exhorts Queen's Bench members to begin to think of nominating an "electable" candidate for the Oregon State Bar Board of Governors. Obviously Queen's Bench was beginning to consider becoming involved in Bar politics - and becoming more "visible".

In October 1972, members had been urged to work for election of the two women candidates for two separate circuit judge positions, Louise Jayne and Mercedes Deiz. One of those, Mercedes Deiz, was happily successful.

The newsletter of July 18, 1972 announced the luncheon meeting day had been changed to the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Another 1972 item was addressed to "Women Newly Admitted to the Bar", and stated that "Queen's Bench is primarily social; its policy is to know each other better; to discuss any legal problems any member might wish to discuss; to aid each other where practical".

But Queen's Bench members finally actively entered bar politics. Sometime in the activist 1960's women lawyers had begun unanimously to refuse nomination for Secretary - Treasurer of the Multnomah Bar Association - for decades it had been the "woman's position" of the bar officers. Immediately the bar responded by nominating and electing men only to all bar offices. This went on for several years; the nominating committee, all men, continually nominated three men for each office. But in 1972, we decided to change this. Several of us called all Queen's Bench members we could reach to come to the MBA annual meeting, as well as friendly men members. We planned to nominate from the floor, Queen's Bench member Virginia Renwick for the office of Third Vice-President. We obtained the help of a male lawyer, Wendell Gray, who nominated our candidate, Virginia, from the floor. She won easily over the three men nominated by the official nominating committee. Previous to the taking of the vote, each candidate had spoken briefly to the meeting. This victory we were confident, placed Virginia Renwick on the usual ladder to the Presidency. As with the former male third Vice-Presidents, we thought she would be assured of one of the nominating committee's three nominations for second Vice-President the next year. If she won that office, then, the following year, she would have one of the three nominations for first Vice-President - and so on, to the Presidency.

We were quite confident that she could finally win enough votes to achieve the office of President of Multnomah Bar Association in an election at the "town meeting" style annual dinner. In the following year, 1973, Virginia went up to the second rung of the ladder as expected - she was second Vice President. However, the next year, 1974, was the year the Multnomah Bar executive committee chose to change the election procedure from the town meeting annual banquet style to ballot-by-mail. Virginia Renwick did not win the male majority in the mail vote! Many of us undeniably thought the change in the election procedure was deliberately motivated by the desire to see that the first woman on the presidential ladder, fell off that ladder. The first effort by Queen's Bench members to elect a woman as President of MBA had failed.

These early 1970's were years of dramatic change. I was chairman of the Queen's Bench committee on new members. The newsletter states that I reported at the monthly luncheon that I would send invitations to each woman admitted the coming fall. The 1972 list - verified by the Oregon bar office - included 11 women.

The 1973 list was over twice that number - 25 women lawyers that year. After that, I stopped writing personal hand written invitations to Queen's Bench - I had type written invitations duplicated!

By 1975 the number of successful women candidates for the bar approached 50.

And in 1977 over 70 women became Oregon lawyers.

This was most exciting indeed. Women lawyers were becoming necessarily more and more "visible" - there were so many more of them.

Issues of discrimination came to the fore - issues of discrimination in hiring, in pay, in promotion to partnership.

Litigation under the Civil Rights Act of 1964 arose, most prominently in states on the Eastern seaboard.

In 1973, Queen's Bench received an interesting inquiry from a California state senator, directed to the Oregon State Bar, and referred by it to our President. The senator was named Mervyn M. Dymally, chairman of that Senate's Democratic Caucus. He wrote that the caucus was trying to complete a profile of women in the American legal profession, and accordingly was asking for historical and current information about the status of Oregon women lawyers.

Indeed, we were becoming more and more "visible".

Although I retired from practice of law in 1981, I retained full active membership in bar associations.

And so I became, in the early 1980's, a member of the first Multnomah Bar Association Committee on the Status of Women Lawyers, chaired by Judy Snyder. It was a hardworking, intense, serious, aggressive young committee. Many of the early Queen's Bench members did not at that time participate, still preferring quiet invisibility.

When on March 14, 1984, the Committee Report was made public including the results of the survey funded by the MBA, there was wide newspaper coverage. Oregonian headlines, on a full page devoted to the report, proclaimed "Bar Survey finds Sex Bias in Pay, Status" and "Women Lawyers, Cut on the Bias".

Women lawyers were truly no longer the "Invisible Bar" in Portland!

In 1985 I moved to Ashland, and lost track of Queen's Bench for several years.

Many friends visited me in Ashland, shortly after I moved. Friends from Canada came every summer. It was from a Canadian woman lawyer, a longtime friend, that I learned of some great advances (particularly in visibility) of Canadian women lawyers. By 1989 the Canadian Supreme Court of 9 justices was composed of 33% women lawyers - 3 women had been appointed:

- (1.) In 1982, the Honorable Madame Justice
Bertha Wilson, from Ontario
- (2.) In 1987, the Honorable Madame Justice
Claire L. Heureux Dubè, from Quebec

(3.) In 1989, the Honorable Madame Justice
Beverly McLachlin.

Moreover, under the conservative government of Mulroney, the Canadian Minister of Justice is a woman from British Columbia. This makes her an important member of the Canadian cabinet. Although Justice Wilson retired recently, and was replaced by a man, the present Canadian Supreme Court is still 22%, or almost a quarter, female. I was certainly impressed by this advance over the "token woman" type of judicial appointments, seemingly prevalent in the United States.

But at the Oregon Bar convention of 1989, I became aware of the continuing accomplishments of the Multnomah Bar Association Committee on the Status of Women Lawyers under the leadership of Katherine O'Neil, culminating in the creation of Oregon Women Lawyers.

Queen's Bench became the first local women lawyer's organization to affiliate with Oregon Women Lawyers.

Queen's Bench had always, at least in theory, considered itself to be statewide. Now as the important metropolitan member of Oregon Women Lawyers, it is playing its part in the statewide arena.

The Portland Portias, who united to form Queen's Bench in its early years, are no longer severed as to its purposes. They are united. They have achieved finally, in the words of the poet Milton, "united thoughts, and counsels, equal hope and hazard in the glorious enterprise".

Queen's Bench is invisible no longer. You are no longer the "Invisible Bar"! You are VISIBLE!

Finis