



## Blowing Springs #957 President's Report to convention – April 2016

The 2015-2016 year has been a good one for the members of Blowing Springs #957 despite having to cancel two of the meetings due to illness and inclement weather.

Our year began with an unscheduled meeting in the early summer – a tea for prospective members hosted at the Bella Vista Historical Museum. Decorations were beautiful, food delicious, and as Sally Field once said, our guests must have “really, really liked us” because from this gathering we added three new members to our chapter!

A second unscheduled meeting was held in August. Invitations to a “Surprise Celebration” were sent to all members. We gathered at the home of the president for coffee on the deck, all still wondering what occasion precipitated the “surprise celebration”. It was a note received from state office offering congratulations on the anniversary of our chapter's founding. So we had a surprise birthday party! We enjoyed cake and ice cream, a few party games, and reminiscing about our history!

Programs for scheduled meetings ranged from “Off the Wall”, a program which encouraged everyone to bring something “off their wall”, and share the history of the item and its meaning to them, a presentation of tin miniatures for the meeting at which we were privileged to welcome our state president, Camille. At our traditional Christmas luncheon we played Santa for the women in our local women's shelter. A large suitcase, which was one of the donated items, was filled to overflowing with a variety of gifts for the women. The suitcase and two brim- full tote bags were gratefully received at the shelter.

Other programs included an informative, but somewhat sad, history of the Orphan Trains, and on a happier note, a tea party with several varieties of tea for tasting, and an informational talk on the history of tea and its introduction into Europe and America. A tour of the Peel Mansion, an event planned for our May meeting, is scheduled for June when the mansion will open for visitors and summer gardens are blooming.

In addition to the Christmas gifts to the women's shelter, we donated \$250.00 to support of the Bella Vista Historical Museum.

We loved last year, and are looking forward to more educational events and fun next year.

*Harriett Neer*