

Herstory

What the Nelson Women's Centre has fostered

In all of these activities, it is important to keep in mind that ongoing activities that include meeting the needs of those women dropping in, reaching out to agencies, networking in the community, and constant grant and letter and report writing work. The event organizing is the whole other side of the work we do.

1972

Vita Storey (Luthmers) is Coordinator of the Nelson Women's Centre working on Health Issues. Marcia Braundy conducts a survey of the area's doctors.

Family Day Care shares the offices at 490 Baker Street.

1973 February

Nelson Women's Centre operating with Secretary of State funding.

West Kootenay Status of Women's Council. (The Trail Status of Women, Castlegar Status of Women, The Nelson Women's Centre, the Slocan Valley Women's Group, the Nelson University Women's Club) produces its first Newsletter, sent out to all those who attended the September 1972 Conference at Selkirk College. Editor: Marcia, working out of the Nelson Women's Centre.

Women's Centre reaching out to high school women with questionnaire on "Being a Girl."

Women's Centre collecting material and local information on abortion and birth control, and the quality of existing medical services for women in Nelson.

Women's Centre starting a small library with books and pamphlets.

Maureen Argotoff is working on Women and Poverty issues in Nelson.

Gail Haws visited the Self-Help Clinic in Vancouver (which became the Vancouver Women's Health Collective) and brought back ideas and materials. Canada Manpower (sic!) has funded conference expenses for a BC conference on Women in Education-Training, Employment and Counselling. The Vancouver Status of Women is looking for funding for travel to bring in 40 women from outside Vancouver.

1973 September

Through the Looking Glass sponsored by the Nelson Women's Centre and Notre Dame University: Women and their Bodies; Women's Movement; Women and Work; Young Women; Non-Sexist Child Rearing; Feminist films, slides tapes. Also planning travelling workshops.

Working Women's Survey finds women reluctant to give out details of their jobs without supervisor approval, particularly non-union women. Nelson women waitress's wage: \$2/hr.

"...it appears that most people tend to go along with the notion that what is good enough for a woman is certainly not good enough for a man, and what is good enough for a man is somehow too good for a woman."

“And most women did not feel they were discriminated against.”

The West Kootenay Status of Women Council is presenting with Selkirk College a two day session on Women and the Law. The Council’s President, Susan Charlton, is appointed to the National Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

1973 has been designated Human Rights Year by the United Nations.

The B.C. Federation of Women is an inkling in the eye of the Women’s Office and Women’s Action Group at UBC and the Vancouver Status of Women.

The Women’s Kit, a multi-media box of educational materials by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education is received by the Nelson Women’s Centre.

Trail Day Care Centre opens September 15th~! The Trail Status of Women is offering an adult education course on The Changing World of Women.

Bonnie Evans writes of the challenges and pressures that conspire to keep her from her vision of herself as a writer: time – husband/family – self: An eloquent and recognizable “excuse.”

1973 October

Maureen Argotoff runs for City Council in Nelson.

The Women’s Centre and the University Women’s Club host an all-candidates forum.

Virginia Clover presents a fascinating workshop presentation on The History and Ideology of the Women’s Movement to a small but engaged group of women at the Through the Looking Glass Conference, detailed in the newsletter by an unknown author.

Our Bodies, Ourselves, written by the Boston Women’s Health Collective is published by Simon and Schuster. Price: \$2.95

The Women’s Meetings in the Slocan Valley will reconvene on November 1 at Mel Thompson’s house.

1973 November

The Slocan Valley Community Theatre presents Ibsen’s A Doll’s House, directed by Nancy Harris, at WE Grahme in Slocan City and the Notre Dame University Theatre in Nelson.

Bonnie Evans shares stories of a marriage, a community, and a women’s group, and urges women to talk with each other and support each other through the challenges of coming to terms with ourselves and our lives in a changing time.

The Nelson Women’s Centre has received 16 replies out of 40 questionnaires sent to area doctors, out of which only 13 were actual responses. We call for women to take these questionnaires to their doctors next time they go and talk to him (sic!) about it.

A call for a name for the newsletter!

December 1973

Moe Lyons reminds us what demoralization marriage has meant to many of those who have engaged in it and praises the single life for women.

The 25 year old UN Declaration on Human Rights is reprinted in total.

Abortion is noted as a Conflict in Human Rights with a call for removing it from the Criminal Code. Vita Storey wrote a 5 page article looking at the facts and realities of the issue, and calling for letters to the Justice Minister of the day.

We see a letter from Otto Lang, Justice Minister, to Vita, justifying denying native women's rights and saying that the Indian Act took precedence, and native women who married non-native men should lose their native status.

We lobbied hard to have the Indian Act changed.

The Nelson Women's Centre supports the proposal made by the NDP Women's Caucus for the immediate establishment of a Women's Ministry.

1974 January

The Women's Centre started a "rap group" on Tuesday afternoons. (In 1974, this meant a discussion group, or perhaps a consciousness raising group.)

Kootenay woman Susan Charlton, with the Federal Advisory Council on the Status of Women, voiced concern in Ottawa about delays in eliminating inequities under the Labour Code, Citizenship Act, Canada Pensions Act and Human Rights Legislation, as well as the fact that despite the appointment of 2 new judges, no woman had been named.

IMAGES is suggested as the new name for the newsletter.

1974 March

Gene Errington of the Vancouver Status of Women informs us about the Royal Commission on Family and Children's Law, and the potential impact on women, and urges us to get involved.

Factory regulations restricting the work women can do have been repealed.

At the Trail Status of Women's panel discussion on Women's Changing Roles and Conflicts, there was a lively discussion of the Pope and the Roman Catholic church. There was also still a contingent who voiced that every mother must stay at home until her children are school age.

Marcia Braundy, sponsored by the West Kootenay Women's Council, and working out of the Nelson Women's Centre is organizing the Pass Creek Women's Festival, with women musicians, artists, writers and craftspeople.

Bubbles Hodgson typed the newsletter in total.

Bonnie Evans taught a Women in Literature class, with humour and wit, advertised at the Library.

Rosemary Brown introduced a Private Member's Bill into the BC Legislature that would "require all government departments and any company or organization which get provincial money to work towards full equality between men and women in employment practices."

Male employees in US Dept. of Labour will be allowed to take up to 30 days paternity leave, the first policy of its kind in that country.

1974 April

Women's Centre runs out of funding two months earlier than expected due to bookkeeping error. A call goes out for donations to pay the rent and a meeting is set to determine the future of the Centre.

The most spoken words at Thursday's Women's Meeting in the Slocan Valley:

1. Find your strength
2. In what way does power function in this relationship?
3. Start sentences with "I feel" and fill in with whatever emotion it is and say what is causing those feelings, specifically.

IMAGES is full of articles about Women and the Law, Abortion, and women controlling their own bodies.

West Kootenay Women's Council is running a 4-week Speak Up workshop, with speech writing, audio/visual aids, speech presentation, and Social factors in public speaking.

1974 June-July

Libby Weiser publishes an article about working on the green chain at the Triangle Pacific mill in Slocan, documenting several of incidents where women had to rise up and challenge discriminatory situations.

Shirley McCune describes similar treatment at Canadian Cellulose in Castlegar.

Women Centre reps attend BC conference on Venereal Disease at the Hotel Vancouver.

Work continues from the Women's Centre to follow up on project to get a sexual culture clinic in Nelson. Previously all culture were sent to Vancouver, and the delicate culture died on the way. This enabled the profession to say there was no gonorrhoea in the Kootenays. Success! A new clinic is opened in Nelson.

Nelson Women's Centre applies for funds to the Community Resources Board, where male members have provided "quite a bit of flack."

Trail Status of Women submitted briefs to the Berger Commission, attended the Action for Women conference at Capilano College, and had a full discussion regarding sexism in the schools and school materials. They also has a spirited debate about men attending their meetings. Sadly, what they agreed upon was cut off in the gestetner printing, but to my knowledge, that never occurred.

The two-day Pass Creek Women's Festival, was a great success. Women who had never performed on stage, but only around local kitchen tables, sang and played to great acclaim. Local artists and craftswomen sold their wares, and women learned new skills.

1974 August

The West Kootenay Women's Association is created under the Societies Act to act as the legal parent organization of the Nelson Women Centre.

IMAGES comes out in newsprint for the first time.

Marcia Braundy nominated to the founding Standing Committee of the British Columbia Federation of Women.

She attended the Secretary of State conference on International Women's Year – 1975 as a representative of the Kootenay Women's Council.

Canada's Federal Government gives the advertising contract for IWD to an all-male firm who come up with the logo, "Why Not?"

Otto Lang, Minister of Justice cuts off funding to the Saskatoon Women's Centre for providing women seeking abortions with information about where they might go in the United States.

100 women attend Status of Women Conference at Selkirk College. Shelagh Day, Human Rights Officer, is the Keynote Speaker. Workshops on Health, the Law, and Affirmative Action. Vita Storey gave two workshops on employment and Marcia Braundy and Kathy Woodward gave two workshops on non-sexist child-rearing.

Arlene Burwash of the Trail Status of Women is appointed to the Task Force on Police and Women.

Diane Luchtan and Cally Wozny were coordinators at the Nelson Women's Centre, still trying to get VD culture facilities at the local hospital so VD testing can be done in Nelson and the cultures won't be sent to Vancouver.

Hoping to receive funding, there are several workshops in the wings: women's health, women in literature, legal information and plans for a Birth Centre. The Women's Centre is open 5 days a week with one salary. There is a need for more volunteers.

IMAGES is being produced out of the Women's Centre, with secretarial and editorial support provided by the Kootenay Women's Council's Bubbles Hodgson and Marcia Braundy.

The Kootenays opened the discussion about men at the upcoming Western Canadian Women's Festival taking place in Kaslo.

A beautiful art deco type fold-out poster for the Nelson Women's Centre is the Centrefold of IMAGES, designed by Jackie Nedlac.

The Women's Centre receives a Secretary of State grant which will allow it to operate for 6 months. Camille Bush joins Dianne and Cally, staffing childbirth education courses and health. Women's films & books will be at the Women's Centre table at Multifusion!

Trail Status of Women is planning a one-day conference for senior secondary students for International Women's Year. Diane Edmondson reported on the BC Women's Studies Conference where graduate and post-graduate studies are being developed, along with potential two-year diploma programs at community colleges.

1975 April

The debate about men at the Women's Festivals rages on in IMAGES.

The highlight of the National Women's Centre Conference in Thunder Bay was Gert Beadle, a farm woman from the area, who read her poetry. The amazing and powerful work was published in the centrefold of IMAGES.

Irene Mock is working to set up a local Well Women's Clinic.

Camille Bush wrote a great article on the Diaphragm, what it is, how to get it, and how to use it.

Women' Centre groups coming up: On Abortion; Women & Health; Sexuality.
Classes: Women in Literature; Self-Defence for Women; Natural Childbirth.

Well-Women's Clinic open at the Selkirk Health Unit, Wednesday's 1-3PM.
\$15,000 received by Kootenay Women's Council for 4-day Western Canadian Women's Festival in Kaslo.

Women's Centre calls for protest of imprisonment of Dr. Henry Morgentaler.

1975 May

Women's Centre sends petition to Ottawa calling for removal of abortion from the Criminal Code.

Women's Centre sends telegram in support of equal pay for work of equal value, universal access to quality child care; equal rights for women in family and property law.

We gave a presentation at the Youth Centre with film "It Happens to Us," with a discussion on Birth Control.

Women's Centre lobbying for sexual health education, available contraception and lowering the age of consent to enable younger women access to information and treatment.

1975 June

Rita McNeil headlines the Western Canadian Women's Festival in Kaslo with strong feminist songs. The Slocan Valley Readers Theatre keeps the crowd spellbound. A group of women from the Lower Mainland facilitate a workshop on gay and straight women working together, bringing the issue out into the more public eye for the first time in the Kootenays.

1975 October

IMAGES has a new editor – Moe Lyons. She produces the 24 page Abortion issue, and calls for women to work on IMAGES as a collective.

The BC Federation of Women (BCFW) Convention meets with many women from all over the province and passes resolutions on Lesbian Rights, Education, Child Care, working women and Affirmative Action, and women in prisons.

1976 January

As her finale for International Women's Year, Grace McCarthy closes the provincial Status of Women Coordinator's office against the commitment of her government to instate a permanent office.

Slocan Valley Women's Readers performed at Selkirk College and Appledale Hall, sponsored by the Kootenay Women's Council. Nancy Harris, Bonnie Evans, Meredith Bain Woodward, Judith Ceroli, Cathie Marrion and others gave power to the words of women writers and shared skills in a follow-up workshop.

On January 30, the West Kootenay Women's Association holds its first AGM. This entity is put in place to be the official society of the Nelson Women's Centre. The first committee structure is also put in place.

Women's Centre becomes a full member of the BCFW.

1976 February

IMAGES has a collective: Moe, Marcia, Rita, Camille, Lone, Lisa and Karen.

Lynn Lidstone's poetry appears in print for the first time.

Women's Centre plans for participation in International Women's Day demonstration and lobbying event in Victoria. (Women's Rally for Action later set for April 22)

Ongoing consciousness-raising groups, self-defense course

1976 March

IMAGES puts out a Women & Health issue in preparation for the big Women's Health Fair at Selkirk College:

Local doctors, nurses, and health specialists and invited guests present on Self-Exams, Breast, Uterine and Cervical Cancer, Vaginal & Urinary Tract Infections, Female Sexuality, Change of Life, Natural Medicine, Hysterectomy, Natural Birth Control, Exercises for Women and Women and Psychiatry.

IMAGES has great article analyzing local co-ed volleyball.

1976 April

The IMAGES women's collective has grown: Bonnie Baker, Marcia Braundy, Irene Mock, Lone Neilson, Camille Bush, Rita Moir, Annie Sylvan, Kathy Ratz, June McClintick, Vita Storey, Sam Simpson, Kent Sheffer.

Nelson Outreach is sharing office space with the Nelson Women's Centre at 490 Baker Street. After a year long research project into barriers to women's employment and training, Vita Storey and Sena Gates are considering a pre-trades exploratory course for women. A six-page article on their report appears in IMAGES.

Susan Charlton is now the local Human Rights Officer.

1976 June-July

Three benefits for IMAGES made summer around the Kootenays a delightful, musical and fun place to be!

1976 August

8-12 week Women's Exploratory Apprenticeship Training program at Haney sponsored by BC Ministry of Labour, with training allowance and travel paid.

Women's Studies in the Kootenays!!! Selkirk College will be putting on two anthropology course of special interest to women: Women, Men and Cultural Change; and Women of Rural Canada, thanks to Wendy Hurst.

1976 September

Manpower nixes a local Women in Trades course in favour of "Employment Orientation for Women" course. Women who had tried to organize the first course were refused entry, even after strong lobbying efforts by local women.

1976 November

Nelson Women's Centre and IMAGES begin the move to the Jam Factory at 307 Vernon Street.

1976 December

Charges dropped against Dr. Henry Morgenthaler.

Nelson Women's Centre delegates drive over the Monashee for BCFW Convention to pass resolutions in thirteen different policy areas. Two of these women were the only nursing mothers in attendance.

1977 February

Diane Luthmers (Luchtan) is our area representative to BCFW.

Pat McGauley (Pegasus) attended the BC Federation of Labour Convention and provides strong critique. Only 500 of 12,300 apprentices are women, and 400 of those are in hairdressing.

Marcia Braundy goes to carpentry school in Dawson Creek, sends home letters to IMAGES.

The Working Women's Conference is held in Trail. Joy Langdon, the first woman printer, hails from Rossland. Her challenges and the support she got from her union led her to sit on the BC Federation of Labour executive council. Diana Dawson spoke of her love for manual labour once Cominco finally hired her. Assertiveness Training workshops were offered.

150 women attend Women Alive! Conference in Cranbrook, many overcoming serious negative pressure to attend and gain information on health, law, political change and socialization.

1977 July

IMAGES Sexuality issue causes censorship and loss of advertisers.

Creston Women's Institute shares stories of women from the area.

Nelson Women's Centre sponsors Women's Film Festival: "Great Grandmother" and "Like the Trees among them."

Rita Moir reflects on going treeplanting.

The BCFW presents a brief on non-sexist education to the Minister.

IMAGES takes up the case of Miss Nelson, who sued the Chamber of Commerce for verbally agreed upon recompense of \$1000 for a year of representing the city, when they refused to pay. Judge D'Andrea agreed with the city that the agreement was only "social in nature."

1977 October

Kootenay women attend BC Women's Studies conference and find themselves in a rural strategies workshop with 30 other women from the interior and north of British Columbia identifying challenges and potential solutions.

Basic Carpentry for Women course offered in Winlaw.

1978 January

Women's Advocacy Programme is a project of the Nelson Women's Centre to help women deal with sex discrimination in local institutions.

Vita Storey is running an ovulation (natural birth control) workshop.

The Women's Centre is currently running without funding, staffed by volunteers.

1978 April

Three Kootenay women attend the Prairie Women's Socialist Feminist Conference, to some disappointment regarding the lack of small group discussion. Still, much information was shared, and an important conference was organized without benefit of government funding.

1978 June

Women's Summer Solstice Celebration at Vallican Whole Community Centre raised \$485 for the Women's Centre. 150 women showed up for music, food and sisterly solidarity.

Stella Bliss case on UIC maternity benefits goes to the Supreme Court. They reserve judgement.

1978 July

Women's Centre screens Bonnie Kreps', "This Film is About Rape."

Drop in is open Tuesday to Friday 12-3:30 and 3:30-7PM.

1978 September

For the third time in a row, Canada Works has rejected funding for Nelson Women's Centre workers. From May to September staff was paid from Secretary of State summer worker's program. Volunteers are running a women's advocacy program, a Kootenay herstory project, library use, and setting up a rape relief line. Money is available to pay travel and day care.

1978 November

6 women from the West Kootenay and 2 from the East Kootenay attended the BCFW convention. 4 of them are now on the Standing Committee: Vita Storey, Bette Bateman, Marcia Braundy and Darcy from Cranbrook.

Bette becomes Coordinator of the Nelson Women's Centre.

1979 October

SORWUC, an independent women's union gets first contracts.

Donna MacDonald describes life as a forestry worker.
Lesbians describe their lives.

Nelson Women's Centre runs Rape and Sexual Abuse Crisis Line with volunteers.

1980 May

B.C. Women in Trades Association recently formed out of Vancouver.

June 20, 1980 – Women Against Violence issue of IMAGES:

“Solutions, however, are more complex and demand all our organizational strength. We must demand that the institutions of our society reverse their sexist laws and practices: repeal the anti-abortion laws; complete reform of the rape laws to reflect the legitimacy of women and their complaints in court; enforcement of laws protecting women and children from assault of any kind; prosecution of men who assault women; the elimination of brutality against women in the media; physical defence course for girls in the schools; and an end to sexual stereotyping of children into passive and aggressive roles. In other words, we must change from a sexist society to one in which women are no longer threatened with physical coercion to “know her place and stay in it”!

Home births legitimized in landmark court decision!

On April 18th, Marcia Braundy was initiated into the United Brotherhood (sic!) of Carpenter and Joiners of America, Nelson local 2458. Already a fourth-year apprentice, she is the first female in the construction sector of the Carpenters Union in British Columbia.

Women's Centre benefit at the Vallican Whole Community Centre June 28th.

Women speak out against Michel Tremblay play, *Bonjour la' Bonjour*, recently produced in Nelson, as psychological and philosophical grounding of misogyny in its characterization of the women in the play as evil corruptors.

Selkirk College has eliminated the Women's Access Coordinator position held by Vita Storey. Many of the letters the college had received in support of the program “upset” the Chairman (sic!) of the Selkirk College Board, because they criticized the college. West Kootenay women submit joint brief to Task Force on Older Women calling for educational supports, unemployment insurance for part-time workers, counselling on finances, housing, employment, health and legal issues.

1st National Women In Trades conference takes place in Winnipeg, with several BC women attending. Lloyd Axworthy says more women are needed to fill upcoming skills shortages.

1980 November

Workshop on Incest held in Nelson after 5 cases of incest were discovered in the area. The film, "Incest-The victim nobody believes" was screened, and much information was made available and discussed.

1981 January

BCFW considers the concept of "elitism" in the women's movement and its impact on women from rural areas at its Annual Convention.

CAIMAW, an independent Canadian union, fights for the demands of their women workers.

1981 March

Heather Bishop plays to resounding appreciation at the Vallican Whole.

Call for addition in the developing Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms: "Every individual shall have equality of rights under the law without regard to sex..."

1981 May

Marcia Braundy becomes the 1st Journeywomen carpenter in BC, the 3rd in Canada.

1981 July

50 men and women demonstrate on the street in support of feminism and against the anti-woman tirade of local newspaper's sports writer.

Women in Trades Kootenay Council has its first meeting.

BC Government Employees Union negotiates precedent setting agreement at Douglas College which includes protection against Sexual Harassment.

Sanda Laine and Eileen Pedersen complete Wen-Do instructor's course in Vancouver and will be offering this women's self defence course here in the Kootenays.

Many demonstrate successfully to challenge the City of Trail to allow the Women In Need Transition House to remain in their house and have their rent go to needed improvements. WINS has been given a 5 year commitment.

BC Women in Trades submits brief to Pacific Vocational Institute outlining actions needed to create a more effective learning environment for women.

Nelson Women's Centre open 10 AM – 5PM Tuesday to Friday. Monthly potluck last Thursday of the month. Lesbian Drop-in every Thursday at 7 PM.

Nancy Henne visits Nicaragua on a work-study tour with CUSO and talks about the experience of women and children there,

1981 July

Frances Wasserlein and Debra Lewis of Vancouver's Battered Women Support Services facilitated a workshop in Creston for 30 participants.

1981 August

The West Kootenay Women's Festival at the Vallican Whole Community Centre was enjoyed by many, with music, dancing, workshops, swimming, food and fun.

1981 September

Lin Farley, the woman who coined the term "Sexual Harassment" and wrote Sexual Shakedown – The Sexual Harassment of Women on the Job, spoke to 50 people at the Fairview United Church, sponsored by the Nelson-Trail & District Women's Centre. (Marcia Braundy was representing the Carpenters on the Council at the time, and had met her in New York)

Local women meet to reflect on changes needed in BCFW to better meet the needs of rural women.

Kootenay women involved in supporting the occupation at the Department of Indian Affairs in Vancouver.

Kootenay women march in Vancouver in support of a woman's right to choose.

Kootenay women leaflet at local Human Resources office informing women of drastic changes in welfare regulations in a time of high unemployment in B.C.

1982 March

Performances by women writers and musicians at the Nelson Women's Centre on Friday nights through April

BC Tel and their union, TWU, open the doors to craft/trades jobs to women operators being displaced by technology.

Women's Access at Selkirk College has been reinstated, and Vita Storey is in the job.

16 women and 5 men form a Women's Committee at Cominico to deal with issues such as sexual harassment, maternity/paternity concerns, day care, hiring practices, apprenticeship and health & safety concerns.

The Women's Centre gets developmental money to do a feasibility study for a business to employ chronically unemployed women. They are studying three possibilities: a wooden toy factory; producing ethanol using Jerusalem artichokes; and a jam factory.

1982 June

Jeanne Shaw, Argenta member of Voice of Women and Ploughshares travels to New York to protest at the UN Assembly on Disarmament. Jean Willow speaks at a Nelson anti-war and anti-nuclear demonstration.

500 women rally in Vancouver for safe, legal abortions.

Barbara Sage has been called to the Bar, and is now a practicing lawyer in Nelson.

1982 July

IMAGES brings feminist anti-nuclear activist singer, Holly Near, to Nelson's Civic Theatre.

The B.C. Provincial Council of Carpenters holds a historic women's conference with 35 women from around B.C. Kudos for the Council negotiating sexual harassment into the collective agreement. (Marcia Braundy and Sally Mackenzie of Women in Trades Kootenay Council prepared the resolution that Marcia took to the Local and moved as a motion. The brothers supported it, and it made its way through convention, and ultimately through the collective agreement.)

Rita Moir, sports editor for the Nelson Daily News, attends the “roasting” banquet for John McKeachie, after being warned off as a woman. She writes a public article shaming the proceedings.

1982 September

Mary Murry is the Nelson Women’s Centre’s new coordinator.

22 women attended a brainstorming session on the future activities of the Women’s Centre, where focused groups will meet on a 3-month basis: the Arts with Bev Mill, Health Care w/RN Bonnie Fidler, Women’s Support w/Micki Hansen and Daphne Armstrong, Political Choir w/ Sue Anderson, Consciousness-raising w/ Judith Brooke, a lesbian support group, and a battered women’s support group w/ Mary Murry, Leigh Sims and Vicki Buckingham.

The Coordinating Collective will meet twice a month to discuss Women’s Centre policies and politics. They are organizing a speaker’s bureau for the schools and the public to use. The Drop-in, Library and Referrals are ongoing.

1982 October

Voice of Women hosts Kay Macpherson, past national president of Voice of Women and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women to speak on Disarmament. Macpherson was recently detained at the US border on her way to speak at the June 12th Peace Rally in New York City.

The Regional District of Central Kootenay declared the area a Nuclear-Free Zone.

1983 March

Selkirk College is running an Introduction to Non-Traditional Occupations course taught by Marcia Braundy, where women get a hands-on opportunity to explore the trades and do some personal skill building and career exploration.

1983 August

West Kootenay Women’s Festival at the Vallican Whole Community Centre. Nelson Women’s Theatre presents My Blue Heaven, The Euphoniously Feminist non Performing Quintet and many local musicians add to the fun of workshops on theatre games, massage, Wen-do, face-painting, astrology, healing and peace! Childcare is available.

1983 September

Women in Trades Kootenay Council embarks upon a research project interviewing trademen, trades instructors, and trades employers regarding their attitudes and practices in relation to women so Marcia Braundy and Sally Mackenzie could develop a seminar to assist those men to integrate women more effectively.

EMMA’s Jambrosia begins production of a tasty product that can’t be called jam because its not 70% sugar, but it is 70% fruit. EMMA stands for: Everywoman’s Moneymaking and Manufacturing Association, sponsored by the Nelson Women’s Centre and funded by Employment and Immigration Canada.

Nelson Women’s Centre joins with a coalition of local union and community groups to fight Bennet’s budget. Sam Simpson and Mary Murray act as speakers for the groups.

Local women fight for greater legitimacy for midwifery. Others are working to change the birthing policies at Kootenay Lake District Hospital to make them more family friendly.

1983 November

Donna MacDonald, Greg Utzig and their young daughter Brett leave for a two year stint with CUSO forestry workers in Mozambique.

1984 January

WIT KC pilots the seminar, The Workplace in Transition: Integrating Women Effectively with Selkirk College; the Provincial Council of Carpenters and the BC & Yukon Building Trades Council Joint Apprenticeship Board Coordinators.

1984 April

Kootenay women take up occupation in the David Thompson University Centre to protest government closure, and are supported by many others: Betty Daniels, Dede Dodds, Jacqueline Cameron, Alice Bruce, Phyllis Margolin, Caroline Woodward and many others on the inside, Tish Lakes, Francis Wellwood, Fran Horan and Dorothy Gomez among others on the outside provided humour and support. Rita Moir was an independent reporter for the Daily News and CBC who covered the occupation from start to finish.

1984 May

IMAGES benefit with wonderful music and theatre.

Selkirk axes Women's Access, and Women's Centre staff and community volunteers attend a College Board meeting to speak to deaf (and sexist) ears.

1984 Summer

Bubbles Hodgson, IMAGES first typesetter, died on June 15. She will be missed by many, not least of which Marcia Braundy, and Susan Charlton, Arlene Burwash and Diane Edmundson of the Trail Status of Women.

This year the West Kootenay Women's Festival has spawned women's festivals in Prince Rupert and Winnipeg. Great success to all.

Sally Mackenzie spends time in Nicaragua and comes home to share their stories.

1984 August

DTUC occupation ends with good result.

Women in Trades Barbeque

Ann Swanson Gross's Gallery in the Forest opens in Winlaw. Ann has made wonderful posters, illustrations and drawings for the local Women's Movement over the past 10 years.

The 10th Anniversary of the West Kootenay Women's Association is celebrated with a Women's Festival, music, theatre, dancing, swimming and fun.

1984 December

Dr. Henry Morgenthaler is acquitted for the fourth time on abortion charges.

Creston women faced sexist jeering as they approached the Regional District for assistance to help fund a crisis line to respond to the violence against women calls they have been receiving.

1985 January

The BC Press Council upheld a complaint by the Nelson Women's Centre regarding publication of a Head's boots advertisement printed by the Nelson Daily News. When the Women's Centre had complained about the ad, the publisher reprinted it suggesting anyone who saw sexual connotations should "seek psychiatric help." The ad was eventually withdrawn by Head's after complaints to the Canadian Advertising Advisory Council upheld the complaints in a unanimous decision. They also said the reprinting aggravated the situation.

Jean Mackenzie and Carol Gaskin are spearheading the contributions to a national "Peace Quilt" here in the Kootenays.

The Young Women's Institute brought in Not A Love Story and began discussions around town about pornography and its impact.

The East Kootenay Coalition against Pornography is working towards a city by-law banning the public display of such material.

1985 February

First Women and Words Conference in the Kootenays held in Creston with Dorothy Livesay giving a reading is attended by 70 women

1985 Spring

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms with the hard won Article 15 has been proclaimed. "Every individual is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability," and "Notwithstanding anything in this Charter, the rights and freedoms referred to in it are guaranteed equally to male and female persons."

The West Kootenay Women's Association (WKWA) sponsored a research study, conducted by Vita Storey, and funded by Secretary of State Women's Programs, which looked at the interest and demand for Women's Studies programming in the Kootenays. The report is in and 75% of the respondents would be interested. Selkirk College is not at all interested in providing it.

Major efforts are underway to develop a Peace Institute here in the Kootenays. Kootenay women are very involved in promoting this: in the schools, at DTUC, as Theatre, as politics.

Theatre is alive and well in the women's movement. Women on Cue is presenting a play about wife battering throughout the region, and Paulette Giles and Caroline Woodward are working on a play about rodeo cowgirls!

The Nelson Women's Centre challenges the devastation of the Welfare System!

1985 Summer/Fall

The IMAGES Ad Hoc Singers are in high demand, performing at 5 festivals in the Kootenays and the Okanagan this summer/fall/

Judy Small, fabulous feminist from Australia, and our own Connie Kaldor play at the Multicultural Festival of the Arts in Nelson.

Paulette Jiles recipient of Governor General's Award for Poetry.

WINS Transition House in Trail receives a \$25,000 Canada Works grant to hire three staff: crisis line, child care and support care workers.

Nakusp workshop on Self-Esteem attracted 45 women on the weekend of International Women's Day.

The Golden Women's Centre has been busy with community education, lobbying and a Solstice outdoor barn dance.

The Nelson Women's Centre is open 12-5 Tuesday to Friday and is very busy. Three summer students are helping with drop-in counselling and legal work, and are organizing the West Kootenay Women's Festival. Work is ongoing to assist women with disabilities at a local group home get their rights.

The Library and filing system are being reorganized.

Watch for a film series, "Women and Revolution in the Third World" this fall.

Viva Flood from Nelson and Luanne Armstrong from Creston attend the International Peace Conference in Halifax.

News about women's lives in Mozambique comes in from Donna MacDonald.

1986 Spring

EMMA's Jambrosia is forced to cease operations. They make the incredibly difficult decision to do so responsibly so none of their suppliers is negatively affected, and none of the collective goes into debt. It is a tremendously sad day, and explanations are made to the WKWA AGM.

Kootenay Women Works (formerly Job Corps) now has three workers and will begin taking in students this summer.

The battered women's support group and the single parents' group continue.

1986 Summer

Sally Mackenzie completes her apprenticeship and achieves her Journey ticket in Benchwork and Joinery restoring the Capitol Theatre.

36 Women's Centres meet and form the Association of BC & Yukon Women's Centres.

The West Kootenay Women's Festival is two days of entertainment, workshops, auction, potluck food, open stage, deep discussion and laughter.

1986 Late Fall

WKWA sponsors a panel discussion on "Abortion – A Difficult Decision" and hope to get a pro-choice group active. Thanks to Tish Lakes, Carol Beauchamp, Joy Gardner and Judy Pustil for taking on the emotional challenge of bringing their thoughts to a public forum.

Salmo Women's Centre receives funding for workshops and part-time coordinator.

Nakusp women plan workshops on Single Women & Poverty, Women & Rape, Breaking Abusive Cycles, Self-Esteem and Alcohol & Violence.

Cranbrook Women's Centre has a job-reentry program going.

1987 Spring

Anti-abortionists accost women at the Kootenay Lake District Hospital.

Carol Beauchamp leaves after 3 years as Women's Centre Coordinator and Sally Mackenzie steps in with a three-month overlap for orientation.

1987 Summer

West Kootenay Women's Festival this year even includes Feminist Theory!

The Women's Centre float in the Mid-Summer parade was a real hit, goat and all.

1987 Fall

IMAGES holds a HoeDown at the Vallican Whole Community Centre, Square Dancing, Sing Along and Auction!

East and West Kootenay Women held a conference in Cranbrook with 5 of the NDP MLA women. Stimulating and inspiring, their goal was to increase their numbers and get more women into politics. Local New Democratic women are forming a women's committee to put on some political skill-building workshops.

Marcia Braundy is back from teaching exploratory trades training to women in Grenada.

1988 Spring

Pro-Choice group of 35 forms after call from the West Kootenay Women's Association and raised \$2000 to place a full page ad with 400 names in local newspapers around the region. 50 people marched at the Post Office in protest of offensive 4-colour glossies being sent through the mail to all Nelson residents without cover of envelopes.

Supreme Court strikes down Section 251 of the Criminal Code that made securing abortions a criminal offense.

Building on Strengths, a regional women's conference is held at Selkirk College. Sophie Pierre, Chief of the St. Mary's Band gives the keynote address.

1988 Summer

Anti-Abortionists take over the KLDH Hospital Board, defeat by-law that allowed Slocan Valley residents to participate.

IMAGES talks with young high school women about teen pregnancy, sexuality, AIDS and violence.

Planned Parenthood opens in Nelson.

West Kootenay Women's Festival is at the Vallican Whole Community Centre sponsored by WKWA.

120 Tradeswomen and Technologists from across Canada came to Naramata for 2 days of skill-building and story-telling, joined at the end of the 2nd day by employers, unions, government and educators to look at potential solutions and practical applications occurring around Canada. Surviving & Thriving – Women in Trades and Technology and Employment Equity will be talked about for years to come. A National Network was called for, and a National DataBank Inventory of women workers. Many clear recommendations were passed that could lead to strong integration for women into the technical workforce. Organized by a team headed up by Kootenay woman, Marcia Braundy.

1989 Spring

A full week of events are planned for International Women's Day in Nelson: Women in Literature Brown Bag, International Women's displays, locally produced videos: Being Poor Takes All Your Money & Rural Women and Poverty; Women in Trades and Technology panel; an Open Mike for authors, poets and performers, and a dance at the Art Folks Home in South Slocan with women's Rock & Roll.

WKWA Evaluation dinner with 18 participants, reflecting on past practices and future directions, what the needs of women in the community are and how to respond to them.

1989 Summer

Nelson Women's Centre celebrated Canada Day with a booth at Lakeside Park after winning 2nd place with their July 1st parade entry.

Sam Simpson completes 7-week study into need for Nelson Transition House for WKWA. It was clear the need is there. The report calls for transition house with information and referral services, counselling, and follow-up services; in-service education for doctors, public health, nurses and agency workers; public education; toll free numbers to call; and the formation of a rural committee.

WKWA is looking for a home that could house the Women's Centre, WKWA offices and the Advocacy Centre. Many volunteers are working towards this.

Write on! Sisters T-shirts have the names of most Kootenay Women Writers. If your name isn't on it and you think it should be, contact the Nelson Women's Centre.

The Forbidden Festival. WKWA's annual event at the Vallican Whole Community Centre reminded us with music and words what feminist music is all about.

1989 Winter

Audrey McLaughlin becomes Canada's first woman to lead a major political party.

Nine West Kootenay women participated in a Speak-Out for Choice at the Capital Theatre in Nelson.

December 6th - 14 women engineering students are murdered in Montreal by a man screaming, "feministes!"

1990 March

5 Feminist Minutes has its debut

1991 May

Nelson Women's Centre protests T-shirts promoting violence against women. Protest takes place in front of San Francisco store in Chako-Mika Mall.

IWD Market with international wares and homemade stuff.

1991 October

International Visitors from Nicaragua and Angola with Donna MacDonald and Sam Simpson.

One of the greatest Women's Festivals at the Vallican Whole Community Centre – young and old together.

1992

Bus Stop kiosk filled to acknowledge IWD

75 years of "Votes for Women" provide the opportunity for the women and girls of Nelson and District to dress up as Suffragists and parade through the city.

Women's Centre distributed "Raise\$ not Roses" pamphlets on Secretaries Day.

Another great festival at the Vallican Whole, with full body paint pictures, and children and singing together.

Women Centre 20th Anniversary Open House

Solstice Gathering

1993 Spring

Women's Centre fills Bus Stop kiosk with decorous information, art and ideas about women.

5 Feminist Minutes for IWD brings out the clown in some people

International visitors to the Women's Centre: Jean Eparo fro P.N.G. and Corazon Soliman from the Philippines, along with Penny Priddy, Minister of Women's Equality.

1993 Summer

Women's Centre campaigned against the sexist/racist newspaper columns of Doug Collins in Sterling newspapers. BC Report of January 3, 1994 credits Nelson feminists with Sterlings decision to stop running his columns.

Women's Centre distributed educational flyers with "Every Mother is a Working Mother" buttons attached.

GETT Camps put on by Kootenay WITT's Sally Mackenzie at Selkirk College a great success.

December 6th Day of Remembrance pamphlets produced and distributed

1994 February

Through the incredible tenacity and vision of folks like Suzanne Mackenzie, WKWA buys a house at 420 Mill Street in need of renovation and repair.

March – Bus Stop Kiosk
Celebrating our diversity

Faces of Feminism opening reception – National Exhibition Centre, Castlegar

Five Feminist Minutes – Red Diaper ice skaters
Fundraising dinner at Rita Moir's in aid of the new house.

1994 May

SCWIST & WKWA co-sponsored Ms. Infinity Conference for young women

1994 Summer

WKWA gets training grant to hire Sally Mackenzie and a crew of willing women to renovate the house.

ani di franco performs at the Capitol Theatre

Women's Festival at Vallican Whole

1994 November 25th

Crew goes out for a celebratory party

November 26th – Moving Day, supported by so many women who have been packing up the Centre from the top of Gerrick Cycles.

December 6th is commemorated with strong sisterly feeling and a sense of having a home.

Coordinating Collective Retreat takes place in new house.

December 16th - last day of work and crew party

1995 September

Gathering Strength – An Exploration of Women's Health Conference

Take back the night march and gathering

1996

West Kootenay Women's Festival

1997

WKWA Visioning session at Emory House.

1997 May

C-4 Conference at Selkirk College

1997 August

West Kootenay Women's Festival at Vallican Whole Community Centre.

1998

1999

Ruth Beck hired for 19 month Employment Equity project to work with Columbia Power Corporation, the Regional Districts and municipal governments to ensure women have access and opportunity for employment on the Columbia Basin Power Projects and other employment opportunities in the region. Working with them to develop action plans and set goals, targets and timetables for policies and practices to be in place is part of the job

2000

2001

2002

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

2008