

today are neighbors. In 1921, when the Old Spanish Trail convention was held at Gulfport it seemed as tho it was "love's labor lost."

The New Orleans Convention

March 26-27-28, 1923, a convention was held at New Orleans with delegates present from Florida to California. That convention was planned as another rally of the forces that would have to put over the big bridges, seawalls and pavement between New Orleans and Pensacola if the highway was to connect across the continent. New Orleans to Pensacola embraced the "orphan sections" of four States. The bridges and causeways alone would exceed thirty miles in that short sector. That convention succeeded in its purpose.

The New Orleans convention also included a convention of women and they started the women's auxiliary that became so helpful. The convention also established the Executive Board plan for the headquarters city. The directors were scattered across the continent and could not meet easily and the headquarters office did not have the support of official board meetings. The San Antonio Executive Board thus came into existence and for seven years rendered real service. When, in 1929, auditors prepared a complete audit and finance statement it was found the Executive Board had its records in business form and that the funds had been carefully administered. Moreover the Managing Director was enabled to spend more time on the highway and thus contact with the directors and members and get better results.

The Work of the Women

The convention of the women at the New Orleans general convention in 1923 brought large and interested delegations. There the Women's Department of Beautification was started, the first Interstate movement for billboard removal and roadside beautification. The New Orleans women gave splendid leadership. Mrs. Henry Drought of San Antonio at a later meeting was elected the National Director, since followed by Mrs. F. W. Sorell and Mrs. H. A. Moos, also of San Antonio. This movement gathered headway slowly for it was all pioneering work. Mrs. Drought held this department together until it became firmly rooted. The interest of the women dates from this period and their influence has been a force ever since.

During this period Mrs. J. T. Smith removed advertising signs, and also secured from the various State attorney-generals a statement of road advertising laws (these proved few and of little value then) and a proposed law was drawn and introduced in the Texas Legislature and also sent to others interested over

the United States. The principles of that proposed law are today generally recognized as the basis for roadside advertising control.

Under Mrs. Drought also the zero stone, a prehistoric boulder, was placed at San Antonio's old Spanish center of trails and surveys near San Fernando Cathedral. The City Federation of Women's Clubs, Mrs. J. K. Beretta President, sponsored this; it was Mrs. Beretta's leadership that carried the work thru — and this San Antonio stone started the movement at Saint Augustine that lead to the monument and international celebration there, including three days of old Spanish pageantry.

Under Mrs. F. W. Sorell as National Director the women's work was extended to other States. Mrs. H. A. Moos, her successor, reports today in various sections the attractive Old Spanish Trail signing, and tree planting and landscaping are in progress. Mrs. T. W. Lanier, the West Texas Director, reports 1000 more trees being planted in the El Paso Valley; two years ago the first 1000 was planted. Mrs. R. G. Rafferty, the Mississippi Director, is rallying the women and the civic organizations for landscaping and planting across Mississippi. Miss Esther Banning, Alabama Director, has placed informing signs and they plan to follow behind the road builders with beautification. In East Texas, Mrs. E. Clinton Murray Director, Houston city and Liberty County have plans for beautifying those new boulevards.

The San Antonio women under Mrs. Sorell concentrated on the widening and beautifying of the road westward to Boerne as the first step to foster a broad boulevard into the Hill Country. Widening to 100 ft. was accomplished by Mrs. A. C. Seiser as chairman, supported constantly by Joe S. Newton, the county commissioner. That was a long struggle following years of discouraging pioneering; now the broad boulevard seems assured far into the Hill Country. The wayside park and the rock columns at the county line were constructed as examples in convenience and attraction for travelers. The Medical Auxiliary, Mrs. E. W. McCamish chairman, erected the columns. The Perrin Estate donated the park land and Kiwanis Club assisted in beautifying it. Mrs. B. K. Hankins, as chairman, designed and constructed the rock lodge, with San Antonio firms contributing the building materials. Mrs. Alex L. Adams, as Associate National Director, vitalized interest in the old Spanish history and the historical signing. Miss Mary Bonner, noted artist, aided effectively in planning the designs.

The administration of Mrs. H. A. Moos as National Director began in 1929. She has traveled the highway from Saint Augustine to San Diego and is receiving reports of continued progress.

Many thousands of miles of traveling, at their personal expense, is to the credit of these women. Eastward to the Atlantic,