

**Eighth Triennial Convention  
September 2-6, 1931  
Utah School for the Deaf, Ogden**

The eighth triennial convention of the Utah Association of the Deaf was held at the Utah School for the Deaf on September 2-6, 1931. The opening session featured an address, "The Depression," by Gus P. Beckman, general secretary of the Salt Lake

Chamber of  
Commerce  
(The UAD  
Bulletin,  
Summer  
1963, p. 5).



**1931 UAD Convention in front of the Driggs Hall Dormitory**

**1931 – 1934**

**President**

E. Ross Thurston

**First Vice President**

Catherine Crawford

**Second Vice President**

Grant R. Morgan

**Secretary**

Florence Florence C. Stebbins

**Treasurer**

Gladys H. Burnham

**Ninth Triennial Convention  
May 31-June 2, 1934  
Utah School for the Deaf, Ogden**

At the ninth triennial convention of the Utah Association of the Deaf at the Utah School for the Deaf on May 31 – June 2, 1934, Mr. Howard Driggs, professor of the University of New York and also president of the Oregon Pioneer Trails, gave a talk of the first Pony Express.



1934 UAD Convention in front of the USD Main Building

A play, "Accidents will Happen," had a cast of Gladys Burnham, George Laramie, Gilman Stebbins and Kate Keeley (The UAD Bulletin, Summer 1963, p. 5).

**1934 – 1936**

<b>President</b>	E. Ross Thurston
<b>First Vice President</b>	Grant R. Morgan
<b>Second Vice President</b>	Chester C. Dobson
<b>Secretary</b>	George L. Laramie
<b>Treasurer</b>	Gladys H. Burnham

<b>Board of Trustees</b>	Kate O. Keeley 2 year term Gilman Stebbins 4 year term Paul Mark, Chair 6 year term
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**Tenth Triennial Convention  
August 21-23, 1936  
Newhouse Hotel, Salt Lake City**

For the first time in history, the Utah Association of the Deaf hosted the tenth triennial convention outside of the Utah School for the Deaf. It was the most successful convention (Cole, *The Salt Lake Tribune*, 1936). The attendance was the largest

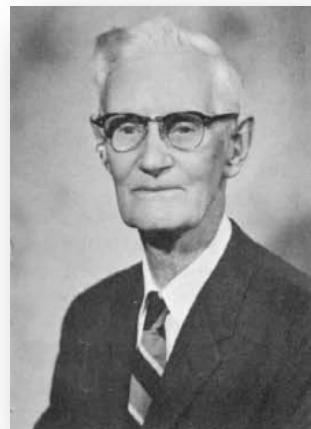
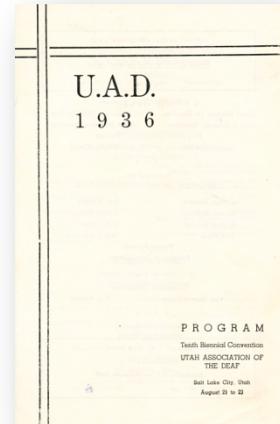
in the history of  
the UAD, as  
evidenced by the  
registration of 166  
persons (The  
UAD Bulletin,  
Summer 1963, p.

5). Thirty-six visitors from other states were also present (Cole, *The Ogden Standard Examiner*, August 27, 1944).



E Ross Thurston, UAD President  
The UAD Bulletin, Summer 1963

During the convention, E. Ross Thurston, then president, deplored the public belief that deaf people are incapable of driving automobiles or of competing with normal person for public positions. He declared, "We must fight to advance ourselves. We must oppose laws unjust to our kind, and must seek greater recognition for deaf persons in Utah" (The Ogden-Standard Examiner, 1936). The discussion was opened as to whether the UAD considers affiliation with the National Association of the Deaf or not. There was no action being made on this



Max W. Woodbury, Utah  
School for the Deaf teacher  
and principal  
The UAD Bulletin, Winter  
1967

question; it was decided that the question be tabled till the next convention (The UAD Bulletin, Summer 1963, p. 5).

George L. Laramie of Salt Lake City, Utah was elected president, succeeding E. Ross Thurston of Murray. The convention at the Chamber of Commerce approved numerous changes in its constitution and by-laws (Telegram, August 22, 1936).

The discussion was opened as to whether the association would consider affiliation with the National Association of the Deaf. No action was taken on this question and decided that the question be tabled until the next convention (The UAD Bulletin, Summer 1963, p. 5).

Saturday night, more than 200 representatives of the association from all parts of the state attended a play in pantomime in the auditorium (The Salt Lake Tribune, August 23, 1936).



Newly elected officers of the Utah Association of the Deaf. Back row L-R: George Laramie, president, John Glasett, first president; Ferdinand T. Billeter, treasurer. Front Row L-R: Lillian Coles, second vice president, and Georgia Hendricks, secretary  
Salt Lake Tribune, August 23, 1936

The annual meeting ended Sunday with a picnic. At the picnic, E. Russ Thurston stated, "A warning that the noisy world is endangering the hearing of all persons was sounded." Scientists agree it is not too fantastic a possibility that modern man someday may lose his hearing and it might be wise for those who hear to study the sign language of those who do not" (Telegram, August 22, 1936). UAD expressed regret that Superintendent Frank M. Driggs and Max W. Woodbury were unable to attend the convention (Cole, *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 1936).



**Leaders of 'Eloquent Hands' Convention. They supervise  
at 1936 UAD Convention...seated Fern Player, Eula Pusey  
and E. Ross Thurston. Standing, George L. Laramie,  
newly elected president, and Joseph Taylor**  
Telegram, August 22, 1936

## 1936 – 1938

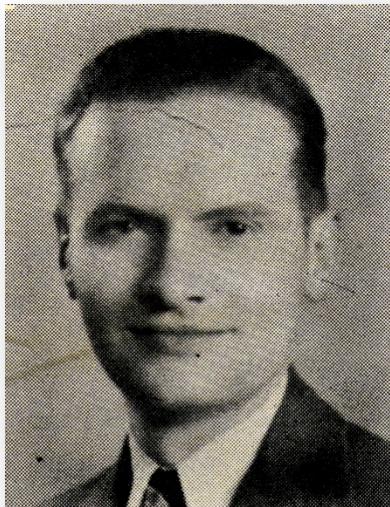
<b>President</b>	George L. Laramie
<b>First Vice President</b>	John W. Glassett (resigned – date?)
<b>First Vice President</b>	Alfred C. Keeley (appointed after)
<b>Second Vice President</b>	Lillian S. Cole
<b>Secretary</b>	Georgia Hendricks
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ferdinand T. Billeter
 <b>Board of Trustees</b>	 Gilman Stebbins
	(resigned 10-3-37)
	E. Ross Thurston
	(appointed 10-3-37)
	Paul Mark, Chair
	Justina Keeley

**Eleventh Biennial Convention  
September 2-4, 1938  
Newhouse Hotel, Salt Lake City**

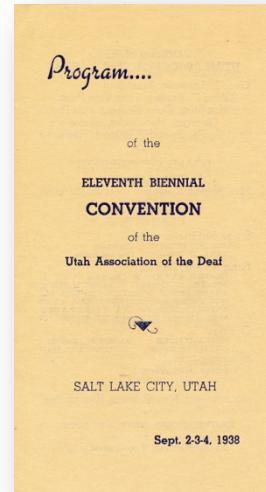
During the interview with the Salt Lake Tribune, President George L. Laramie mentioned that the 1938 convention held in Salt Lake City attracted the largest attendance of any of its 10 annual gatherings. He stated, "We hope to surpass that record this year" (State association for deaf opens annual meet today – Salt Lake Tribune, 1938). Georgia Hendricks, secretary, hoped the convention will be of interest to Texans and said as several of them attended the tenth biennial convention two years ago, whose presence was greatly

enjoyed and they  
were looking  
forward to seeing  
them again

(Hendricks, *Modern Silents*, 1938).



George L. Laramie, UAD Bulletin.  
Source: The UAD Bulletin, Summer  
1963



However, 100 members of the Utah Association of the Deaf gathered in Salt Lake City for their eleventh biennial convention at the Newhouse Hotel in Salt Lake City, Utah (Utah Security Chief Speaks at Deaf Meet – Salt Lake Tribune, September 3, 1938). The aim and objective of the convention was to end discrimination against deaf persons seeking employment (Salt Lake Telegram, September 2, 1938).

President Laramie, a successful and efficient linotype with a local printing company, urged an end to discrimination against deaf persons seeking employment. He said "We aren't as incapacitated as people think." He also declared, "We must lessen the injustice and discrimination which retards us from working and living as ordinary

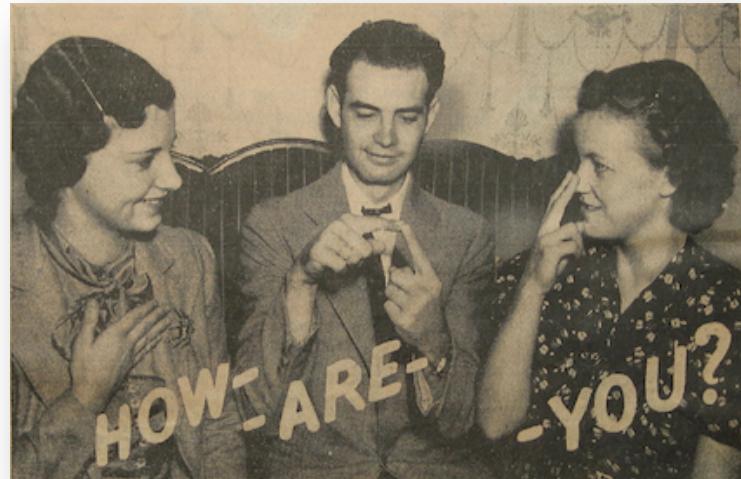
people." He emphasized that, "Many deaf people become discouraged at the constant refusal of employment. We urge them to join with us and regain their confidence." Lastly, he urged that "We do not pity and we don't ask for charity" (Salt Lake Telegram, September 2, 1938).

When such laws had been passed in a number of states prohibiting deaf persons from driving automobiles, UAD representatives expressed their desire to serve warning on the state legislature against enactment of laws they fear may curb activities of the state's deaf population

(Salt Lake Tribune, September 4, 1938).

They feared the possible future legislation prohibiting deaf person from driving automobiles  
(Salt Lake Telegram, September 3, 1938).

Mr. Laramie as UAD president fought hard to prevent possible future legislation prohibiting the deaf people from driving automobiles  
(The Salt Lake Tribune, September 4, 1938).



Communicate through hands. L-R: LaRue Averett, Lorenz Downsy, and Anna Downsy  
The Salt Lake Tribune, September 2, 1938

President Laramie declared traffic records showed only two deaf people had been involved in Utah automobile accidents in the last 10 years. He said, "Why should we be robbed of the joy of driving when there is not a need of it?" At that time, 300 deaf people lived in Utah, about 65 drive automobiles and 28 being Salt Lakers. Apparently, the State of Utah did not pass the law to bar them from driving (Salt Lake Telegram, September 3, 1938).

Friday morning at the convention, President Laramie spoke a few words of welcome and said that since Salt Lake City was a wide open city he could not offer the key to the city to the delegates (UAD Bulletin, Summer 1963, p. 5). Floyd Brower, president of the Idaho Association of the Deaf was a speaker in that morning. Dora B. Laramie sang the "Star-Strangled Banner" and Elgin Jacobson offered the invocation (Salt Lake Tribune, 1938).

Educational and business sessions were held the first two days (Hendricks, 1938). Pauline Humphries, daughter of Paul Mark, chair of the board of trustee, served as an interpreter throughout the convention (Salt Lake Tribune, September 3, 1938).



**Pauline Humphries serves as an interpreter throughout the 1938 UAD Convention**  
**Salt Lake Tribune, September 3, 1938**

A subject of more interest was discussed, the laws preventing the deaf from working and where the employer must pay compensation insurance (Salt Lake Telegram, September 3, 1938). At the time, canneries and sugar factories employed deaf persons, but mines and other such companies refused to employ them because accident insurance companies had refused policies to protect them (Salt Lake Telegram, September 3, 1938).

On the opening day, Frank B. Muir, deputy collector and local chief of the federal Social Security Division, was a principal speaker (Salt Lake Tribune, 1938). On the opening night, Joseph B. Burnett, recent graduate of Gallaudet College, directed a play (Salt Lake Tribune, 1938).

The following day, the business session was held where William B. Hayward, Utah manager of the Social Security Board, reported his trace of a three-year history of Social Security Administration in the United States. He stated, “It’s too early to appraise all the results of this American adventure in neighborliness. But it is not too early to measure our forward strides. At the third-year milepost, the road back shows well over 30,000,000 men and women now building up insurance against want in their old age; 25,500,000 workers who have earned some credit toward insurance against temporary unemployment; about 2,350,000 of the needy receiving assistance in their own homes, and health and welfare services reaching out into all parts of the country” (Utah Security Chief Speaks at Deaf Meet – Salt Lake Tribune, September 3, 1938). President Laramie informed William Hayward that he understood that about twenty-five UAD members had social security numbers, the remainder being on farms or owning their own business (Utah Security Chief Speaks at Deaf Meet – Salt Lake Tribune, September 3, 1938).



Arthur & Ray Wenger, the Utah's famous twin team

During the session, D. Hart Wenger, a young brother of the Utah's famous twin team, Ray and Arthur, explained how the trouble was started about the deaf working on the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and was not in favor of a labor bureau for the deaf in Utah, since there seemed to be so few in need of such help (The UAD Bulletin, Summer 1963, p. 5). D. E. Nelson, Utah Safety Consultant for the Works Progress Administration, was aware that his office had been accused of discriminating against their employment on WPA projects. He assured them no discrimination against the deaf was intended in the WPA program (The Salt Lake Tribune, September 3, 1938). Frank M. Driggs, Superintendent, proposed that they urge the legislature to assign a state labor commission member designated to handle work problems of the deaf and establish state

cooperative fund within the UAD to provide homes for aged homeless deaf (The Salt Lake Tribune, September 3, 1938).

In the educational session, UAD expressed concerns about deaf children making slow progress academically and often receiving low academic scores. They acknowledged that some states require that a minor between the ages of 3 and 18 who is totally or partly deaf and who is a pupil in a public school must be sent to a suitable institution. UAD was aware that lip-reading instruction was provided in the public schools where students who are hard of hearing are enrolled. They are struggling to overcome difficulties with their adversity in the school system (The Salt Lake Tribune, September 2, 1938).



D. Hart Wenger and Gladys (Burnham) Wenger

President Laramie opened the discussion on the question of the Utah Association of the Deaf joining the National Association of the Deaf. Mr. D. Hart Wenger, state representative of the National Association of the Deaf explained the advantages of joining. A spirited discussion took place with the majority being in favor of being affiliated (The UAD Bulletin, Summer 1963, p. 13).

D. Hart Wenger was elected as the new president, succeeding George L. Laramie (The Salt Lake Tribune, September 4, 1938).

On Saturday evening, Gladys Burnham was in charge of the banquet and dance, with Max W. Woodbury acting as toastmaster. The entertainment included a pantomime presented by Les Hunt, magician from San Francisco, California, a song by Afton Burdett, a dance by Shirley May Brown and a comical song offered by Joseph Burnett (Salt Lake Telegram, September 3, 1938).

**1938 – 1940**

<b>President</b>	D. Hart Wenger
<b>First Vice President</b>	E. Ross Thurston
<b>Second Vice President</b>	Lillian S. Cole
<b>Secretary</b>	Dora B. Laramie
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ferdinand T. Billeter

<b>Board of Trustees</b>	Paul Mark, Chair
	Justina Keeley
	George L. Laramie 6 year term