



Remembering the 1970s

by Jane Bibber, Ph.D.

When asked to write about the time when I was President of IPA, I started to remember the 1970s. In the early years of the 1970s, psychologists were coming to an agreement on the content of a bill to license psychologists in Iowa.

IPA had a certification process, chaired by Tom Hannum, Ph.D., a professor at Iowa State University. However, IPA was under a considerable amount of pressure from the American Psychological Association to go for licensure in the State of Iowa to “protect the public” from ill-prepared psychologists.

One important issue for some Iowa psychologists was confidentiality; we wanted the privilege allowed lawyers but had to settle for what physicians have.

Prior to my election to office of president, I had been the recording secretary for two years, then executive secretary and newsletter for two or three years. During this time we hired a lobbyist and at the same time were trying to cut our expenses so we could afford it. The newsletter wasn't much, a couple of sheets, typed and duplicated on the copy machine, mostly about our licensing bill.

As Executive Secretary, my major achievement was the construction of a telephone tree – e-mail didn't exist – activated at critical times as our bill progressed through the legislative process and finally became law.

When I started my term as President-Elect, IPA hired our first paid Executive Secretary/Newsletter Editor, whose business was to perform such duties for professional associations and trade unions. As President, I worked with the Executive Council to assist in the implication of our licensing law. I enlisted the help of Jane Anderson, Ph.D. of Iowa City to chair the committee to propose rules for the continuing education requirements. I hoped we could bring our academic and practicing psychologists closer together through continuing education.

I also wanted IPA to have a piece of the action. I assured the chairperson of our annual meeting that by producing a continuing education workshop, we could make money for our upcoming legislative effort to gain health insurance coverage of psychological services. (Again, APA was eager for Iowa to get this accomplished.) So the Program Chair was persuaded to contact Richard Bandler and John Grinder (The Structure of Magic, 1975) to provide a workshop for IPA.

At our annual meeting, on Friday, IPA business was done, including presenting an award to Arthur Benton, Ph.D., Professor at the University of Iowa, for his contributions to the field of neuropsychology. And, I delivered an obscure message, urging psychologists to avoid the arrogance so prevalent in the medical profession at that time. On the following Saturday, IPA held its first workshop for psychologists and social workers from across the state. The hall was packed with psychotherapists, some spell-bound, as we learned about Patterns of Hypnotic Techniques of Milton H. Erickson, M.D. and The Structure of Magic. The workshop was a great money-maker for future lobbying and, more significantly, an enriching professional experience for many.