A LOOK BACK

75 Years Ago
March 1939
• The Equity magazine contains an article entitled The Theatre Needsn't Help Destroy Itself, cautioning against "the practice of selling a successful play to the motion picture industry before it has exhausted its natural run in New York and on the road." The article goes on to say that "though the picture may play profitably where the play has been shown, the play cannot play profitably in competition with the picture, nor even hope for good business where the picture has been presented," thereby causing a loss of employment for Equity members.
• Equity protests increased rates at hotels in the Times Square area—home to many members—during the World's Fair.
• A membership meeting draws 1,205 members
• The Quarterly Meeting of Chorus Equity makes history by electing, for the first time, five members of that Association to sit on the Equity Council with a voice and vote.

50 Years Ago
March 1964
• Equity reports the creation of a new department to extend and promote the professional theatre throughout the United States. (It later evolves into FEDAPT—the Foundation for the Extension and Development of the American Professional Theatre.)
• The membership, voting in a mail referendum, approves a dues increase on a sliding scale from $24 for all members to $30 annually up to $100 in the highest earnings category. Initiation fee goes from $150 to $200.

25 Years Ago
March 1989
• Council approves the mailing of a questionnaire to approximately 1,000 Equity members throughout the country who have been randomly selected to assist in a study by Columbia University to determine artists' work-related human and social service needs, especially in areas of health care and insurance, life insurance and pension and welfare benefits.

10 Years Ago
March 2004
• Equity launches the Members Only section on its website.
• Equity hails passage of a new Child Performer Education & Trust Act in New York State that mandates work permits and establishes educational requirements and blocked trust funds.
• Council approves a new University Resident Theatre Association (URTA) contract which increases health rates 32-46% over the three-year agreement.

Colleen Dewhurst represents Equity at a hearing sponsored by the New York City Committee on Women studying the status of women in media and the arts.