

The Wisdom of Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus

As a former English teacher, Dr. Andrus understood the power of words. She knew how to use words to educate others, whether her students, state legislators, presidents, or the American people. Dr. Andrus communicated her thoughts eloquently and persuasively, inspiring millions to join her cause. Her arguments were always based on facts and



intelligent insight...which she delivered with heartfelt passion and empathy. Although soft-spoken, Dr. Andrus was unrelenting in her logic and purpose. She had an uncanny ability to lead her listeners through a problem in such a way that they would arrive at the solution she had seen long before. As a former student once said, "Somehow you found yourself acting like she wanted you to." Dr. Andrus also knew how to turn ideas into action so their truth could be demonstrated;. This was the purpose of Grey Gables, to demonstrate her core belief that retired people are fully capable of taking matters into their own hands and building a better future for themselves.

Scott Hart, author of *The Power of Year* (1964): "The central idea of Ethel Percy Andrus was the power of years. It must have occurred to many others, but it was Ethel that turned ideas into action. What she saw cast upon the shelf in cavalier fashion were human lives, worn a little or much, but bearing strong residues of experience and wisdom the young had yet to find. From the seeing came the idea, and from the idea arose action, good, brave and unrelenting. What emerged was a wealth of writing [and speeches] that have inspired thousands to live again, not merely apart but within the torrent of forces driving the restless nation toward a better realization of its meaning and destiny."

The following quotes provide a glimpse into the wisdom of Dr. Ethe Percy Andrus:

On Aging, Growth, Maturity, and "The Power of Years"

"As it is, when you leave a job they often just give you a gold watch, and all you can do is look at it and count the hours until you die. Yet think of all the grand things we can do that youth can't. Think of all the things we already have done. Someday, the retired citizens of this country will have the dignity they deserve."

"We are helping make aging better, for aging is everybody's business and everybody's

future.”

“The false assumption that aging is all decrement, added to the fact of no recognition of the continued maturation and development of skills and understanding, is destructive to the drive of older persons to maintain their usefulness and health.”

“We have the physical equipment for the good life, but we need not only heart but empathy. It is tied in with feeling. If we haven’t it, we can develop it. We must believe and have faith in ourselves, and what we can do for each other. The choice is ours.”

“We can paint you a picture of older people who know that age isn’t a punishment and a penalty, but is a privilege. They hold that every year comes to us as a merit badge, something of esteem that might be considered a feather in one’s cap and say, ‘We are the accomplished ones; we’ve lived, and we’re proud of it...every year.’ To them life is a victory and not a defeat.”

Quoting Dr. Gregor Ziemer: “We’re not ‘oldsters,’ we’re ‘people,’ the same as everybody else. And we’re not in our ‘Golden Years’. Our years are the same as everyone else’s—we are just trying to do more with them.”

“Don’t get old. Grow...and don’t stop growing. Only when you stop growing are you old.”

“Aging is an achievement. The later years have meaning and purpose. Activity is life, and work is one’s salvation.”

“Old people are tough. They have to be to have lived this long.”

“The older American is as unique an individual as he or she was as a teenager. It is as hard to categorize older folk as it is to categorize youngsters. Even in youth some were eager beavers--alert, vital, and serviceable. It is perhaps these, now mellowed by compassion and enriched by experience, who hold the community and the nation to correct some oversights and misdirections.”

“Let’s glory in being old. We who are older have the right and the responsibility to keep on living in the stream of life.”

“We earnestly seek not eternal youth but a constantly increasing maturity, the wisdom that will not need or seek praise, striving to realize each day a little more of our goals—goals of helpful, happy, and enjoyable living and of growth.”

“We hope that the man in the street and the lad in the school may come to look upon aging as a source of inspiration and a resource to be used, not only for leisured reminiscence of days and deeds gone by, but also for prophetic forecasting of things to

come, to dream about, to realize.”

“As older Americans, we’re challenged to do something to help our communities... We mustn’t be afraid, but proud of the word ‘old’.”

“We don’t just get old—we grow old—we mature. There is nothing grander than growing old. Hold your years as merit badges you have earned, as awards for experience and achievement. Let us remember maturity is not static. With our years come changes in the philosophy of age. No longer through preachment does old age achieve dignity and respect. Achievement rests with the older person himself.”

“Such to me is the new image of aging: growth in self and service for all mankind”

“Longevity and health are not inherent rights; these privileges carry an obligation to earn them. The oldster must stop thinking of the treatment of his ills as merely applying a temporary patch to a worn fabric. He must think positively how to keep that fabric in shape for long a comfortable use. He need not put up with handicaps and infirmities that can be fixed.”

“Maturing is the product of years of living fully. Neither youthful zest nor the accomplishments of spectacular college life can produce the vital equipment that comes only with the ripening of years. That is the crown that dynamic maturity earns. That is the glory of age.”

“As we age, sometimes we grow apprehensive and fearful at [time’s] speed and the uncertain shortness of our stay, that we waste it, trading existence for living.”

Dr. Andrus says she’s “terribly grieved” at the attitudes many young people have toward growing old. “There are some wonderful things about it, and it can be a rich time for anyone who realizes it.”

“Older people want to give and be respected for what they are instead of what they were. They want to be proud of growing old—proud of every year.”

Quoting the poet Bailey in Festus:

“We live in deeds not years.”

Quoting Longfellow:

Age is opportunity no less
Than youth itself, though in another dress,
And as the evening twilight fades away
The sky is filled with stars, invisible by day.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow US poet (1807 - 1882)

“Unless the world that calls us senior citizens wants to be dubbed as junior citizens, they are putting us aside and thinking that the lovely strong words, “age” and “aging” as something that must be camouflaged, must be deodorized, must be made respectable. This we regret and feel is a pity, a disservice.”

“I don’t want to be called a senior citizen unless you want to be called a junior citizen. If I’m an old woman, you’re a young man. Those who segregate the nation’s older people with the use of the term ‘senior citizen ’have employed a regrettable and misleading stereotype “which can become in time a boomerang to its makers, who some day, too, will be old.”

“If you call me a ‘Senior Citizen ’I’ll call you a ‘Junior Citizen.” That will fix you!”

“Everybody’s aging!”

“The people who live to an old age are those with reason to live.”

The author, Scott Hart: “Age can be what one makes of it. She, herself, exemplified her aim: dynamic maturity.”

“Retired persons are considered walking hospitals. But that’s not a true picture of old age today. We shouldn’t dread it. We’re lucky to be old.”

“Let’s not grieve at growing older. Let us only grieve if we stop growing. Age is inevitable; the only way to avoid it is to die young. For those of us who have made the grade, maturity is an asset. It is for each of us to demonstrate how our family, our town and our state is better for our living. There is much that we can do; there is much to be done. We must first heed (heed) the call of service. Then remember the words of that kindly humorist of yesteryear, George Ade, ‘Those who give, get.’”

“We believe age is an achievement, not a tragedy. The latter years, we contend, have much meaning and great promise. Activity is life, and work is our salvation. We are living proof that the elderly can proudly go on serving as an integral, serviceable, and respected part of their communities.”

“Every grey hair I have is a kind of merit badge.”

Service to Others

“What we do, we do for all.”

“We learn the inner secret of happiness when we learn to direct our inner drives, our interest and our attention to something besides ourselves.”

“The human contribution is the essential ingredient. It is only in the giving of oneself to others that we truly live.”

“We have a stewardship of influence and an obligation to assume an increasing responsibility for dynamic leadership at the national, state and community levels.”

“Many men now give but a minimum of their potential interest or activity to purposefulness. They seem to prefer to let life slip by with interest centered in trivial activities and unrewarding ways. The person who uses a portion of his leisure to the unselfish service of his fellowship finds in his purposefulness that he can influence and change existing circumstances for the better”.

“Climb out of your self and serve others.”

“The future is ours to go on helping build and helping protect the things we hold dear in our America. In so doing we have discovered that the ultimate good for us—and for all others lies not in self-seeking but in selfless service to humankind.”

“Volunteer service is the gift we bring to Veterans Hospitals, local hospitals, nursing home programs, Red Cross activities, church activities and community service programs.”

“Remember, one person with faith and love for his fellow is equal to a force of ninety-nine with only selfish interests.”

“What I spent, is gone; what I kept, I lost; but what I gave away will be mine forever.”

“To serve, not to be served.” Motto of Dr. Andrus and AARP, taken from Mark, “Even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.”

“Dr. Paul D. Moody is quoted as saying, ‘The measure of a man is not in the number of his servants but in the number of people he serves.’ The oldster who loves his family, who shares, with his neighbor, of his time and of himself, who helps his community become a happier, healthier place because he is in it, is truly successful. For him, aging ceases to be a problem—he has become the answer to it.”

“Many men now give but a minimum of their potential interest or activity to purposefulness. They seem to prefer to let life slip by with interest centered in trivial activities and unrewarding ways. The person who uses a portion of his leisure to the unselfish service of his fellowship finds in his purposefulness that he can influence and change existing circumstances for the better.”

Our most important years lie ahead of us. Giving and serving are the reason for living.”

“The causes that can engage your leisure hours to the betterment of society are as

numberless as the sands of the desert. Just what your choice is, only you can tell and only you can do the job.”

“What our deepest self craves is not mere enjoyment, but some supreme purpose that will enlist all our powers and will give unity and direction to our life. We can never know the profoundest joy without a conviction that our life is significant—not a meaningless episode. The loftiest aim of human life is unselfish service to others.”

“Too often we retired persons say, ‘I’m just one man, one woman.’ We should realize that as a retired man or woman, we still have a place in life—a place in which we can serve. We believe that every man and woman has a duty to help others. So often someone says, ‘I don’t have time to help others.’ We do have the time. The world would be better off today if, whenever someone called for help, there would always be someone else to say, ‘I am here.’”

“Our people want to go on serving. They’re not through with life just because they’re off the payroll.”

“Remember, one person with faith and love for his fellow is equal to a force of ninety-nine with only selfish interests.”

“Few joys are greater than the joy of participation with a dedicated group, and that is a boon we offer to all men. We are all recruits in the total human enterprise that is hoping to contribute to the ultimate good. So we enter into a community of service and hope. By so doing, we transcend our allotted span of life; we deny mortality. We live for that which passes beyond the here and now. We give to purposes that matter, that outlive one’s own life.”

Society and the Social Basis for Life

“In our daily meeting with one another we must realize that it is only in the sharing of one’s self with others that we renew ourselves. Only in the meeting of minds—thine and mine—do we meet and release the divine in each of us.”

“We seem to think “they” should do something about “them.” Is it not time for us to realize that there is no mythical “they” in this land where freedoms and rights exist and seemingly are forgotten—that “we” are the “they” whom so many talk about as being responsible and corrective?”

“The concept of the person as a social being is that society has no existence apart from that of its individual members. Our Association emphasizes for us this truth: first, that retirement is opportunity; and second, that man does not live by bread alone; that together we can work toward a many-splendored maturity; growing, not just growing old.”

Creativity

“Creativity is ageless.”

“Remember every morning we have the gift of time—24 hours—no more, no less—just as your neighbor has. What are we going to do with our gift? Why not make it creative? Let’s push aside the horizons of our interests and make for ourselves a lovelier, richer and more challenging world. Truly, creativity is not an aptitude—it is an attitude.”

“A myth has grown around creativity, leaving the inference that only the talented possess it; that it is an attribute of genius. Creativity is the inherent, unceasing impulse in all of us to embody, outside of ourselves, something that the divine and the spiritual within us perceive as noteworthy. It is the power in which we must have faith—the creative and the curative power—that refreshes us in sleep and heals us when ill. It is upon this human factor—upon man’s stamina and resourcefulness, upon his daring that the growth of creativity depends, for creativity does not mean merely the adding of another skill to our operational or artistic equipment. Instead, it is the development in ourselves of a different confrontation both with the realities of life and the awe and wonder of it. It connotes a novel and a more satisfying involvement of ourselves with the life about us and the spiritual and intellectual life within us.”

On the Future

“As we retire, the most impelling problem facing us is ‘What of the future?’ This we know: that the past is forever gone and the future is not yet. All we—and all mankind—have is the present—already passed as we think of it.”

“It has been widely said that whatever many may say about the future, it is ours – not only that it may happen to us, but it is in part made by us. To enjoy the present, to extract from it every jot of its flavor, its scent and its quality, to have faith in man and in country, that’s the way to build the future. Today is ours—it will be significant to us as we make it purposeful.”

“Whether some care to admit it or not, old people have a future. And they have an obligation to both their nation and their community.”

“If there is one important resolve that is both urgent and self-protective for us it is to break with the past—for the past cannot be changed or cured. A man cannot go forward and stand still looking backward at the same time.”

“Might it not be well for us older folk now to develop interests and intellectual concern for the future so that we may improve our understanding of the world and prepare ourselves more fittingly to live in it?”

Grey Gables

“Young man, the tragedy of old age is inactivity. We hope to prevent that at our home. Never take to the rocking chair when you get on in years. If you do, you are a goner.”

“ Twelve years later, Grey Gables, administered by the nonprofit Bureau of Homes (a subsidiary of NRTA) has altered the image of aging into a desirable condition. Approximately 85 residents demonstrate the ‘most effective example of social integration we have seen,’ said the French Magazine *Le Troisieme Age*. ”

In assessing Ojai for her retirement community, according to Scott Hart: “She talked to everyone, probing into the town’s mood, the people’s attitudes, and she talked lengthily with the children.”

For residents of Grey Gables, according to Scott Hart: “A zest for living was demanded, and, even more so, an ability to live in harmony with others. The foremost imperative was the willingness to reach the dynamic maturity which Dr. Andrus exemplified.”

“Loneliness, boredom, the tendency to grow mentally and physically careless and indifferent, the terrifying sense of insecurity and possible physical or mental incompetence, the spiraling costs of nursing and medical care, the harrowing fear of lack of privacy and medical care, the harrowing fear of lack of privacy and independence—all the uncertainties of advancing life; these became the dragons we saw and resolved to slay.”

“Grey Gables is a club-like, self-sustaining, non-profit home for group living, one answer to the teacher’s problem of retirement housing, for it offers an adventure in spending one’s leisure years in one of California’s loveliest of sunny valleys, enjoying metropolitan living against a mountain setting. It is at once a quiet home for relaxation and a dynamic cultural center; it offers both and, in addition, luxury accommodations with gracious informal hospitality.”

“Some of the dragons we saw and resolved to slay were loneliness, boredom, and the terrible sense of insecurity. Grey Gables is more than a residence or clubhouse of retired folk. It symbolizes what can be accomplished by groups inspired by courage and vision. Grey Gables is a realization that retired folk need not wait to be served by their younger brethren but can build and administer their own future.”

“Grey Gables is the name of our NRTA residence and headquarters. It is an estate of five and one quarter acres in the village of Ojai, an ideal place detached from the distractions of city life...the air is invigorating and dry...We of Grey Gables are certain that this project will be a pilot one, the first perhaps of many to prove to the world that retirement can be a dynamic adventure in gracious living.” –from NRTA Journal

Dr. Andrus foresaw a nursing home where the elderly might receive 24-hour care in the highly-specialized field of geriatrics. “The Acacias hopes to be more than a nursing facility, more than a convalescent home; it is a health center that will demonstrate the

potency of helping older people discover the basis of their trouble and through care, friendly concern, and expert service find the right channels to recovery. The Acacias in its freshness and beauty of building and setting is in itself a strong factor in the attainment of this goal; its lines are restful; its colors refreshing; its furnishing modern and effective.”

Learning and Growing

“Learning is Timeless.”

“What isn’t realized is that [the problems of old age have their] roots in the same tragedy as juvenile delinquency. The desire to learn certain things is killed. A little child can drive you wild with his constant questions: “What’s that? Why? Where? When?” But the tragedy is—they stop asking. The same thing applies to older people when they lose their curiosity, when they lose the adventure of finding out about things.”

So we have to ask ourselves, why do adolescents and older people begin losing their curiosity, the adventure of finding out about things? Why do they stop questioning the universe? Part of it is the way society has defined adolescence and old age. For adolescents, their time to make a contribution is in the future; for older people, it is in the past—neither has a purpose...and this kills the desire to learn. What’s the purpose?

Retirement

“If we look upon our retirement from paid employment as also being our commencement, our graduation into a new unexplored world, our 65th year is no longer tragic, but, instead, is a time when we can plan our own individual time, schedules, and our own program of activities and can either develop or ignore our own potentials for growth and for service.”

“The social service agencies have programs of recreation, card playing and so on...That’s not for us. We’re interested in growth and service, not just a kindergarten.”

“Retired persons can find much to do and learn, and we like to do for ourselves instead of having others do for us.”

“Retirement is that time in life when a person has time to get down to work in earnest,” says Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus who speaks from experience.

“Our generation of older folks is a pilot one. How it will be reported by posterity depends on us. We hope we will be judged on our rewarding and interesting lives, and the importance, to ourselves and to society, of our value in personal growth and community participation. We hope we will be judged as having faced confidently an entirely new present and an unknown future, trying to continue in the full stream of life and emphasizing the truth, first, that retirement to us means opportunity; and, second, that

man does not live by bread alone; that together we can work toward a many-splendored maturity; growing, not just growing old.”

“We must learn to live in retirement. We must learn how to let go of our old job, no matter how we loved it. That is behind us, and ours no more. We must recognize how much of life is still before us, how much it holds of real promise, and how truly we can and should continue to serve.”

“Retire not from, but to service”.

“Happiness, we know, comes from within, but it is equally true that our greatest unhappiness comes also from within. When our inner happiness is self-centered, we lose it. When our inner-self seeks an “other’s” goal, we gain it. If the aim is centripetal, it defeats itself; when it is directional, it brings with it well-being.”

"As it is, when you leave a job they often just give you a gold watch, and all you can do is look at it and count the hours until you die. Yet think of all the grand things we can do that youth can't. Think of all the things we already have done! Someday, the retired citizens of this country will have the dignity they deserve."

“As we retire, the most impelling problem facing us is ‘What of the future?’ This we know: that the past is forever gone and the future is not yet. All we—and all mankind—have is the present—already passed as we think of it.”

“Each of us has powers of which we are unaware, each of us has a circle of influence. Our limitations are a product of our own thinking and self-evaluation. If only we think we can!”

“Let us keep our zest for living, for the joy we can find and the warm human friendships we can make—and mindful of our life as a trust—do what we can to make life useful.”

“You had an aim for your mature working years. It was to teach the young. They were rich and rewarding because you were actively engaged in reaching a goal. The same should be true of the retirement years. Reach for a definite, realistic accomplishment.”

[My mother] “was my inspiration to do something about being retired. She once told me, ‘you thought your work was done when you gave up youngsters, but it’s only the beginning because it’s now with older persons.’”

“If we retire from life, life retires from us.”

“We are not retired, but refired!”

“Retirement should be intelligently anticipated—should be planned for, long before that

period of life is reached. There should be a yearning for something to life for and to live by beyond the here and now, something more compelling and challenging than his own welfare and well-being. He should adopt the slogan, 'Retirement is opportunity unlimited'. He should be constantly aware that no one can live for himself alone. The gift of time, which retirement brings, offers him the chance to do as he would for others, to volunteer and to contribute, to be emotionally involved, to stimulate the sluggish and the inactive lonely—the rare opportunities of service, and the treasured side-benefits of retirement living. He hopes to show them a world where no one becomes old and sad, where no one becomes godly and grave, where no one becomes crafty and wise, where no one becomes bitter of tongue.”

“Happy is the man or woman who, on growing old, can quickly adjust to necessary changes and find satisfying substitutes; who looks upon retirement from a job, however devoutly served and treasured, as a challenging opportunity for a second career. Happier still will that fortunate person be if this second career expands his circle of friends, raises his sights to service for his fellows, challenges his powers, absorbs his interest, and makes the activities of each day a necessary part of the future he is helping to build for others as well as himself.”

NRTA-AARP

“Our whole aim is to get aging people back into the stream of life and to prove they are able to keep on growing and serving.”

“In 1947 the National Retired Teachers Association (NRTA) was founded on a shoestring and a prayer. We made no little plans, for in little plans lies no magic to stir one’s blood. We made big plans. We aimed high in hope and work. We counted upon our people’s determination and their missionary spirit. We did not count in vain.” (This is a paraphrase of a quote by Daniel Burnham, architect.)

“NRTA was and is built upon the thesis that creative energy is ageless, that we must keep on being active, that our years of experience, understanding, and skill are reserves of energy and power that we must put to work to build richer, more interesting lives, to help stretch the purchasing power of the retirement dollars, to help in crusades that reach beyond the here and now and to find in such activity, content, faith, and hope.”

“NRTA, not knowing that it was involved in the nationwide industrial and social revolution, had, instinctively, helped in the solving of some of their inherent problems. We think that NRTA has solved: First, the need of continuing the productive skills in a no-work world. Its answer is found, not in theory, but in realistic action. Production goes on at an increasing pace, but the shifting is from a production of goods to the production of services, intangible, elusive, heart-warming services; endless, for man’s appetite for such is insatiable.

Second, the required shift in goals in a no-work world from the concept of happiness through comfort and the collection of status symbols to the concept of happiness through self-fulfillment.

To me, this is the story of NRTA's dedicated effort. It stands high along the measuring arc of service to self in the giving of self to the service of others. Like Schweitzer, NRTA in its growing maturity, has grown socially, intellectually, and spiritually, in line with the hoped-for program of the world of peace and good will, for which we all pray and work. It forgets its age in years and its physical shortages in the challenge of growth and services of a happier world because of our stay in it. Such to me is the new image of aging: growth in self and service for all mankind."

"The NRTA was our answer. In it we found unity in diversity. In it we learned that we could look forward to tomorrow because we had lived today."

"The National Retired Teachers Association is unique in that it is run for and by older Americans."

"The AARP is proud of its high purposes and its fine traditions; it is proud to envision its promise of greater growth and wider service. An association concerned with tomorrows, but at the same time not unmindful of the yesterdays, made brighter by the courage and the fortitude of those among us who have shouldered for older folk the burden of helping, righting wrong, relieving tensions and making richer future living. It is only the older folk that can and will change society's viewpoint—correct society's inequities. The older folk can do it only by building for society a new image of old age, by mirroring for society their individual dedication, self-reliance, and purposeful well doing in the daily life of their communities."

AARP: "Dr. Andrus was an extraordinary and visionary woman who founded AARP, and thus inaugurated a new way of life for older people."

"AARP is the answer for older persons who believe that the way to keep young, maintain independence and dignity as they grow older, is through activity, usefulness, and service to others."

Basic principles of AARP: [from *The Power of Years*]

"Our *nation* needs the accumulated experience, knowledge, wisdom and skills of all older adults."

"Our *members* have the responsibility to remain active in retirement, to keep themselves well informed, to cooperate with responsible public and private agencies and organizations concerned with programs and activities that will help to make our nation strong morally, spiritually, and materially for the benefit of all Americans."

An AARP office was opened in the nation's capital in 1959. "It is our aim to make this office the central source of information in the nation on the problems of aging—a most ambitious program," the NRTA Bulletin observed. "However, in view of the signal

recognition which AARP has won from distinguished national officials, as well as from influential private citizens, we confidently anticipate its success.” “Not only will this compendium of information be of great assistance to us in formulating our own retirement program, but as a further phase of our service to retirement living, this collection of classified, up-to-date information will be made available at all times to agencies—federal, state, local, and private—which are engaged in retirement programs.”

“Our organization differs from others of senior citizen membership. We are dedicated to constructive, meaningful service to members and not to something that merely passes time for them.” She scoffed at what she called “card-playing” solutions to older needs. “I think our young social workers who think they know all the answers will be a bit embarrassed when they get older at their ways of treating senior citizens like they belonged in kindergarten. Apathy already is a crime of old age. It’s a pity to turn a person on himself and make him feel that entertainment and killing time is really life. Activity can be busy work, but to us activity is having a purpose.”

Most organizations working with older citizens did things for them—things that too often led to trivial activities and childish games. “Why can’t AARP offer senior Americans a chance to solve their own problems of personal identity, recreation, travel, health protection and financial security? Suddenly I realized I had been spared all these years to accomplish this purpose.”

On Practical Idealists

“Our members have realizable ideals, within the reach of everyone: living each day a little more fully than yesterday, observing happenings about us with sensitivity and an urge to understand and to help, to relive when relief is indicated, but sharing humor and the upward and outward look. We are practicing idealists.” Idealism, not just as an idea, but as a practical way of life—living in deeds.

“Instead of sharing with other nations the American dream of individual responsibility, of creative measures to relieve suffering, we have stressed the efficiency of our technology, the products of our inventiveness and effort. We have not realized that things do not stir one’s imagination. It is the poetry of life, the philosophy, the creed that excites and stimulates. We who are practical idealists, have forgotten that it is our idealism, never yet realized but progressively being pursued, that should be our greatest article of export.”

“We often hear expressions of concern for America’s future, but there are many Americas. Some are not worth saving; there are the Americas of privilege and of smugness, an America of lethargy and inequality, an America of discrimination and an America of violence. But there are other Americas, too—of tolerance and generosity, of benevolence and understanding, of curiosity and creativity, an America of dynamism and access to opportunity—the America we finally hope to realize.”

Retirement Research and Welfare Association

Dr. Andrus founded the Retirement Research and Welfare Association in 1961 to: “conduct research and studies in retirement living; prepare and disseminate informative material based on research and evaluation; stimulate and support, financially and otherwise, programs and projects in the field of aging; establish needed services and facilities for older persons; identify and give assistance to significant programs and meritorious organizations (charities, foundations, projects) working in the interest of older persons; accept, receive and expend gifts and grants of money, public and private, for any of the forgoing purposes.”

Dr. Andrus on RRWA: “The Retirement Research and Welfare Association has already done much to justify the faith in it held by its growing number of members. It has shown by statistics the falsity of the stereotype that aging is largely a pathetic state, that aged persons are ill, indigent and dependent, whose greatest needs are compassion, care, and a dole.”

Her Goal for Her Students:

“To bring to each a sense of his own worth by treating him with dignity and respect, by honoring his racial background, not as a picturesque oddity, but as a valued contribution to the rich tapestry of American life, to keep active in him the sense of filial obligation to his stock and to his family, to help him develop his strengths and to realize his limitations, to find fulfillment according to his own unique nature, then to find worthy of his respect his neighbor of a different race or color, to treat him with understanding and friendship and to regard the heritage and the future of his friend as an esteemed part of the America we are all building.”

“Our student body became a part of the larger social movements of Lincoln Heights. Our athletes became the coaches and sponsors of their respective elementary schools. Training rules kept prospective delinquents in bed at bedtime to qualify,” she wrote. “Recognition for civic performance satisfied and fed the drives of youth, which like age, wants to be needed, to be praised and be ‘a member of a team.’”

Teaching:

“At a reunion at the university where years before I had received my first degree I was often asked what was my line of work before retirement and when I answered, ‘Teaching,’ invariably I was then asked, ‘What did you teach?’ And I began to wonder—what did I teach? What did we all teach? Youth certainly—some subject matter—but probably ourselves most of all.”

White House Conference on Aging

“The real success of the White House Conference will depend upon the wide-spread genuine interest it inspires, the down-to-earth conditions it discloses, and the hoped for results in remedial legislative action it generates and the wholesome change in attitude on the part of the public toward aging it develops.”

Quotes by Others about Dr. Andrus

Senator Harrison A. Williams, Jr., N.J. at her Memorial Service: “She will be recorded in the history of our time as one of the great women of America.”

Melvin Laird, Wisconsin: “The social history of our time will record that when retirement was considered an ending, Dr. Andrus created a feeling of independence, dignity, and purpose for the later years.”

Dr. Edward Warner Brice, Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Education: “Her permanent memorial is the warm thoughts of all of us in government, the arts and professions, in all walks of American life who see in her life the daily reminder that the concerns of people do count.”

Dr. William Bechill, Commissioner of Aging, Dept. of H.E.W.: “When Dr. Andrus considered time at all, it was usually to look ahead and start something new. This could be either a new organization, a new service, a new program or a new fight to promote the kind of constructive social action that she felt was essential to the well-being of older people.”

President Lyndon B. Johnson: “The life of each citizen who seeks relentlessly to serve the national good is a most precious asset to this land. And the loss of such a citizen is a loss shared by every American. In Ethel Percy Andrus, humanity had a trusted and untiring friend. She has left us all poorer by her death. But by her enduring accomplishments, she has enriched not only us, but all succeeding generations of Americans.”

Tribute by Margaret Riggs, Grey Gables resident: “We who are the fortunate residents of our beautiful California “home away from home” know how completely Dr. Andrus realized the fulfillment of her dream, and we are and will forever be indebted to her for her wisdom and her foresight in providing better things for better and more gracious living for us at Grey Gables.”

Scott Hart, “There were many who scoffed at her phrases *Modern Maturity*, and *Dynamic Maturity*. They felt she was creating awkward euphemisms to cover the fact that people get “OLD”. She didn’t run from the word “old”, but she sought to redefine it. She knew the power of words, and the need to redefine old age.