QUILT JUST ONE EXAMPLE

WI's generosity on display

BY LISE DIEBEL
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A handsome red-and-white quilt belonging to the Caudle family of Wiarton speaks volumes about the contributions made by Women's Institute groups over the years.

Back in 1932, during the Christmas season, the David Caudle family of Colpoy's Bay lost their home to fire.

Colpoy's Bay WI members wanted to raise money to help the family rebuild and the women did it by making a quilt. People could have their names embroidered on the quilt by donating money to the family.

People gave 10 to 25 cents to have their name sewn on, said David Caudle son Ken Caudle, 67, of Wiarton. [illegible], money was a lot different

[illegible]ith its 714 names, was [illegible]aturday at the Wiarton Propeller Club as part of celebrations for the 100th anniversary of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.

Ken Caudle was just two when the fire destroyed the family home and everything in it. But he remembered the quilt, which was on his bed as a child. "It was used as long as I can remember at home."

The quilt eventually went to his sister, Marguerite Lemcke, who passed it on to Caudle.

Colpoy's Bay WI president Elaine Rouse heard about the family treasure and asked Caudle if she could borrow it for Saturday's exhibit.

"To me, it's a history," Rouse said. "I know a lot of the names that are on there and I felt it would be very interesting to a lot of people coming through today. There are people who were in here today who have their names on there."

The Colpoy's Bay group was one of 10 WI branches in the North Grey district taking part in Saturday's event. Groups showcased their talents by hanging dozens of brightly colored quilts on the walls. They also set up exhibits outlining their history and accomplishments.

"This is our hundred years and we wanted to make sure that everyone knew how special the Institute was and how much it has done over the years," said Donna Ward, of the Bruce North District WI. "We have worked really hard over the 100 years we have been around and if the Institute was to disappear, our communities would really suffer."

These days the WI is trying to raise its profile and keep membership from dropping. Saturday's well-attended event is one way of doing that, Ward said. Ward's daughter Candy, 10, said she would someday like to join a WI group. "I'd like to learn more about it," she said.

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Donna Ward of Bruce North Dis[illegible] WI, shows WI memorabilia.