

# Woman earns doctorate for doing God's work

By LINDA O'CONNOR  
Staff Reporter

"My father always told me that if the church calls you to a task, you don't say you can't do it. You're responsible because God makes it possible for you to do it."

Margaret Taylor has lived by her minister father's philosophy throughout her life, and because of her dedication to the church, was honored for her efforts.

In May, at the Presbyterian College in Montreal, she received a Doctor of Divinity degree (DD Honorary) from the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

What makes the honorary degree particularly special is Mrs. Taylor is the first lay person to be honored. Only in comparatively recent times have women been chosen, and those five others were full-time church workers.

She's had a wide range of positions with the Presbyterian church - everything from being the first woman chairman of the Board of Missionary and Deaconess Training School (now called Eewert College) in Toronto from 1957 to 1963 to chairing a committee on the place for women in the church.

"I seemed to get the job nobody else wanted," she jokingly notes.

She admits that it wasn't easy at first to be accepted as the first woman chairman of the board.

"A number of the men thought I was a reporter; they were the only other women in the room."

She went on to ascertain her position, however, and has played many other vital roles in the Presbyterian church, including chairing the building campaign for Eewert College, travelling from coast to coast to raise money.

After her work on the building committee, she went on to become chairman of the administrative council, registration convener for the first Congress in Kingston, chairman of the board of congregational life, chairman of the communication services committee and chairman of a special task force in later years.

Born in Dresden, Ont., Margaret McKay married K. Denton Taylor in 1945. The couple and their three children moved to Belleville in 1958.

Mrs. Taylor has been involved in a great deal of community church work as well. An elder at St. Columba Presbyterian Church, she has organized an Explorer group, assisted in Vacation Bible Schools, served on various session committees, participated in each congregational visitation, and worked as chairman of the Second Century Advance, director of Commpac 1981, co-chairman of the Mission and Outreach Committee, and co-chairman of the church retreats.

Although she has been involved in many church activities, Mrs. Taylor is adamant about what her foremost role is: wife and mother. Now a grandmother of four, all Mrs. Taylor's children are now married.

Through the years, to

help keep her going when she travelled, Mrs. Taylor lived by some rules: "I was very much here when I was here, and very much there when I was there."

Mrs. Taylor is modest of her accomplishments. "I've been a leader on many things but nothing would have happened without the other people on the team."



MARGARET TAYLOR

## City woman to advise on status of women

*Intell Oct 5/85*

*Intell Oct 5 1985*

*Taylor, Margaret*

*Intell  
Thursday, June 9  
1983*

A Belleville resident, Margaret Jean Taylor, has been appointed to the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

The appointment was announced by Walter McLean, the minister responsible for the status of women. The council will advise the government on issues of concern to women.

Taylor, whose appointment is for a five-year term, is one of five new members selected to serve on the advisory council.

She will be required to meet with other members up to four times a year and she expects to receive details of her duties within the next few days.

The Macdonald Avenue resident was returning from vacation at the time of the official announcement, so she did not learn of her appointment until Friday afternoon.

"It's challenging and stimulating (work)," says the non-partisan appointee.

A graduate of the University of Toronto, she received an honorary doctor of divinity degree from the Presbyterian College, which is affiliated with McGill University, Montreal, in 1983.

Taylor, who has a history of volunteer work at the local and national levels, chaired a special task force, in 1981-82, called the Liberty of Conscience as it Pertains to the Ordination of Women.

She was the national campaign chairman for the building of Ewart College, Toronto, and she has 25 years of experience as a chairman of a national board of the Presbyterian Church.

She has also worked with many children's groups, including camps for girls.

She is also a published writer whose short book, *The Gentle Adventurer*, is a Canadiana work based on her father's experiences in western Canada in the early nineteenth century.

She and her husband, K. Denton Taylor, have three children and five grandchildren.