

An eighty-six year old school house purchased by Picnic Grove Institute in Glengarry County, and now used as an "Institute Home" and community centre.



A Rural Community Centre

By Eileen Fourney

WHEN THE SCHOOL known as No. 6 Lancaster in Glengarry was closed and put up for sale, one thing prompting the members of Picnic Grove Women's Institute to buy it for an "Institute Home" and a community centre may have been that the school has always had some use as a community centre. There are still people in the community who can remember going to the school to day-school, Sunday school, prayer meetings, Institute meetings and euchre parties.

In 1962 after eighty-three years' service as a school house the school was closed. It had to be put up for tenders and there were several who would have liked to buy it; but when they heard the Women's Institute wanted it they withheld their bids as everyone felt sure the Institute would make it a good meeting place for the community.

We tendered for the school on September 12, 1962. However, when we went to the lawyer to have the deed transferred we discovered that we could not become owners without being incorporated. Five members of the executive signed the forms before a notary public and witness; there were still a few items to be untangled; but we finally obtained our charter on Dec. 27th and the school officially became the Women's Institute Home.

The school was purchased for a very modest sum and the school board agreed to leave the piano and oil heating system in it. So all the ladies had to do was to bring the tables, chairs and dishes they already owned and move in. Since then one member's husband secured a used but very good electric stove for us, and as he was an electrician he also installed it. Another husband renovated part of the building, removing the boys' cloakroom and wash-room facilities and the teachers' room and installing cupboards and a sink to give us a lovely, modern kitchen. A lady gave us a

large fluorescent light for the kitchen; gay plastic curtains were purchased and more dishes and cutlery; and we were all set to go ahead.

Even before we owned the school the Institute had held many euchre parties there. Now we have them regularly during the winter. In the first two years after the school came into our possession we had two variety shows. The husbands of the members were the actors in several amusing skits climaxed by a fashion show—the men all dressed as women. Later we had a "Husbands' Night" and served a hot cafeteria style supper to our husbands. This week we had a "Thrifty Sale and Tea" which was a great success.

We intend to plant a flowering crab in front of the school next spring as our centennial project.

Demonstrations at the Lakehead Fair

By Mrs. W. Elmore

NUMEROUS TALENTS come to the fore the week the Lakehead Exhibition takes place in Thunder Bay. Three or four members from each Institute put on a demonstration from two to four-thirty in the afternoons and from seven to nine in the evenings.

The branches taking part decide what they can best demonstrate. This year East Fort William did Knitting and Wool Craft; Rosslyn, Gift Wrapping; Kakabeka Falls, Millinery; West Fort William and Stanley, Block Printing; McGregor, Cake Decorating; Slate River, Art of Cheese Making; Conmee, Pancakes; North Blake, Making Shell Jewelry; South Neebing, Desserts with a Difference; McIntyre, Ways of preparing Carrots.

These demonstrations take place in the Arts Building, are open to the public and are considered a drawing attraction by the Fair Board. Each branch taking part receives a prize. Thursday noon features a Pot Luck Luncheon, when all members join for a gathering.