



Miss Shelly Lyons, of Cheltenham, the winner of the Peel County Women's Institute bursary.

Lones and Links

from the Australian Women's Institutes Home and Country

In the Country Women's Institute movement, some of the work done is not spectacular, nor is it very well known to the general public. But it means a great deal to those concerned. Sometimes work done behind the scenes can be more important than, or at least, as great as that which is seen by the public eye.

Into this category, we should put the "Lone" movement, and "Links." Today I am going to tell you something of this work.

The "Lones" operation was started some 15 years ago when it was decided to write to women who for various reasons such as distance, age, or physical disabilities could not really take part fully and actively in the meetings.

Some are back-country farmers' wives, some lighthouse keepers' wives, some "shut-ins". Many of these women would find life humdrum without some outside interest, and this we endeavour to provide. A "Lone" is adopted by an Institute, and members write regularly to her, telling her what has taken place at meetings, and interesting happenings, and plans for the future. If she's near an Institute local member will visit her. They're encouraged to



Miss Joan Macdonald, of Terra Cotta, winner of the 1968 Women's Institute Peel County Scholarship.

enter competitions especially arranged for them in conjunction with the biannual conference and the Annual General Meeting.

One "Lone" who was adopted in 1959 was the wife of a lighthouse keeper, on Cuvier Island in Auckland Harbour. This member had a family of three, and her letters were most interesting. She told us how she watched the weather as mail day approached, once a fortnight. Supplies also arrived that day, and if the weather forecast was bad, existing stocks were carefully watched, just in case. People said to her when she went to the lighthouse, "Oh, now you'll have plenty of spare time"; but she found that it was quite the reverse, as such a number of adjustments had to be made, and extra work done. The children's school work had to be supervised each morning, which meant household chores were delayed till the afternoon. Maybe some mending or sewing could be done in the evening, as there were no near people to "pop in" and hinder her. The "Lone" enjoyed her stay there. She's now at South Island Institute, and can attend meetings, but her adopted Institute still keeps touch.

Another "Lone" is a permanent patient in hospital, and can do nothing for herself. She just waits for mail every day, and the news from her adopter.

Yet another is a cripple who can attend meetings very rarely. She enters into all the competitions, and keeps abreast of all the doings of the movement.

One member wrote to a "Lone" after each meeting for seven years. This lady was very sick, and just lived for the letters. She has since passed away, and her husband sent a gift to the member, in appreciation of the years of happiness she had given his wife.

But those who adopt these "Lones" get as much joy as those who are adopted. If we can do something that may help someone else well, there is our reward.

There are now 119 "Lones" on our Roll and we welcome enquiries from "Shut-ins" or those who can't get to meetings. We'll gladly adopt them and both parties will derive a lot of pleasure from getting to know each other.

The "Lones" now have their own banner. This was displayed at the 1966 Conference and had a place of honour among Federation Banners. Theirs is bright blue, depicting sea and sky and embroidered with a white heron, pen and ink, and a lighthouse. It was made by the Wanganui District Federation.

The "Link" movement began during World War II, and has continued ever since. It was felt, during those difficult days, that we may be able to help our less fortunate Sisters in England. Addresses of Institutes were obtained from London Headquarters and given to any