



## The President's Corner

Mrs. Austin S. Zoeller, President, the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.

Many of you will be planting gardens as I write this and by the time you are picking your tomatoes, many interesting and exciting things will have happened. Some of our members will have attended Officers' Conference, District Annuals, the Conference of the Associated Country Women of the World in Norway, and Area Conventions; adventures into the unknown.

Meetings truly are an experience but to each meeting we take a little of ourselves. It may be in the way of knowledge, personality, talent or attitude. Try attending Officers' Conference and you'll experience the sharing of thoughts and ideas, and the magic of these experiences reflect a part of you.

Do you ever think how little we really know about one another? We work side by side not knowing of each other's religion, politics or problems but respecting each person for their individuality. Enjoying the associations for the individual's worth and not because of their status in life.

Women's Institutes give us the opportunity that no other organization affords, that of developing the talents we have and directing our energies toward a common purpose — higher standards and leadership.

These "unknowns" are with us constantly. We really don't know if the tomatoes we are planting will grow, or how much information was taken back from District Annuals or Officers' Conference, but one thing we do know, if we have the proper attitude we'll be more concerned for having attended these meetings. Perhaps with concern comes a desire to become more alert to the world around us. How concerned are you about the Status of Women report? Do you know there are 167 different recommendations directed to the Federal and Provincial Governments? The complete copy of the report and the abbreviated version, "What's In It" are available from the Queen's Printer. Granted this is heavy reading but how are we to learn if we aren't informed? Another "unknown" that we hear and read about is the family, the family unit, and the need for a

family. What is your philosophy? Do you think the family unit will remain or do you think that by the year 2000 the family as we know it now will have changed? The family unit, husband-wife-child relationship must never change; the love and joys of family life will remain. However, society is changing and the acceptance of working mothers is now part of our way of life. We now seem to be desirous to excel and maybe the time has come for us to develop to the fullest the talents of both men and women. Isn't society the loser if we discourage and ignore or misuse the talents women possess?

In the seventy-four years of Women's Institutes' existence the nucleus has centred around programs. We are in a better position than ever before to move forward with the development of programs and activities to make appropriate use of the important information in the Loan Library, Public Library and from Government and Industry. The concept of libraries has changed; no longer do we consider books the only source of information for program material. The Women's Institutes are turning more and more to the Loan Library, and under the direction of Mrs. Mary Dawson this library has our interest as its main concern, tailoring its contents to the needs of the Women's Institute. Resource material available in the form of papers and pamphlets which provide a wide scope of program material.

This is the time to say "Congratulations" to all the Branch members for the completion of the 75th Anniversary project (our contribution to the expansion of Macdonald Institute), ahead of schedule. Don't you agree that we need a single project with an objective that gives all Branch members in our province a reason for unity?

You all know that we have an option on the Erland Lee property at Stoney Creek to be picked up in June 1972. This historic home in its beautiful setting is a place that we will be proud to own, and with the house we will get the lovely old dining room table on which the Constitution for the Women's Institutes was penned. Contributions are starting to come in and we are hopeful that your branch will contribute voluntarily within the next year.

Margaret Zoeller

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O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea  
Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free,  
For as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,  
Survey our empire, and behold our home.

—Lord Byron.

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