

to take back to their branch members. It was a moment of vindication for me.

I was elected to the office of Provincial President in the fall of 1947, and all that winter my thoughts were with our organization. What could be done to help the individual member realize how important she was and how important was the work that she was doing? What could be done to raise the sights of the Women's Institute member as to the overall value of our work? The higher up the hill one climbs the greater the vision and the greater the appreciation and understanding of our work.

How could we get together to know one another better, — to share mutual problems and mutual achievements? — for from every human contact something is learned. We had large Convention Areas in the Province where there was sometimes an interchange of Area Presidents, but we had no Provincial interchange of members, ideas and problems.

Why not a Provincial Conference? But how? How to work it out? How could one expect a small Branch in Rainy River to finance sending an officer to a conference at Guelph? A president of an Institute near Guelph or in Southern Ontario could drive there in an hour or two at practically no expense.

The only way was a pooling system, by which the Guelph Area member would help to finance her sister member from the north and west. Would the members agree? Would they be willing to pool their finances so that all members might have the same opportunity to attend?

I remember stepping out of the chair at the Board meeting in May 1948 that I might present this idea to the Directors. It wasn't easy to persuade those canny Directors of 1948 that it could work and would work if they all got behind the idea; but after lengthy discussion they approved the idea as being valuable and workable. So plans went ahead for a Conference in the spring of 1949.

You can imagine the time and effort that went into planning that two day program for to prove itself the Conference must provide excellent thought, suggestions and leadership. We set the pooling fee at \$30.00 and I understand that that pooling fee proved right and stood for many years.

The officers called in for that first Conference were Area Chairman and Secretaries, District and Branch Presidents and Secretaries. The majority of the delegates came in the night before for a get-acquainted party. Here they were served by members of the Provincial Board who did their best to help the ladies get acquainted with each other. It was a happy evening.

One of the highlights of our conference program was to show the delegates how the Pro-

vincial Board functions. When the morning session opened, the Board members were seen seated around a table on the platform. Two subjects were discussed (a) The Ontario Women's Institute Scholarships (b) The Women's Institute Summer Holiday at Guelph.

Excellent addresses were given on subjects pertaining to ways that would help members in better home making and program planning. Tributes were paid by O.A.C. officials to the Ontario Women's Institutes.

The late Colonel Kennedy, then Minister of Agriculture, stated, "We people who live in rural Ontario are church-going, peace-loving and law abiding, but we must go outside of our homes to help others."

Miss Florence Eadie, then Supervisor of Junior Extension, spoke on Junior work — its importance in rural development and the need for trained leaders.

Other speakers were Miss Mary Collins, Senior Home Economist, Department of Extension, Washington D.C.; Mr. Tolton, Director of Public Relations O.A.C.; Mrs. J. E. Houn spoke on Snags and Snails in Women's Institute work, Miss Anna P. Lewis, then Director, spoke on Extension Service and outlined changes in a new Hand Book; and Miss Helen McKercher, then a Home Economics Supervisor, spoke on Program Planning.

My own contribution was a few thoughts on the subject, "The Qualities of an Ideal Institute Member," and I spoke of my liking for the word enthusiasm. Nothing was ever accomplished without an enthusiastic beginning. If you are enthusiastic you have a sincere belief that what you are doing is right. It is a word I still love and emphasize.

Later we broke up into discussion groups with Board Members as leaders. Branch delegates discussed such topics as, "Do you plan a yearly program? Do you remember the young member in program planning? Do you plan good times? Do you welcome new-comers?"

As a basis for their discussions the District Officers used, "Were you satisfied with your latest District Annual Meeting? How could it be improved? Should branches in a district have common projects?"

Convention Area Officers discussed such topics as, "Did you enjoy last year's Convention? Was it worthwhile? What feature did you enjoy the most? What new features are you planning? Should Area presidents visit District Annual meetings? What emphasis should be placed on panel discussions, outside speakers, and recreation at conventions?"

I feel these questions are just as pertinent today as they were in 1949. There isn't the time to tell you the findings of these different discussion groups. They were reported by the leader to the whole assembly. If you are inter-