

# Meet the Secretaries



Miss Margaret Roberts, Secretary to Miss Helen McKercher, Director, Home Economics Branch  
Mrs. Sid Armstrong, FWIO office Secretary  
Mrs. Wm. G. Miller, Secretary-Treasurer, FWIO  
Mrs. Robt. B. Weber, Secretary-Treasurer, Officers' Conference  
Mrs. Flora Purdy, Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Food, The Hon. Wm. A. Stewart

## MISS MARGARET ROBERTS

Although born and raised in the City of Toronto she became aware of the problems and interests of farmers when working for the Federation of Agriculture at head office in Toronto. Her observation is that since the General Farm Organization vote, the role of the Federation changed and there is a greater input by the farmers into the Federation. This organization now speaks with a much stronger voice on behalf of Agriculture.

Her first work with the Ministry was as Secretary to Miss Jean Scott, Supervisor of Junior Extension. This was her first introduction to the work of the 4-H Homemaking Clubs and the great amount of organizational work which must be done in the office in order to have the club program run smoothly.

When Miss Iona Winterburn retired as Miss McKercher's secretary, she was appointed secretary to the Director of the Home Economics Branch. She finds her work stimulating and a new experience, with the work divided between the Ministry and the Women's Institute. Her knowledge and understanding of the work of Women's Institutes was very limited but now she feels a closeness to the organization through the correspondence and telephone conversations.

There always is a certain amount of routine in any office but the variations are great and there is no dullness to working as Miss McKercher's secretary. Miss Roberts finds that having had the experience of working with Miss Scott in the 4-H program has helped her a great deal in this job.

Margaret will tell you that one of her interests is making "crafty things." This is evident when you see

the wall hanging of orange and yellow felt above her desk in the office. Crocheting, needlepoint and knitting are also favourites.

A course in Interior Design helped her to give her apartment that personal touch. Although apartment living gives little opportunity for gardening she enjoys growing things and recently had a coffee table specially made so it will hold flower pots, giving them a sunken look because of the holes in the top of the table.

Margaret is an outdoor girl, enjoying bicycling and travel. Last year she holidayed in Great Britain and one of her stops was a visit to the Royal Welsh Show. The Women's Institute had a large tent displaying crafts, table settings on various themes, and she even brought a few publications home for the Loan Library.

Margaret has worked with youth, having lead Explorers and C.G.I.T. groups. She will tell you, she enjoys people of all ages.

## MRS. SID ARMSTRONG

Mrs. Armstrong is on the staff of the Home Economics Branch, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and is responsible for the day to day routine of the office of F.W.I.O.

Helen joined the Women's Institute in 1941, at the time when the Scarborough Junction Juniors were seeking permission to become a Senior Branch. Mrs. Mary H. Graves, (a Board Director and on one of the first Home and Country Committees) assisted the Juniors, and the senior Branch was formed and renamed the Mary H. Graves Women's Institute.

Mrs. Armstrong's first office in the Branch was auditor, over the years she has held most of the offices, including Secretary Treasurer and President. At District level she served as Secretary Treasurer for three years as well as Historical Research Convener. She was the first Secretary of York County Rally when the five districts of York joined together for the purpose of presenting a scholarship and to enjoy a get together. At Area level she served six years as Reservation Secretary and another six as Secretary. 1950 was the first year she attended Central Area Convention and has not missed since. She has attended FWIC Conventions in Ottawa, Vancouver and Guelph.

The ACWW Conference held in Toronto in 1953, Helen and her Branch members were the Indians in the pageant "Dominion of Destiny." She and her husband also attended the Lansing Conference.

Scarborough Junction Village has changed since the second world war and the family farm now is the corner of Eglinton and Birchmount. Mrs. Armstrong is a keen photographer and has a collection of slides depicting the changes in this area where she grew up, attended school and still resides.

For relaxation she enjoys needlepoint and embroidery as well as cooking and trying new recipes.

If you would like to know the history of Toronto, just take a ride with Helen and she'll point out the landmarks and show you the changes.