

Getting To Know You

The twinning of Provinces, has developed beyond the stage of letter writing. Women's Institute members have taken advantage of the Secretary of State travel exchange grants and have planned visits and revisits. Some Ontario and Newfoundland Women's Institute members now count each other as personal friends and feel they have developed lasting friendships.

Thirty-five Wellington Centre District members spent a week in the picturesque Atlantic province enjoying new experiences, magnificent scenery and learning to appreciate another Province's life style.

St. John's Women's Institute members were on hand at the airport to welcome the Ontario group and extend greetings during their brief stop-over. Tapes were played containing greetings from Ontario members who could not be presented and Mrs. Myrtle Reid presented the Ontario Women's Institute Story book to the Branch.



Upon arrival in Gander, Newfoundland, Women's Institute members meet. Mrs. Wilma Jamieson (R) is seen presenting Ontario Women's Institute Story book to Mrs. Jean Jenkins, President, Gander W.I., Mrs. Ismey Bird, FWIO Board Director for Subdivision 12, Mrs. Agnes Richard, President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Women's Institutes, Mrs. Betty Sobol, President, Wellington Centre District.

Leaving St. John's the Ontario members travelled to the Town Hall in Port Union to renew friendships (this branch visited Ontario in 1973), exchange gifts, meet their families and talk about Women's Institute work and programmes. The Ontario members left the Town Hall with their hostesses to be their house guests for the remainder of the visit.

Sometimes the group travelled by bus, sometimes with the hostess and her family by car, but wherever the ladies went it was an entirely new experience. The visitors and hostesses boarded a bus for Gander where Mrs. Ronald Richards, President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Women's Institute, welcomed all. Gander Women's Institute served dinner which included the well known fish and brewis, cod tongues and blueberry pudding.

The well planned week afforded all a wide variety of events. A picnic in Terra Nova Park, berry picking, driving in and around the marvellous little villages, shopping, as well as an opportunity to appreciate both the friendships and scenic beauty of Newfoundland. Some were able to fish and Elinor Longstreet caught a large cod with a jigger in Random Sound while on board "The Escape", later she was then able to enjoy a Jigger's dinner cooked Newfie style.

A visit to Come-By-Chance Oil Refinery where officials showed a film of the building of Come-By-Chance from the turning of the first sod by J. R. Smallwood to the present day, as well as a tour of the Refinery and the waterfront. Then on to the Rustwood

Ranch to see the home of the only living Father of Confederation.

Later in the week all were back in St. John's to meet the Mayor, tour the City Hall and the Confederation Building, House of Assembly and a chance to talk with some of the parliamentarians.

A beautiful view from Signal Hill of the narrows with the many ships coming in was a sight for those who live far away from the sea. A visit to the Trinity area and its fine museum gave all plenty to think about as the curator Walter White showed the group through and related some of Newfoundland's history.

The Perth County folks were also visiting the area and joined the group in an evening of fellowship. Skits, poems, songs of Newfoundland and a slide presentation, helped to cement friendships. Perhaps the most touching part of the evening was the singing of the Ode to Newfoundland and O, Canada.

Because the visitors live far from ocean waters, the fish processing plants and shipyards were a new adventure. To actually see the process of drying and curing cod, to meet the men in charge and be able to ask questions helped all to appreciate these industries much more.

At the end of the week, the Ontario members looked back and reflected. All agreed the lives of Women's Institute members had been enriched in so many ways, through travel, the scenery, visiting in the homes and meeting the families. All felt proud to be both Canadian and members of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada.

However, something deeper was gained than the "knowing" and "participating" perhaps it was an inner feeling almost unexplainable — experiences, beauty, fellowship, but beyond it was that something, that unknown dimension, the realization that above everything else — people and not things are what really count. It means more to this group when they repeat, "to strive to touch and know the great human heart common to us all."



Part of display by Newfoundland members during Wellington Centre District exchange visit. Quilt depicting wild geese, and cushion with embroidered spinning wheel.