

PURPLE GROVE has an interesting story relating to its history. Mrs. Wm. Arnold, Curator, takes notes from the Tweedsmuir History Book.

Purple Grove in the northeast corner of Huron Township at the southern part of Bruce County, was settled by Irishmen. Some came direct from Ireland but many came here when the Queen's Bush was opened up in 1852. They had been living in the Ottawa area. A small hamlet grew up which had a blacksmith shop, store and school nearby and also a Methodist Church and Orange Hall. The blacksmith was John N. Logan. People had to walk to Bervie, about 5 miles away for mail. They applied for a Post Office and in 1876, Mr. Logan received word that their request would be granted and he was to send a suggested name. Great discussions took place in the Blacksmith Shop.

There were many Stanleys and Collins families and so Stanleyville, Collinsville and Loganville were suggested but none met Mr. Logan's approval. Finally, one day, "Sandy" McLaren, who lived about a half mile east of the corner, said, "John, I have a fine grove of beech trees and you have just received the Purple, let's call it Purple Grove." This name pleased Mr. Logan and it has carried the name ever since. The Purple was a badge in the Orange Order. The Post Office was opened on April 1, 1876 in Mr. Logan's home and he was first Postmaster.

On May 6th, 1920, a Ladies Aid was organized in connection with the Methodist Church. They were an active group in the church and held many community events as well. The church was closed in 1926 but some services were held for a few years. The women never disbanded and did welfare work and Red Cross work. By 1946, some of them felt they needed affiliation with a larger group with a more educational programme. This was discussed at the November meeting. One member, Mrs. T. E. Morgan was a member of Ripley Women's Institute and so in December, they decided to become a Women's Institute Branch in the New Year. Thus their first meeting was held on January 14, 1947, with Mrs. J. R. White of Ripley (Board Director) assisting.

The President of the Ladies Aid also had some W.I. experience, so she carried on as first W.I. President. This was Mrs. Don McCosh, who is still an active W.I. member although now living in Ripley. This Branch continues to be very active, having sponsored 75 4-H Homemaking Clubs and many Senior projects, helped in the community and carried on a good programme. Their Tweedsmuir History is in its third Volume. This Branch has been very successful in recruiting all the women of the community as members.

GOOD NEIGHBOUR WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Before the Women's Institute was organized on February 25, 1948 in Essex North District, a group of ladies from the neighbourhood used to gather together to do Red Cross work. They met regularly to work and visit. After the war, the need did not seem so urgent, but all felt there was a need for "something."

After many discussions it was agreed they would form a Women's Institute. The organization meeting was held at the home of Mrs. N. Law. Special guests, the District President and Secretary, had been invited to tell about WI work. Nineteen members joined at that meeting, with Mrs. Bruce McLennon elected President and from that original group nine are still active.

In 1957 the old S.S. 16 school was purchased to be used as an Institute Hall. During that same year card parties were organized for community enjoyment and continued until 1974. The members made quilts and quilted regularly. The men of the Community contributed as well, hauling wood for the furnace, and donating gravel to provide a better driveway. Two years later the mortgage was paid off on the Hall.

As we all know, by the time the mortgage was paid the Hall needed renovating. The men again contributed by installing a new ceiling and walls.

Good Neighbour W.I. have acted as good neighbours in the community by catering to golden weddings, funerals, serving lunches, visiting the sick and presenting flowers.

As Mrs. Mary Simpson says, "we started out as a neighbourhood of farmers, all so friendly and good neighbours to each other and our feelings for one another haven't changed in twenty-seven years."

The name RUMMELHARDT according to the Public Records and Archives dates back to 1842. Francis J. Rummelhardt bought 11 acres of land from Benjamin Eby and it is thought that the name of the little hamlet originated from this family name.

This small community has been absorbed by the city of Waterloo. Although the "home base" has become part of the city, most of the members and their families still have their feet, minds and hearts firmly planted in the country.

In 1962 a group of interested women decided to form a branch, which they did, and of course the name chosen was "Rummelhardt".

The organizational meeting was held in the original school house purchased in 1844. The old school has served the community well and long, and has been in continuous operation except for two years in the 60's when many schools in the region consolidated. When the school was closed, a group of interested private citizens purchased it as a need was felt for a bilingual school and it has continued to thrive ever since.

When Rummelhardt W.I. was formed the women of the community felt a need for an organization such as the Women's Institute, where they might take courses, learn crafts, and work with the youth of the community. Because they met in the school the W.I. had strong links with the school, the teachers and students, and worked hard to provide the extras for the students and classroom and one of the many efforts was a skating rink.

At the inception of the bilingual school the W.I. then met in the homes. In Centennial year the members broadened their horizons, held a big Farm Fair and raised enough money to support a Korean child. Mrs. Stephen Butler, Tweedsmuir Curator says, "this effort alone has made Institute work so rewarding."