

## PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE

*Mrs. R. C. Walker, Provincial Curator, speaks to the Provincial Board about the Tweedsmuir Histories and the duties of the Curators.*

It is gratifying to again note the enthusiasm with which the compiling of our Tweedsmuir Histories is continuing year after year. Although we do find some groups which just tag along, the majority of our Branches throughout Ontario are aware of the value of these histories, and the use of them by outside groups.

Of course, as in all fields of endeavour, there is apathy in some places. Some feel they do not have the time — but then, none of us have if we don't wish to find the time. Some feel they do not have the ability of writing stories — but not all of us have the art of words like some more gifted. Others complain they do not receive assistance from folk of the community — but then, not everyone has the power or desire to draft help from those around them. These are all virtues that we can cultivate to some degree, if we but apply ourselves. Let us all try them.

As I have often said over the years, we just never seem to be able to get final totals of the Histories in our Districts, or Areas. Some District Curators have still never bothered to get to know their subordinates, nor how these folk are really getting along with their histories. This is also true at Area level. Occasionally some Area Curators have complained in their reports that the number of Branches and number of Tweedsmuir Histories were not the same — that there were more Histories than Branches. This should be the case in many of our Districts. If a Branch disbands and has a Tweedsmuir History, this History is always included in future reports from that District. Thus we have many Districts throughout the Province with several less number of Branches than number of Tweedsmuir Histories.

When we are reporting, though, please remember that regardless of the number of volumes to a Tweedsmuir History, or if there is a supplementary Record Book or Scrapbook, each Branch does not have more than one Tweedsmuir History — and if a Record Book is also kept, it is not counted. However, if a Branch keeps only a Record Book (not a true Tweedsmuir History) then, at Area level, this is included in the Tweedsmuir History count.

We find more and more of the Branches are recognizing the Curator with giving her the privilege of having a Curator's meeting one month of the year. And, believe it or not, occasionally we note she has been honoured with a banquet ticket to a Convention or District Annual, or some other small token of respect for her untiring efforts. Could this not be done more often?

Mainly we find our Curators are dedicated women. Now that there is a six-year term (beginning in 1972), there should be a trend to more involvement among the membership. We also find that more Curators are having, and accepting the help of, committees. Remember folk outside the Women's Institute should be included on our Tweedsmuir History Committee. This makes for a much better type of history. New ideas, new ways, new subjects, etc. will show in our Histories, and this is good. Let us not get in the rut of our former

Curator. So long as we cover the various types of history needed to show the development and changes in our community, our social life, our people, and our involvements, the methods of how this is accomplished is the initiative of the Curator and her Committee.

We find many Branches still asking for Manuals. When a Curator is replaced by another, the Yellow Manual, the Tweedsmuir History, and all materials are passed along to the new Curator. This is not being done in some Branches — as I have found at Workshops.

Owing to the restraint requested by the Ministry, there are to be fewer Tweedsmuir History Workshops, and we are asking for a wider scope in the attendance. Where Workshops are being held we have notified the various surrounding Districts to take part, if they wish, and we do find there has been excellent attendance so far. We have especially enjoyed the Curator meetings held in the London, Guelph and Hamilton Areas. Those attending include Area and District Curators, their Committees, and any other interested Branch Curator. These gatherings are stimulating and breed enthusiasm with the extensive discussions and exhibits.

A long list of Tweedsmuir Histories has been sent into the Archives for microfilming, and we trust this work will progress to the satisfaction of those waiting to have their books called in. *Remember* when you write me to have your book microfilmed:

*Note:*

1. have your pages numbered, and
2. set up a complete Table of Contents in the front, *THEN* when your book is returned from the Archives, **BE SURE TO NOT ADD ANYTHING TO IT, EVER!**

I would like to congratulate those Curators who are promoting the House Logs in their community. You have often heard me say, during these past ten to fifteen years, had we found House Logs in all of the homes, our researching for our Tweedsmuir Histories would have been almost nil. I would like to congratulate Simcoe County for their work in this field. Contests are being held, and under the direction of Mrs. Don Harvie there were Classes for the House Logs at the Orillia Fall Fair. Doubtless there will be many more House Logs shown next year, now that folk have seen what can so easily be done. When encouraging the people of your community in doing a House Log be sure to stress the fact that the **HOUSE LOG REMAINS IN THE HOUSE FROM ONE FAMILY TO ANOTHER.**

In closing, may I again extend my sincere thanks to all of the Curators — at all levels — for their fine work in the Tweedsmuir Histories, and for the prompt reporting. Also my sincere appreciation and thanks to the Provincial Board, to Miss McKercher, and to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, for the privilege of being Provincial Curator for these twenty-one years.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Let us have a true count of the Tweedsmuir Histories in each District.
2. May we have an updated list of the Branches, Curators, addresses and codes from each District.
3. Let us strive to have a house log in each Women's Institute member's home during this coming year.