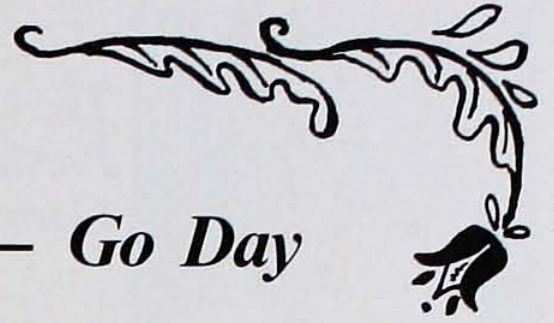


Come Day – Go Day



Ho hum another day!

This day entered our lives as quietly as yesterday departed. We didn't think much about it — we took it for granted. The sun rose, the rain came, the flowers bloomed, the corn grew and it seemed nature took its course. These are phenomena over which we have no control, but it's accepted without much thought.

There is a certain routine to our daily lives that we accept as part of our life style. Meetings come and meetings go, if we attend — that's fine — if we don't — we feel very little obligation. Our own reasoning for not attending the meeting seems so much more logical than the reasoning given by our friend.

We look back to 1897 and the formation of the first Women's Institute and wonder how they accepted responsibility. Those pioneer women were kept busy with their daily household tasks and probably assisting their husbands in the fields, when needed. Do you think they were as busy as we are in 1976?

After the formation of the Stoney Creek Branch the members immediately held meetings every fortnight and later on every month. Records show those women were conscientious and attended the meetings regularly.

How conscientious are we today? Do we have the same depth of dedication? Immediately we think of our own communities, how many more opportunities there are for each of us today and how many more demands are made of us. Where are our priorities? The WI member today might be the working mother, with home responsibilities along with many more organizations, clubs, and social gatherings to attend, all demanding a portion of the 24 hours. Doubtless many today attend as many functions in one week as the Grandmother did in six months. Because we are busy, does this give us the right to become irresponsible and neglectful of our duties?

If, as a Branch or District, you decide to ask for a course or workshop, how do you feel you should treat that request? Are you being fair or acting as a responsible member if at the time of the course you decide you would rather go on a bus trip or attend another meeting? Have you shirked your duty by changing your mind?

Do you have any feelings for the specialists who prepare these courses? Did you ever wonder if they were disappointed with your lack of interest and concern? Or were you far too apathetic, and really just didn't think?

In the days of the pioneers, when Women's Institutes were formed, the greatest need could best be served by teaching basic skills related to Agriculture and Home-making. These skills for the most part were simple and long lasting. The flow of new information usually wasn't very fast and the old skills taught weren't likely to be outdated for many years.

What seems to be our trouble today? Probably it is "change." By the time we consider change it's too late, when we recognize the problem the solutions are obsolete. Which sometimes cause us to say, "why bother."

A thought for all of us to keep in mind is that participation involves more than simply saying, "I'll come if I can make it." It involves more than simply making sure that each person has the opportunity to play an active role. More importantly, we must develop an atmosphere in which people want to participate.

It's a fairly simple philosophy, if we want to do something we surely can find the time. If we aren't caring too much, we can soon find excuses. When planning this year's programmes, take time to make wise choices for meetings, and do the things that the members are interested in. Plan meetings that will create the greatest response. Keep in mind each member should have a full awareness of their own roles along with a strong wish to achieve desired goals.



Margaret Zoeller