

A Tweedsmuir History TV Tour

As told by Mrs. George Durnford, Tweedsmuir History Curator and Mrs. E. V. Thompson Public Relations Officer, West End W.I. Wellington South District.

An inovative TV program, publicizing one of the varied interests of the Women's Institute, was a Tweedsmuir History Tour. This was a combined project of the Curator and PRO.

Channel 8 TV, Guelph were very enthusiastic about this different type of community program, and on two sunny afternoons in the Fall, there was the utmost co-operation from the two technicians who taped the film and commentary.

The tour was planned as an exterior viewing of some of the older farm homes in the area and interviews with the owners. The program was introduced from the living room of Mrs. Durnford's modern home near Marden School. A brief outline of the Tweedsmuir History was given and several antiques shown and discussed before starting the tour.

Points of interest at the Lewis farm home were noted and at the former Quarrie farm home, which farm is now Guelph Township Recreational Park. A drive around the park was taken, pointing out items of interest, these included the children's slide presented some years ago by West End W.I.

At 'Bleak House', the 150 year old log house, home of Mrs. J. A. Reilly, the planting of the large spruce and pine trees on the front lawn was discussed. These were planted about 1870 by Mrs. Reilly's grandmother and her young son.

At 'Andover' which has been in the Thompson family for five generations, Edward Thompson showed articles of historical interest. These included the old farm bell mounted on a high post and used in earlier days as a dinner bell. Before telephones were in general use, dinner bells were rung as a means of alerting neighbors in an emergency. Also shown here was the stone roller that belonged to the Guelph Cricket Club in the 1830's, at which time the pioneer Thompson brothers were keen cricket players.

At 'Blythwood Farm' Mrs. Donald Blyth showed a recently acquired painted wooden figure of Sam Tawse.

Carved in 1858 the figure, which is 3½ feet in height, was used for advertising in front of William Tawse' boot and shoe shop in Guelph. The shop was in business from 1858 to 1878 and for that period, Sam, holding in his hands a pair of boots, was a familiar figure.

On the McDonald farm, which since 1827 has been the home of six generations of the McDonald family, Mrs. Walter G. McDonald drew attention to a small log building at the east corner of the barn. This old structure was the pioneer home on the farm.

The stone house and colorful garden made a very attractive background at the Robert Cleghorn farm, as Mrs. Cleghorn showed the splendid growth of an oak tree, which some years ago was one of several sent to Guelph Township Horticultural Society from one of the Royal estates in England.

A former Guelph Township school, SS4½, now the attractive red brick home of Donald Bowman and family, was viewed and changes noted. The inscriptions on the commemorative stone at a former burial ground of early settlers were read and filmed. Several members of the Quarrie and Cleghorn families were laid to rest here along with other pioneers.

On a picnic table on the lawn outside his home, Alex Anderson had set out a number of interesting 'bygones', antiques, wooden tools and implements of early years. The reading habits of his Scottish forebears, were seen in the well read books which they brought with them from Scotland in the early 1830's. Well kept account books were of special interest, as were comparisons, given by Alex, of the cost of buildings then and now.

Several hours were devoted to the making of the film which, when edited was approximately one and a half hours in length. The film was shown several times on Channel 8 TV and many viewers expressed their enjoyment in seeing pictures and hearing commentaries of places in the community. Other viewers discovered an important facet of Women's Institutes' varied activities.

ORILLIA AREA MEMBERS attended a workshop provided by the Simcoe County Arts and Crafts Association.

Members of the WI attended the quilting workshop to learn about "kuikilaulima", a quilting bee in Hawaii, where the Hawaiian women have developed a quilting technique distinctive to their islands.

The technique is a combination of applique and quilting done by hand with rows of stitching outlining the applique shapes. Patterns are large and symmetrical, representing Hawaiian trees and flowers.

Usually Hawaiian quilts are made with two strong contrasting colors. The fabric for the design is folded in the same way a snowflake is made, then cut in the desired shape and applied to the background. A single design covers the entire quilt.

Echo quilting is done with rows of stitching a half-inch apart repeating the outline of the pattern until

the background is filled. Traditionally, no inner batting is used. The resulting kapas (quilts) are used as bedspreads or wall hangings, many of which are now used to decorate the hotels and public buildings of Hawaii.

The art of quilting was introduced in Hawaii in the early 1800's by American missionaries. Smaller versions of the designs lend themselves to colorful appliques for cushions, tote bags and skirt borders.

LAKE ST. GEORGE WI, SIMCOE EAST DISTRICT had as a special speaker Mrs. Sara Vanakker, a member, as well as a registered nurse. Her topic was health. Perfect functioning of the body, pure air, sunlight, exercise and proper diet are some of the main aids to good health. A question and answer period received a good response.