



BETWEEN THE LINES

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As the new year 1981 unfolds across our vast province, may peace good health and joy be yours throughout the coming year. It is a well-known fact that each year brings forth new challenges, but also the hope for a better to-morrow. These few lines help to express the thoughts of "A New Year".

Here's a clean year, a white year,
Reach your hand and take it.
You are the builder
And no one else can make it.
See what it is that waits here
Whole and new;
It's not a year only
But a world for you!

Let us build for a better to-morrow, resolve to continue to make our community a better place in which to live and encourage our members to be responsible citizens.

Following your Branch annual meetings, your program committee will be busy making plans for the coming year. You have already been alerted to the fact that 1981 is "The International Year of the Disabled Persons." It is, therefore, fitting that Women's Institute members should centre their thoughts and actions around a central theme. Your Provincial Board decided at the annual meeting that the 1981 Project for the Women's Institute should be: Working Toward "Barrier-Free Communities for Disabled Persons Across Ontario." It is a well-known fact that many disabled or handicapped citizens are denied full use of public facilities due to physical barriers. You are encouraged to make a survey of your community in respect to transportation, employment and recreational opportunities for physically disabled people. Remember, action begins with you! Follow up your survey with a published report and suggestions to remedy the need that exists for the one out of seven people handicapped.

Plans are underway for the 33rd Annual Officers' Conference. Discussion group leaders from all across Ontario are making preparations for this year's Conference. It will be a time of beneficial instruction for all who attend, with the hope that leaders will be developed for the future well-being of our organization.

This new year marks the start of a new beginning in my life as I commence to serve my first year as your Provincial President. "Thank you" for giving me this great privilege and honor. I will endeavor to carry out my duties to the best of my ability. My most sincere

thanks to those who sent congratulatory messages by phone or mail, and to those who have offered their services and pledged their support. Your best wishes and kindnesses have been overwhelming. I am indeed pleased to bring this great honor to Elgin County and London Area.

Early in December I had the opportunity of meeting many Women's Institute members at "The Lee". This was a special occasion when members visited the Home to see the traditional Christmas decorations, Victorian fashion. As the guests stepped into the pioneer kitchen they were greeted with the aroma of freshly baked bread and an offer to sample this delicacy. The harvest table was laden with an impressive display of culinary delights. The mincemeat pie, dundee cake, thimble cookies, turkish delight, a bowl of English walnuts, another bowl filled with cranberries and a tall glass pitcher filled with maple syrup, were a few of the samples on view.

The Parlor looked magnificent. Garlands made of cedar and entwined with popped corn and cranberries framed the doorways and bay window. The traditional Kissing Ball, forerunner of the Christmas Tree, hung from the centre of the bay window. The parlor table centrepiece was made of cedar, pine cones and miniature feathered birds.

The world renowned Constitution Table in the dining-room featured an apple pyramid with sticks of cinnamon and a few sprigs of cedar. This work of art glistened under the beautiful crystal chandelier.

As the guests arrived at the Drive House, they were treated to a cookie and a drink of hot mulled cider. The ceiling high cedar tree was bedecked with red bows, white crocheted stars and slender whirling mirrors. Cloth wrapped parcels tied with ribbon could be seen under the tree.

Demonstrations by ladies dressed in old fashioned gowns, upstairs in the Drive House and also in the Home, included spinning, china painting and numerous other handicrafts.

The two busy memorable days I spent at "The Lee" certainly put me in the mood to prepare for an old fashioned Christmas at my home in the country.

Now that we have stepped into this New Year, let us remember that "the measure of life is not in its duration but its donation." What are you as a Women's Institute member willing to contribute to family, community, Branch, District and Area in the days ahead?

The Door of Happiness by Virginia Oliver has good advice.

I stood at the door of happiness
And flung it open wide,
For I wished to have the chance to see
Just what might be inside.
And there I learned a lesson rare
That meant a lot to me,
Because I found how really happy
Folks everywhere can be.
Doing all that we can for others,
The little deeds that show
Our thoughts of love and of kindness
As through the world we go.

Janet D. Hiepleh