

# Farm Women In The Farming Business

There is a friend who has a marvelous saying, "When you're carrying the flag up the mountain, look behind you to see if there is someone following."

Many farm women were following Dianne Harkin and her women to the first National Farm Women's Conference in Ottawa the first week in December.

It was an exciting experience to attend "a first". How many persons have the opportunity to attend a national founding meeting?

Farm women gathered for a single purpose—to talk about challenges, issues and concerns that face the farm family today.

It was good to attend a meeting where women came from all provinces to talk about upgrading the role of the farm wife. The concerns were certainly diversified; when delegates were asked what was a prime issue, within three minutes they suggested twenty-three different thoughts, given more time, this could have been doubled.

Within a year this Winchester oriented group of farm women conceived an idea—a good idea—added enthusiasm which gained momentum. When positive thinking people get together with positive goals and objectives in mind, only good things can happen, was Dianne Harkin's opening remark. Knowing they had a purpose, they aimed high! Talked to all sorts of people in all walks of life, formed a National Planning Committee, worked hard and put a Conference together. Again to quote Mrs. Harkin, "it took a pulling together by positive thinking people from across Canada—a pulling together and a positive thrust that hopefully will continue into the future. Up people, smart people—thinking smart, sharp and progressive people."

The Conference heard fifteen different speakers, as well as co-ordinators for the various sessions, and findings from the Research Project were in printed form.

## HON EUGENE WHELAN

Mr. Whelan said, the preservation of the family farm is "top priority with the Minister of Agriculture." There are hundreds of new markets for the wide range of agricultural products, with this comes great export

potential. With a greater marketing effort to convince Canadians to buy Canadian grown food, we have the potential for production. If we provide economic potential there is no need for subsidies.

He acknowledged men have not always given support to the idea of women taking a more visible role in farming. Nor have we encouraged women to seek leadership positions in the national farm organizations.

Women presently are disadvantaged when seeking farm credit. He has asked Farm Credit Corporation to look into the problems women have in obtaining loans. Also, the government "expects to introduce legislation in the near future" to allow women to contribute to and benefit from the Canada Pension Plan. The minister recently appointed Brenda McIntosh, Seaforth, the first woman to serve on the Advisory Committee and Carol Teichrob to the Board of FCC. "Tax changes are already in the works to allow farm wives to be paid for their work on the farm. Change effective for the 1980 tax year."

An emergency resolution called on Mr. Whelan "to live up to the Federal commitment to provide funding for Canfarm for the full three years . . . to 1983 as originally committed."

## FWIC President, Mrs. Emmie Oddie

Mrs. Oddie outlined the work of the FWIC stating "predominately we are involved in things rural and things affecting the farm." Education has been a main factor down through the years and a constant promotion of the appreciation of the part Agriculture plays in the communities. The WI is constantly interested in promoting peace and global understanding and the fulfillment and development of women here and around the world.

## JUNE MENZIES

The Chairman of the National Farm Products Marketing Council felt Canadian women must continue to push for break-throughs. It is only because of the urging of women's organizations that she was appointed to the anti-inflation or farm products boards. In a recent study the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women report last March, women held only 15% of the appointments to almost 160 Federal agencies, in actual numbers 181 of more than 1200 appointments.



SILVER CRESCENT, MAPLE HILL AND CHISHOLM WPS, PARRY SOUND NORTH DISTRICT, marched in a parade celebrating the 75th anniversary of Powassan. Above are a group of members wearing sashes and carrying a banner bearing the WI crest.



BOGARTTOWN WI, YORK CENTRE DISTRICT made two quilts and donated cash as well, to a local family who had a disastrous fire. Members display one of the quilts donated to the fire victims.