

# Between The Lines

Dear WI Members:

I hope that each of you had a wonderful summer with ample time for family and friends. Women's Institute activities tend to change in nature during the hot summer months but resume with full vigor when fall arrives.

An unforgettable event for the Ontario Women's Institute delegates attending the Ninth National Convention of Federated Women's Institutes of Canada, was the installation at the University of New Brunswick of Mrs. Harvey (Bernice) Noblitt, Gloucester, Ontario, President of this national organization.

Mrs. Noblitt resides in the Ottawa (Eastern) Convention Area and is a past president of Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. She is a dedicated, enthusiastic and capable Women's Institute member, well qualified to serve as the 23rd President of Federated Women's Institutes of Canada. This great honor bestowed upon her will be very demanding of her time and energy. She is wished every success in her new position.

The decision to continue the "twinning" arrangements for another year between the same provincial units was accepted at the National Board Meeting. This in-depth study of another province has created a great deal of interest by Ontario Women's Institute Members in our "twin" Manitoba.

The Executive Secretary of Manitoba Women's Institute has received dozens of requests for pen pals from Ontario members. However, she is finding it extremely difficult to fill all requests because of the overwhelming response by the large Ontario membership. There are 108 Branches in Manitoba with a total membership of 1,800, compared with 1,196 Ontario Branches and nearly 27,000 members.

The beginning of the Women's Institute in Manitoba is quite fascinating. The first Institute in Manitoba was organized through the combined efforts of an Ontario and a Manitoba woman.

A young woman living at Morris, Manitoba returned to her home in Ontario in 1909 to visit her mother. It was there she heard enthusiastic reports of the work being done by the Women's Institutes. Mrs. Finlay MacKenzie returned to Manitoba enthused about

the idea of having such an organization in Manitoba.

By coincidence, one August morning in 1910, Mrs. MacKenzie was searching the prairies for flowers when she met a Mrs. Graham from Brantford, Ontario, also looking for flowers. During the conversation that followed, Mrs. MacKenzie learned that the Ontario woman was visiting her sister in Morris and that she also was an "enthusiast" of the Ontario Women's In-



*Mrs. Keith Hiepleh  
President  
Federated  
Women's Institutes of  
Ontario*

stitute. Mrs. Graham promised to address a meeting providing her Manitoba friend could get some women together.

This was accomplished and 37 women joined the Morris Women's Institute. Later, when Morris received its charter, over the seal were the words, "Number One".

More than 70 years later this Branch is still active. It still has its older members but it also has young members, many with babies and small children.

During the past year, two Institutes have been organized and there are other young women showing interest in Manitoba Women's Institute. Programs planned to meet the needs of these young women will be a major priority.

Five of the 1982 Regional one-day Conventions were held in April, with the sixth held early in May. A buffalo barbecue was enjoyed by the Manitoba

members prior to registering for their 1½-day provincial Convention.

Now that the sultry summer months have passed and the crisp autumn days have arrived, renewed energy and enthusiasm returns for a variety of undertakings. Many members will be volunteering for the Adult Leaders' Workshops; others will be leading 4-H Homemaking Clubs and a great many will be attending Area Conventions. It is a busy and rewarding time for Women's Institute members as they volunteer time and energy to a variety of worthwhile tasks.

This fall as I return to each of the 14 Areas, I am looking forward to renewing friendships, taking part in your meeting and absorbing with keen interest the summary of programs and projects carried out within our province. Annually, hundreds of women eagerly look forward to the day or days set aside for the Convention. It is here that our circle of friends has continued to expand and blossom yearly into an even greater circle. As Women's Institute members meet in "Friendship's Circle Bright" and experience the goodwill generated by those they meet, friendships are bound to deepen with the passing years.

The Convention Committee has a tremendous responsibility in preparing an agenda that will meet the needs of the members. New approaches in presenting reports are being implemented. Panels and interviews are proving popular. Printed summaries of reports are available for a nominal charge in some Areas. A few Areas distribute reports free to each voting delegate. Money received from the sale of donated draft items helps to defray the cost of distributing free reports.

There are also some Areas that find time to have a tour of a specialized farming operation, industry, museum or school. Highlights are numerous and varied at each Convention, but most important is the opportunity given to each member to become involved in decision making.

It is encouraging to note that Branch members are taking a closer look at their programs. The role and needs of rural women have changed significantly in recent years and it is essential that good program planning meets the