

Helen McKercher, WI friend, dies in Stratford

In Stratford, on March 15, 1985 family and friends paid an earthly farewell tribute to Miss Helen McKercher, a renowned, loved and respected Christian lady, an outstanding citizen and Navy veteran of Canada, who passed away after a long illness two days earlier.

At a ceremony in the Seaway Hotel in Toronto in 1978, Helen McKercher was inducted into the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame — the fourth Canadian woman to receive this honor. The official program introduced her as a woman who “gained national recognition for her contribution to the development of high ideals and worthy standards for successful home and family life”.

As Director, Home Economics Branch, Ontario Ministry of

Agriculture and Food, and previously as chief, Consumer Education, Canadian Department of Fisheries, Helen McKercher established nutrition, home management and leadership training courses which had a profound influence on the lives of the thousands of women and 4-H girls who participated.

Nor were her activities restricted to this country, as evidenced by her interest in the affairs of the Associated Country Women of the World. As a result of this experience, she played a leading role in encouraging the Women’s Institute to set up a \$50,000 scholarship, the interest from which is being used to train women from developing countries in the hope and expectation that they will return and become leaders in

their native villages.

Helen McKercher was made Honorary President of the Federated Women’s Institutes of Ontario, a life member of the Associated Country Women of the World and an Alumnus of Honour of the University of Guelph.

Fame and recognition didn’t detract from her vibrant personality and warm personal affection and loving concern. Her family and friends have been touched by her warmth of spirit and gentleness of heart.

Indeed, a truly great Canadian lady.

(Quoted from the words of Rev. Norman Gibson, Central United Church, Stratford.)



Helen McKercher was awarded a life membership in the Canadian Society of Rural Extension in 1975. Mr. N. O. Watson, society secretary, presented the award to Miss McKercher. The Canadian Society of Rural Extension was formed in 1960 as an affiliated society of the Agricultural Institute of Canada.



Miss McKercher always took an active interest in the 4-H program. She is pictured here receiving a gift from a 4-H member in July 1976.