

depicts life in 1928



mixed crewel; and cotton." To complete the hall appropriate to the period, a wood-burning stove will have to be installed as well as a few accessories. These include a piano, portraits of King George V and Queen Mary and a bulletin board complete with a copy of the Institute's annual program and notices of upcoming community events.

The Women's Institute was also very active in the community improvement movement of the 1920s. Under the Community Halls Act of 1919, partial funding could be secured if certain facilities were included in the hall plan. Halls were used year-round during the day and in the evening for meetings, dances, debating sessions, plays and a host of other community gatherings. Kitchen facilities and washrooms were a necessary part of the plan.

The kitchen, furnished to the period, will be exhibited as that of a community hall, where meals for 20 or more people might be prepared. As "compact" and "sanitary" were the design and decorating bywords of the day, our kitchen must reflect these ideas. Modern (1928) facilities will include running water, a functioning electric range, linoleum flooring, hoosier and work table. Kitchen gadgets; pots, pans and kettles; cutlery and tea cups and many other small items will have to be gathered and placed in the kitchen as ready for use.

The grounds around the hall have also been considered in the museum's plan. A concrete sidewalk will skirt the crossroads in front of the hall. The hall lot will be defined from front by a white picket fence and a flag pole flying the Union Jack will complete the view from the road. A hand pump, outhouses and wood shed will be constructed to the side and rear of the hall. These facilities, as well as a back stop for a ball field will complete the scene, in keeping with hall regulations and in order to demonstrate the public concerns of the Institute at that time.

Museum administration has agreed to the refurbishing of the Women's Institute Hall. Work began this winter on the interior of the structure, but there are certain jobs that must

wait until the spring. Operations at open air museums such as ours are always influenced by the weather. This means that construction on the grounds of the Women's Institute Hall may well go on until mid-summer. Keeping this in mind, we invite visitors from the time of our opening on May 12 but be forewarned that there may be some inconvenience

experienced in seeing the hall.

It would be best, when planning a visit to contact the Museum Tour Co-ordinators at (416) 878-8151.

Susan Bennett is a research librarian at the Ontario Agricultural Museum.

Focus on rural women

The Ontario Agricultural Museum explores the role of the rural woman in Ontario and her contribution to farm and community life in a special display this summer.

Called Rural Women — Labor and Leisure 1830-1980, the display will feature rural women at work on the farm and in the home, and their leisure pursuits.

As the exhibit shows, there was no distinction between labor and leisure in the 1830's for farm women. In her short lifetime, child management, and food preparation and preservation dominated her activities throughout the year. Her only links with the community, in addition to the church, were quilting and sugaring bees, for instance.

In the 1880's, the farm woman's work had become well defined, centering on dairy and poultry activities. Clothing was not as utilitarian, sewing machines and other new equipment freed up more leisure time for women, while catalogues and other literature became available.

The hardships of the 1930's depression were felt in rural Ontario, however, the many technological developments which had taken place by this time radically affected the life of farm women. This part of the exhibit focuses on the dramatic influence of electricity, telephones, automobiles and appliances on farm and home, labor and leisure.

Today, women are often partners in the business of farming. Technology has profoundly influenced their personal development. No longer an isolated, homogenous group, farmers have broken the communication and physical barriers between rural and

urban Ontario, and farm women have made themselves known as a vital, political and social group within society.

This special exhibit is on display at the museum from July 1 to August 22. For more information, and group rates contact the Promotions and Public Relations Office, Ontario Agricultural Museum, P.O. Box 38, Milton, Ontario, L9T 2Y3, or phone (416) 878-8151.



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