

# Kits created

By **BETH BOURNE**  
and **LAURA GREEN**

The summer of 1985 was a busy summer for the members of the Oxford North District Women's Institute and the Women for the Support of Agriculture (Oxford County Branch). These two groups worked together to bring agriculture into the classroom.

Four educational kits were created for elementary school children from Kingergarten to Grade 4 in Oxford county. The purpose of the kits is "to enable students, both rural and urban, to develop a better understanding of and an appreciation for agriculture."

The kits contain puppets, an audio cassette with a script, seed and soil samples, examples of farm machinery and teaching tools from commodity groups. Poetry and stories created and donated by local, talented people are also contained in the kit.

The original concept for the agri-kits came from the Middlesex Chapter of the Women for the Support of Agriculture.

Financing for the kits has been provided by the Oxford North District Women's Institute with dona-



*Displaying some of the puppets and materials in the kits are from left to right, Fran Redman, designer of the puppets; Debbie Steele, from the Women for the Support of Agriculture; and Irene Richardson, from the Oxford North District Women's Institute (Photo courtesy of the Stratford Beacon Herald.)*

tions of toy farm machinery from various machinery dealers. Financial support was also received from municipal government, commodity groups and other support services.

Agriculture is an important industry in Oxford County with about 80 per cent of employment in some way farm-related. The kits were designed because knowledge of farming through experience is no longer common to a

majority of Oxford students and the groups involved feel students should be provided this knowledge.

**Beth Bourne is Oxford North District PRO. Laura Green was chairman of the commodities committee and involved in public relations for the kit project.**

## *WI-FA work together on farm tour*

The Women's Institute has always been very supportive of agriculture. This year the Elgin County Women's Institute Rally proved that once again, by working with the Elgin Federation of Agriculture on a tour of four farms.

Last year was the first time the federation of agriculture organized such a tour. This year it was a joint effort between the two organizations, resulting in three times the number of participants, and a third of those participating hearing about the tour through Women's Institute.

When each car arrived at the starting point, participants received an envelope containing a map of the route to be covered. Up until that time, farms had been kept secret.

**Geraldine Campbell**



Also included were written route directions and a written description of each farm, as well as a copy of **Home & Country** and a leaflet outlining the many activities of Women's Institute in Elgin County. Each child was given an agri-food button.

Each carload then departed to visit the four farms — a dairy farm, a sheep farm, a fruit farm, and a to-

bacco farm. When they arrived at the farm, the visitors were shown around and could ask as many questions and stay as long as they liked.

The Women's Institute was involved on the planning committee, and on the day. Two of the farms involved belonged to Women's Institute members. Through such co-operation with the federation of agriculture, the Women's Institute in Elgin County received considerable publicity and proved once again that the Women's Institute cares about agriculture in their community. If we are asked to help next year, we will.

**Geraldine Campbell is 1st Vice President of Elgin West and PRO for London Area.**