

JWI has strong roots

Roots! With the return of spring and summer I always get that primeval urge to muck about in the garden. Nothing rekindles my enthusiasm and optimism like the smell of freshly turned earth liberally laced with manure! When times were less hectic and my children were smaller, we always enjoyed watching our carefully planted pea seeds sprout and grow in the cool of the early spring. It was easy to forget that under the ground, unseen by us, were the beginnings and strength of those plants, plants that would mature later and fill our freezer.

We need to be reminded often of our roots. Rural Ontario has long, tenacious roots which have provided and will provide the strength of our society. We in Junior Women's Institute are proud that our roots reach back to 1915 and the loving nurture of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. In those early days, teenage girls and their older sisters met monthly and worked under a constitution similar to that of FWIO branches. Dr. Ethel Chapman was instrumental in providing worthwhile programs and spreading the JWI message to as many as 88 branches.

In 1944, the group amalgamated with the Junior Farmers' Association of Ontario. This arrangement continued until 1968 when the JWI opted to reform as a separate organization. Since that time, we have reaffirmed our commitment to the Institute's aims and objectives. With the emergence of a strong 4-H movement, many of our youngest members have chosen to find their roots in that group. The typical JWI member today is between 25 and 40 years-old with children still at home. Many of these members work away from home and a substantial number of our members do not live on farms. The roots of the JWI are strongly rural, yet we have been flexible to realize that we need to meet the needs of our new, rural community which may include displaced urban women.

The growth of JWI has not been spectacular since 1968. Yet there is a solidness there. Our rural groups strongly maintain an interest in the working farm, its strengths and its weaknesses, while our more urban

Carol Hyde



groups help to bridge the gap between rural and urban lifestyles by supporting friendliness, communication and shared learning.

Yes JWI is like the pea plant in my garden. It has strong roots in the 90

year-old values of the Women's Institute and good gardeners in such people as Jean Scott and Dr. Chapman. We are not a mere seedling, nor are we a withered, old plant. We are a maturing plant which is bearing fruit for the communities in which we live and work. We are a hybrid, shaped by the world in which we live and, I hope, stronger for being that hybrid.

May your summer be filled with many growing plants!

Carol Hyde
JWIO President

WI rejuvenated this spring

Between the Lines

Margaret Munro



As I sit here writing, looking out at the snowflakes falling, thoughts of spring are on my mind. At the moment I am merely an observer watching nature create a beautiful, white wonderland.

Shakespeare wrote, "All the world's a stage and all the men on it are merely players". I think nature not only sets the stage, but also the rules.

My favorite scene is spring. At that time, I stop being an observer to become an eager and enthusiastic participant. I always feel it is a chance for a fresh start to a new year. Once again, we prune, discard, plant and nurture in order that life may progress.

Another phenomenon takes place. I am referring to the fever of spring cleaning where we copy nature by discarding the obsolete, the unrepairable in order to make room for the new or restored. We feel rejuvenated and full of vigor, ready to tackle anything.

By the time you read this, spring will be here and you will have already started the process of the revised constitution by electing a program coordinator and her committee. Take time to study and understand the constitution. It has been pruned — parts that no longer work, discarded.

The scene has been set and you as members are the players. Your attitude, your actions are what makes our organization and they will help to smooth the transition.

We are celebrating 90 years this year. I hope you will all do something special to commemorate it and include your community. Share with others your enthusiasm and achievements. I know you can do it, I am sure you will do it, I know I can count on it and we can look forward to our 100th anniversary!

Margaret Munro
FWIO President

AALP grads available as speakers

The first group of participants of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) completed their course in February. There are now 30 young men and women across Ontario who are equipped to speak to groups on various topics. A complete list of the graduates was sent to your district WI secretary. If you are interested in learning more about these people, contact her, or write directly to Pat Mighton, Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program, Guelph Agriculture Centre, P.O. Box 1030, Guelph, N1H 6N1.