

# OMAF link began 91 years ago



George Creelman

to a large degree for the growth of the movement.

In 1902 the Women's Institute position within the Department of Agriculture was given legislative recognition. This legislation marked the department's wholesale commitment to the WI movement. In the same year the department began to publish handbooks for the Women's Institute along with example programs and lists of topics for study. The department also helped sponsor the first Women's Institute convention in 1902 held at the Ontario Agricultural College. In this case, the department's help consisted of supplying the meeting space at the college and many of the speakers.

Financial support from the department increased dramatically in 1903 when a new grant program was initiated. Starting in this year the department gave every Women's Institute in the province an annual \$10 grant with the only provision being that a matching sum be received from the local municipality or the Farmers' Institute.

A speaker service was also initiated by the department in 1903. A number of different individuals — doctors, nurses,

teachers, dieticians, experts in horticulture, dairying, poultry and beekeeping, were hired on a per diem basis to speak to interested rural groups. The department paid the speakers' fee while the local institute provided their accommodation and paid their travelling expenses. The speakers were usually engaged for the Summer Series of Meetings of the Women's Institutes or at joint winter meetings held with the Farmers' Institutes.

This year also saw the release of the first Women's Institute publication. In 1905, the department secured three to five pages in a Canadian household magazine, **The Canadian Home Journal**, to act as the official organ for the group. This section of the magazine featured papers written by or for Institute members as well as Women's Institute news items. The magazine was offered to Women's Institute members at a reduced rate to encourage them to subscribe.

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## *Some facts about Federated Women's Institutes of Canada*

Did you know Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC)

- has a membership of about 50,000 women from coast-to-coast
- is completely nonsectarian, non-partisan and non-racist
- has a quarterly newsletter called Federated News
- offers scholarships for continuing education and prizes for various competitions



- \* prepares resolutions, briefs and submissions to promote changes in Canadian legislation
- \* researches current issues and problems related to families and society
- \* is a constituent society of the Associated Country Women of the World.

For more information on FWIC, write to 251 Bank Street, Suite 606, Ottawa, K2P 1X3, 613 234-1090.