

HOME & Country

A Magazine for Rural Women

Home & Country is a publication for rural women's groups in Ontario. It is published by the Rural Organizations and Services Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food. **Home & Country** has two objectives:

1. To provide a communication link between rural women's groups in Ontario.
2. To provide educational material relating to organizational and individual leadership development.

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Deadlines

Please observe the following deadlines when submitting stories or photographs to **Home & Country**.

DEADLINE: June 28 - July, August, September issue

DEADLINE: September 27 - October, November, December issue

Front Cover

The Honorable Elmer Buchanan, Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food, and Peggy Knapp, President of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, are pictured on the cover. The Minister addressed the FWIO Board Meeting in March. Read more about this on page 11.

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No Longer "Hidden From View"

Throughout the 1980s, I was employed by the University of Guelph doing research, writing and editing work on a variety of projects. But for several years I concentrated my research efforts on one project in particular - the computerization of the unpublished manuscripts of the 1871 industrial census. The 1871 database is significant because it provides a detailed "snapshot" of Canadian industrial activity in all sorts of work environments, including mills, factories, sweatshops and craftshops.

I often wondered why I persevered with this project. It was, for the most part, very tedious work. But the small craftshops located in mainly rural villages and settings interested me. And in one census district in eastern Ontario - Leeds South - the overzealous work of one enumerator really captured my attention. Of the 545 industrial establishments recorded, 254 were domestic weavers, of which 90% were female. This discovery was unusual. Enumerators were instructed by census authorities to disregard female domestic weavers; weaving was viewed as a natural extension of women's work in the home - it had no particular economic value and therefore gained no specific recognition.

Throughout the twentieth century this traditional view of rural women's work remained intact. And national statistics on agriculture have tended to remain gender-blind. For too long statisticians, economists, politicians and policymakers have had difficulties "seeing" and "documenting" women's contribution to family farms and agriculture.

Only now - more than a century later - are census authorities beginning to acknowledge women's direct and indirect involvement in agriculture and the farm economy. For the first time the 1991 Census form allows for more than one operator to be named which will begin to show the reality of women's contribution to the farm industry in Canada.

So on June 4, 1991 - the next Census of Agriculture - stand up and be counted as an important member of Canada's farm community.

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In case you haven't noticed, the **Home & Country** is now printed on recyclable paper. And for those who are wondering what happened to the October/November issue of the magazine - there wasn't one. When I replaced Carol Stewart-Kirkby as Editor beginning in January, I felt that it was too late to continue with the regular production schedule.

Instead, a December/January/February issue was produced, and I returned the backlog of out-of-date material that should have gone into an October/November magazine. I understand the frustration this must cause and I regret not being able to print your reports. But I am working on getting the magazine out to readers on time, and I hope that you will continue to contribute to future issues of the **Home & Country**.

WI Branch Secretaries Take Note:

Would all WI Branch Secretaries please note the date on which they receive their bundle of magazines and send this information to me at the address in the opposite column. We are trying to determine how long the magazines are in transit within the postal system before reaching their destinations. Your responses will be greatly appreciated.