

Branch Profile

BEAMSVILLE WI

Beamsville WI (Lincoln District, Hamilton Area) was founded in 1905 and, 110 years later, the Branch remains very active in the community. The 10 Members come from the towns of Lincoln (Beamsville, Vineland, Jordan), Grimsby and Smithville.

As one can imagine, Beamsville WI has had many accomplishments in its 110 years. The Branch's most visible achievement is the two cement urns placed at the Cenotaph in 1921 to honour the local soldiers who perished in World War I. Members continue to plant these urns and two others each May.

The Branch has had some success in lobbying for improvements in the community, including signage on a Regional Road directing visitors to Beamsville and additional lighting in the arena parking lot. Members continue to be alert to other possible improvements. A letter, phone call or email directed to the proper authority can work wonders!

Beamsville WI presents a craft workshop to the community each February during WI Week. Topics have included painted wine glasses, tin work and many forms of needlework. A euchre party is held once a month to help raise funds which enable the Branch to give back to the community and to WI projects. Continued support is given to the Town of Lincoln's summer youth program, the new library complex, the Ready to Read literacy book bag program, clean-up day in April and the Legion's Remembrance Day ceremony at the Cenotaph.

Members of the Branch have been involved in all levels of the WI from District Officers to Area Executive to FWIO Board Directors. Recently, Member Sylvia House received the Good Citizen Award and joins the growing list of other Members who have been recognized for their community involvement.

Beamsville WI Members enjoy getting updates from their letter link, Bethersden WI, in the U.K. and are amazed at the

varied activities they pursue such as darts at the local pub and their annual Christmas pantomime. Those types of "out of our comfort zone" outings might attract new Members on this side of the pond!

A new venture is in the works for the Beamsville WI! The library has suggested that the Branch use its study room for monthly meetings which would allow library patrons to "drop in" to find out what the WI is all about! Member Virginia Blackman has started a knitting group at the library each Monday where, at times, up to 12 ladies come to share patterns, learn to knit, work on their projects and get to know each other. It is a huge success and something that could be duplicated in other towns!

For many years, Beamsville WI Members have been active at the Erland Lee (Museum) Home and continue to play an important role in the operations of the Museum. As FWIO Board Director, Barbara Temple was involved with Museum events. Swadesh Sachdeva was a member of the committee for eleven years and

is still volunteering her time as a docent. Virginia Blackman is an avid knitter and crafter and continues to make dozens of items for the gift shop where she can be found handling sales, restocking shelves and greeting visitors. Barbara Stones, as a Friends of the Lee member, assisted with the fundraising effort to reopen the Lee. As an Erland Lee Museum Committee member, Barbara's role involves training the volunteers who are responsible for operating the Museum and she also organizes the monthly workshops that have seen over 350 people learning a new skill!

Beamsville WI has held meetings in the Carriage House at the Lee and encourages other Branches to do the same to get to know the "roots" of the Women's Institute. There is always something "new/old" to see!

Special thanks to Barbara Stones for compiling this Branch Profile.



Pictured: Beamsville WI Members and guests at the Branch's Christmas lunch.