

# From Rainbow Country



By Elsie Stephenson

Good day from Rainbow Country! There have been many rainbows this past summer because of all the rain. The perennials and the lawn were lush, but the annuals and vegetables needed more sunshine.

I would like to congratulate the Central Area on planning and hosting the 2004 Provincial Conference at Durham College in Oshawa. The Conference allowed members to renew old friendships and make new friends. I attended the Fundraising Workshop at which the facilitator said, "You can't make people give, but you can make them want to give." The Massage Therapy Workshop helped us work out those "kinks."

The keynote speaker Ken Knox talked about living and contributing longer. He encouraged members to be visionary and to help transform the country. Friday evening's entertainment included soloist Cindy Ashton, accompanied by pianist Joyce Taylor. On Saturday evening, the Ginger Group performed "The Pink Tea," the Famous Five story.



For me, the highlight of the Conference was announcing that all the past and present Coordinators of the Women's Institutes Tweedsmuir History Books had been awarded the Scadding Award of Excellence by the Ontario Historical Society.

This Award recognizes a historical society or heritage group "which has made an outstanding contribution to the field of history." Past President of the Ontario Historical Society Jean Murray Cole presented the Award to the FWIO Provincial Tweedsmuir Coordinator Peggy McLeod, who accepted it on behalf of all the Tweedsmuir Coordinators across the province. What a great honour for Women's Institute members!

At the Conference, Arthena Hecker updated members on the provincial Quilt Show – "Quilts, Quills and Bears" – which will be held at the International Centre in Mississauga from September 16 to 18, 2005. Thank you to all members who brought bears to fill the police car that will be on site at the Show.

The Erland Lee (Museum) Home held its quilt draw at the Provincial Conference; the winner of the quilt was Carolyn Lawlor of Camden. Gwen Vasseur of Mount Hope won the quilted cushion and Margaret McPhail of Puslinch won the quilted tote bag. Congratulations to all the winners! The Quilt Draw raised over \$1,500 toward the operations of the Lee.

Activities at the Lee have been numerous, including a Pancake Breakfast in April, participation in "Doors Open Hamilton" and the Stoney Creek Blossom Studio Art Tour in May, hosting a "Ladies Day Out – Just for Me" in July, involvement in the Wentworth County Quilt Documentation Day and hosting an Antique Appraisal

Luncheon in September, and housing a month-long Art Show and Sale throughout October.

A heartfelt thank you to all members who contributed so generously to the Restore the Roof Fund. The roof on the house has been re-shingled and two lightning rod balls installed. Please take time to revisit the 1897 birthplace of the Women's Institute.

The Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) Board Meeting was held from July 9 to 12 in Brantford. The Revised Constitution and Bylaws were distributed to the Provincial Presidents at the meeting. The finances were reviewed and the budget was approved. The President, the Provincial Presidents and the committee chairs presented reports. The Board was invited to the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead for lunch and "Addie's Summer Garden Party" on July 11. It gave me an opportunity to meet the Hoodless Committee. After a strategic planning workshop, it became evident that a safe water project was no longer feasible. The President, President-Elect and Executive Director will research another national project and present the facts to the Executive members at the November meeting.

All over the province, 100th anniversary celebrations are happening. I was able to attend celebrations in Beachburg, Iron Bridge and Moorefield. The warm reception I received will never be forgotten. Congratulations to all the Branches and Districts celebrating their 100th anniversary.

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