

Learn More *in 2004*

Highlights of the FWIO Provincial Conference

By Viola Ashton

The seven-member 2004 Provincial Conference Committee, chaired by Christine Reaburn, spent innumerable hours in meetings and communicating by phone, fax and email orchestrating the facility, registration, programming, entertainment, competitions, hospitality and recording of this biennial event. Congratulations for a job well done!

Friday, June 11 – Registration was in progress and displays were set up. Conference 2004 was finally a reality! Anyone wishing to take part in bus tours enjoyed a visit to Parkwood Estates, the home of Colonel R.S. McLaughlin who was prominent in the development of the city of Oshawa. The Automotive Museum was another place of interest.

The Presentation of Flags and the singing of O'Canada followed the buffet dinner. Viola Ashton, Chair of the Central Ontario Area WI, opened with welcoming comments and remarked that she believed the Conference would indeed live up to its theme and that everyone would "Learn More in 2004." Dr. Gary Polonsky, President and CEO of Durham College and founding President and Vice Chancellor of Canada's newest university, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT), provided an overview of the new facility. Greetings were also extended from Oshawa's Mayor John Gray and the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) President Margaret Yetman.

FWIO President Elsie Stephenson officially opened the Provincial Conference. She congratulated and made a presentation to Penage Road Women's Institute President Helen Thompson-Makela for their Branch having won the Membership Recruitment Challenge by gaining 10 new members. A special

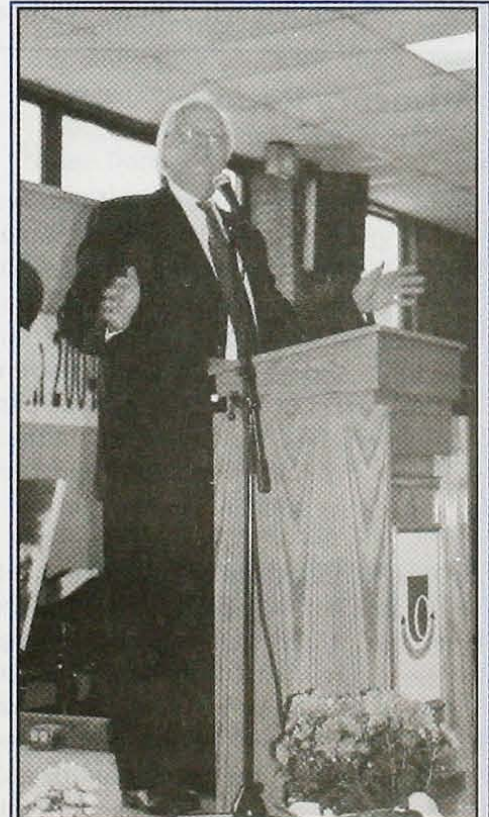


Women's Institute members and guests are shown enjoying a meal together at the 2004 FWIO Conference.

welcome was extended to two couples from Manitoba in attendance, as well as seven members from the Michigan Association for Family and Community Education. The evening closed with three solos from former Junior Women's Institute Board Director Cindy Ashton, accompanied by Joyce Taylor at the piano.

Saturday, June 12 - The morning began with a short address from FWIO President Elsie Stephenson, who encouraged Branches to take every opportunity to make themselves visible in their community and in the eyes of the public. Stephenson then announced that Tweedsmuir Coordinators received the Scadding Award of Excellence on behalf of the past and present Coordinators in Ontario (see page 10).

The Educational Workshops were well attended, with two sessions being held for some of the topics. After lunch, the 10th anniversary of the Year of the Family was recognized by the presentation of over 2,000 knitted or crocheted squares to



Keynote speaker Ken Knox, former Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in Ontario.