

On Your Behalf

By Dianne Orr



This is certainly a wonderful time of year when we greet warmer weather, more sunshine and the spring flowers, showing us that, once again, Mother Nature is a mighty force. It is also a great time for everyone to get outside and do their "Women Walking for WI" hours. This Provincial Project was initiated at last fall's Area Conventions. I know that most of you will feel energized once you get into a regular routine of walking!

Exciting announcements were made at the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO) Annual Meeting in January. I had the honour of accepting a \$223,600 Ontario Trillium Foundation grant from Simcoe North MPP Garfield Dunlop. The money will allow FWIO to complement the "ROSES Are Blooming" Expansion Project, a two-year plan to enhance and ensure the sustainability of the ROSE (rural ontario sharing education) Program. The goal is to expand upon the Program's current focus of health to include a variety of topics. Eight additional partnerships with various health-social service organizations will be established.

The Erland Lee (Museum) Home is now classified as a National Historic Site. This will definitely raise the profile of our provincially owned Museum Home among the general public, as well as our own members. Thank you to Michael Gemmel, Curator of the Lee Home, for all his hard work preparing the necessary documents to obtain this prestigious status.

Your response in 2002 to the *Focus High for WI* was overwhelming! Thank you to all who donated to the Operating Fund at the Provincial Office. *Focus High for WI* in 2003 is already doing well and we are looking forward to presenting a cheque to FWIC at the national convention in Lennoxville, Quebec, in June. The money raised is for the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead Upkeep Fund.

The Johnson Insurance Company circulated their information package through a mailing in January to all Women's Institute members in Ontario. We hope that you took the time to read the brochure and the accompanying letter. This is a new project for all of us and does not require any commitment from FWIO or members. But it does give you an opportunity to read what Johnson Incorporated has to offer us and other organizations.

Please refer to the President's Penmanship Challenge on page 2 of this issue. It is open to members 70 years of age and older.

The 4th Line Theatre has remounted the production *For Home and Country* written by Leanna Brodie. It will be staged for two weeks in August 2003. For information from the Theatre Company phone 1-800-814-0055. For those who will be putting together bus tours to the Kawartha Lakes area, you may contact the local tour company Out and About Tours, Unit 24, 101 East St., Bobcaygeon ON K0M 1A0. Their toll free number is 1-866-538-7472, ask for Wendy Smith and tell her you are from the WI.

Do you have new members who have recently joined your Branch? A special way to welcome that new person is to present them with a gift of the history book *For Home and Country*. Send for your copy from the FWIO Provincial Office while supplies last.

I look forward to meeting many of you this year as you celebrate special occasions such as 100th anniversaries. And while our lives tend to be hectic, remember this line from the Mary Stewart Collect: "Let us take time for all things; make us grow calm, serene, gentle."

On your behalf,
Dianne Orr

Dianne Orr is the President of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. She can be reached at RR 1, Conn ON N0G 1N0, Phone: 519-848-6440, Fax: 519-848-3476, Email: orrway@freespace.net

Increasing Awareness of the WI



Last Spring, I attended my first Russell District Women's Institute (WI) Meeting along with several members of my own Russell Village WI. After listening to the many ways to improve awareness of the Women's Institute in our village, we were inspired. So, we listened, we learned and we acted!

We already had one sign at one entrance to our village, but now there are three! We also had a "Russell Village Women's Institute Welcomes You" sign made for use at the various events we host. The WI crest was incorporated to familiarize the public with our logo. But, we did not stop there; we made royal blue bib aprons and sewed the logo on the front. We wear these aprons to our functions to advertise the WI, while adding a look of professionalism to our group. The apron is neat, tidy, attractive and quite functional as well. To date, we have worn them at the Blood Donor Clinic, which we host, and at our Tea Room at the Russell Fair.

Thanks for inspiring us! These WI recognition projects will last for many years and will hopefully entice new enrolment through fresh awareness of the Women's Institute and its programs.

Submitted by Jean Williams, Russell Village WI, Russell.

From left to right in the photograph are Leny Herweyer, Mary Inglis, Jean Williams and Annette Robertson.