

### Personal Look at Women's Institute

Seldom do we mention the things that take place within our Institute groups, the caring things that Institute members do every day, in addition to the fundraising and awareness programs. Well, I would like to share my experiences with you.

I have been a member of the Women's Institute for over 30 years. The Institute has come to mean many things to me. But the most important thing it emulates is friendship. What would we do without that friendship?

Six years ago I underwent surgery that went wrong, and for the next five years I underwent 33 medical procedures, many of them major. Upon arriving home from my first surgery, I was greeted by a wonderful supper for myself and my family. This continued each night for the next ten days.

I had been out of hospital a short time and still had nursing care at home when the Women's Institutes 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in Hamilton was nearing. Our group had planned and worked hard so they could attend Convention '97. I did not think I would be able to go. But my friends packed me up and took me along, with all my medical equipment. They took care of me so I could enjoy the festivities.

I was never forgotten in those years of challenging times. I received regular phone calls, weekly visits and numerous cards. Sometimes muffins would be dropped off, sometimes homemade soup, or sometimes fresh raspberries, vegetables or flower bouquets from their gardens.

Now five years is a long time, four of which I was unable to speak. Communication was difficult, but the ladies of my Institute were always there. This is what the personal side of the Institute is all about - caring for each other, building lifelong friendships, being there to help someone through a difficult time.

I know this generosity takes place in Institute Branches across the country. I know there are many women like those of the Salem Women's Institute in Dufferin South District.

*Beatrice Hand,*

Vice-President, Salem WI, Dufferin South.

### Hay West

Darwell Women's Institute from Darwell, Alberta, wrote:

We were very pleased to hear of your resolution to the Ontario legislature requesting assistance to help pay for the transporting of hay to drought stricken farmers in Alberta. That was a compassionate thing to do. We realize what a sacrifice it must be for the farmers of Ontario to give away their hay. The farmers of Alberta very much appreciate this generosity.

On behalf of those who received the hay and the rest of us, thank you for your concern and the action you have taken to help out.

*Darwell Women's Institute*

## Central Ontario Area WI Meets the Queen

At the Festival of Ontario held October 9, 2002, on the Canadian National Exhibition grounds, some 85 representatives from Ontario communities were invited to participate in the Community Exhibit Program celebrating Her Majesty The Queen's Golden Jubilee. Central Ontario Area (COA) WI was privileged to have a display (in background) recognizing its 100 years of achievement. The Queen and Prince Philip honoured the WI by stopping to inquire about the display, which included a "Cabin in the Springtime" quilt, the Adelaide Hoodless Rose, Linda Ambrose's For Home and Country and the Area's new commemorative Centennial Poster. Central Ontario Area is proud to have the "Royal Nod of Appreciation" as it enters the 21st century. It was also the pleasure of Mansfield member Blaunshe Ciach to actually have a few words with the Queen and Prince Philip.



Queen Elizabeth is shown with Ernie Eves, the Premier of Ontario.

Submitted by Blaunshe Ciach, PRO, Central Ontario Area.

### Tec-We-Gwill WI Hosts World President



*Tec-We-Gwill WI hosted an open Branch meeting last September with*



*World President Hilda Stewart (centre photo) from North Ireland as the guest speaker. She shared anecdotes of her experiences visiting royal houses to mud houses. She shared her wisdom and her enthusiasm on the benefits of being a member of the WI. Stewart also encouraged members to strengthen their bond with other women through their affiliation with WI and to continue to improve the lives of women and their families throughout the world. FWIO President Dianne Orr (left) and Central Ontario Area President Billie Power are shown with the World President.*

Submitted by Blaunshe Ciach, PRO, Central Ontario Area.