

Profile

Meet Kelly Robson



To be progressive is to create history. Recording our history, in a fair and accurate manner, rewards our actions with responsibility, integrity and professionalism. In retrospect, these recordings offer us an objective evaluation from which to both learn and grow. While writing allows us to be accountable and precise, photography grants us the privilege of expression and emotion. Together, they empower us to capture our past and determine our future.

I am pleased to have been successful in achieving the position of Tweedsmuir History Coordinator for the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. Unquestionably, Rosella Clancy's shoes will be hard to fill and I plan to be in contact with her as much as possible during this transition. I anticipate I will always be in her debt.

Formally, I am educated in economics and photojournalism. Professionally, I have held employment in areas of photographer-writer, photojournalism, public relations and marketing. Presently, I have a small business with my husband in publishing and graphics. Recently, we have produced the Wild Women Indeed Calendar 2002 – a fundraising project for health awareness for the Waters Women's Institute. I am a proud member of this Branch and their interim Public Relations Officer.

Personally, I am married with four children, two dogs, one cat and one fish. For the future, I plan to develop a system where the histories of all Branches and their efforts are more readily available for all to enjoy and embellish.

I strongly feel we need to become a more diverse and amalgamated organization. To be coy, "We have the POWER!"

Kelly Robson is the newly elected Tweedsmuir History Coordinator for the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. She can be reached at 579 Main St., Box 1184, Lively ON P3Y 1M9, Phone: 705-692-0650.

We Were There!

What a proud moment for the Women's Institute! On Wednesday, October 18, 2000, a monument was dedicated on Parliament Hill honouring five Canadian women, Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Henrietta Muir Edwards, Irene Parlby and Louise McKinney.

Many dignitaries, notable people, MPs and school children were invited to attend. But we, the grass roots members of the WI, came because of the historical connection the Women's Institute has with the Famous Five. Emily Murphy was the first President of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) from 1919 to 1921.

These five women came together in Alberta to challenge the notion that women were not persons and could not hold appointed or elected offices. They gathered support for the cause because "the rural women of Alberta were the white hope of the progressive movement. The Women's Institutes and the United Farm Women were not afraid to tackle social problems." These are the words of Nellie McClung from her autobiography, *The Stream Runs Fast*. This group of women often counted



on the support of the Women's Institutes in their quest for advancing the causes affecting women.

On October 18, 2000, those of us who gathered there to celebrate and cheer our women of Canada came away with treasured memories and friends. Forty or more women from Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec stood united under the Women's Institute banner. CBC television, CTV, a local Ottawa station and the Carleton School of Journalism interviewed us.

A copy of Nellie McClung's autobiography was circulated for all to sign, and much to our delight Prime Minister Jean Chretien, Heritage Minister Sheila Copps and Governor General Adrienne Clarkson signed the book and chatted with us. Three descendants of Emily Murphy also signed the book, as did Margaret Trudeau and the President of the Famous Five Foundation Frances Wright.

What a day to remember!

*Submitted by Pat Ager, PRO, Eastern Area WI.
Photo courtesy of J. Stoeckl, Governor General Photo Lab.*

Bare Shoulders and Pearls

The Alford and Park Road Women's Institute shed more than a sedate image for a performance at a meeting last fall. The group was asked to come up with a skit, so they took their cue from the Rylstone & District WI Calendar produced in England. "We kept it mainly to bare shoulders and pearls, said member Ivy Johnson, as they posed for The Brantford Expositor.



*Extracted from an article by Susan Gamble in The Brantford Expositor.
Photo courtesy of Brian Thompson, The Brantford Expositor.*