

## Information Items

### Erland Lee (Museum) Home

Thelma Stewart, Chair of the Erland Lee Committee, was invited to report on Lee activities. Seven school groups signed up for the new Education Program at the Home this fall. The new curator, Michael Gemmell, is very enthusiastic. Stewart reported that the Curator is reaching out to work more closely with other nearby historic sites. He also plans on advertising in tourist areas and sending out informational brochures about the Lee Home to motels in Ontario. Collaboration with the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead is in the works, possibly combining tours of the two historic homes.

### WI Week Proclaimed

Keep your ears open and listen for the provincial proclamation of Women's Institute Week by the Legislative Assembly in February. (See *Home & Country*, Fall '98, p. 11, for ideas on how your Branch can celebrate WI Week.)

### Health Proposal

Eastern Area Membership Organizer Jane Cooper presented a proposal, entitled "FWIO Partnership for Health Education," to the new Board of Directors. The proposal is seeking funding and participation from the Ministry of Health for an expanded health education partnership with FWIO. The Board passed a motion allowing Cooper to submit the proposal to the Minister of Health.

If the project is accepted by the Ministry of Health, it would not only reinforce existing partnerships, it would build new partnerships between FWIO and organizations which support women's health education. Other benefits listed include the opportunity to provide higher quality programs to Branches, to provide leadership training through train-the-trainer sessions and to attract new members.

### Disbanded Branches

Currently, items and material of historic value from the provincial level of the WI are housed in the Archives at the University of Guelph Library. However, Branch minute and record books and other Branch material should go to local libraries or museums because of historical and local interests. A letter should go to the FWIO Provincial Office so that researchers know where the material is located. The only exception to this would be if local libraries and museums refused minute and record books from disbanded Branches. In this case, this material will be accepted at the University of Guelph Archives.

### ACWW 2001 Conference

The theme for this world conference is "Volunteers Make Visions a Reality." As Co-Chairs of the Organizing Committee in Ontario, either FWIO President Arthena Hecker or FWIO President-Elect Christine Reaburn can attend planning meetings in London, England. Reaburn recently participated in a Triennial Conference Committee (TCC) planning meeting at the end of October, where she presented several possible ideas regarding the conference. A motion was passed that FWIO hire a Coordinator/Negotiator for the Associated Country Women of the World Conference to be held in Ontario in 2001.

Please Note: You have to hold an individual membership in the Associated Country Women of the World for at least a year if you wish to attend this conference. To apply for an individual membership (renewable each year) send a £15 money order, payable to ACWW, to ACWW, Clutha House, 10 Storey's Gate, London, SW1P 3AY, England.

### Elections Held

#### Lobbying Coordinator

Congratulations to Anne Dyas the newly elected Lobbying Coordinator. Anne emphasized her willingness to work with other groups to lobby for the same cause or issue. "A collective voice would carry a lot more weight," she noted. Anne can be reached at RR 3, Cochrane ON P0L 1C0, (705)272-6886.

#### Public Relations Coordinator

Congratulations are also extended to Carol Helfenstein, the newly elected Public Relations Coordinator. In her speech to Board, Carol said that the experience she has to offer the Women's Institute comes from "35 years of busy productive rural living." And that she is a "rural girl who has come to understand the value of the printed word." Carol can be reached at RR 1, Kincardine ON N2Z 2X3, (519)395-0065.

Provincial Advisory Council members were elected to numerous committee positions.

### Tweedsmuir History Workshop

*"Only by knowing our past, can we envision our future."*

Rosella Clancy, FWIO Tweedsmuir History Curator, reported giving eighteen workshops or presentations to date this year; her presentation at the Annual Meeting was her nineteenth. Clancy's talk outlined the Tweedsmuir History Workshop Kit she compiled. The seriousness of her discussions, however, were interspersed with comic excerpts and interludes.

As the FWIO Tweedsmuir History Curator, she noted her five priorities:

- to complete each page of the provincial Tweedsmuir History Book in a worthy manner
- to encourage and assist dedicated curators throughout the province
- to encourage the writing of member profiles
- to generate enthusiasm for recording family history
- to work with District Curators to learn the whereabouts of disbanded Branch Tweedsmuir History Books

Clancy requested that all retiring officers at all levels write their autobiographies for inclusion in Tweedsmuir. But, she noted, all member profiles should be included, even if members have never held an office. She also encouraged officers to document and photograph all Branch, District, Area and provincial events.

In concluding, Clancy suggested a historical walking tour of your community or working on a Branch Time Capsule as program ideas.

### Communications Workshops

To ensure the Provincial Advisory Council (PAC), the Board of Directors and the five Coordinators have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and to provide an opportunity for other members attending to learn more about the positions, a series of workshops were organized for the afternoon of December 1. As well, discussion focused on how the flow of information between the various levels could move efficiently.

Outgoing Board Directors Winnifred Mann and Dianne Orr from Subdivisions 10 and 11 facilitated discussions on the roles and responsibilities of the Provincial Advisory Council (PAC) members. Glenna Smith, Guelph Area President, spoke to PAC about communicating. It is critical that everyone communicate to the best of their ability, and especially this year as FWIO's new structure is implemented. Smith stated

that communications involves listening, seeing and speaking. Listening, however, is the most important; hear what is being said and report the facts accurately. She concluded by reminding PAC that communicating is a two-way street. PAC members are to pass on questions and information from the grassroots members to the Board, and vice versa.

Denise Edwards, Organization Development Consultant with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, guided the five Coordinators through a similar workshop. After having a close look at their job descriptions, Coordinators were asked to discuss possible problems or challenges with their duties as outlined. Several potential problem areas were identified, with communications coming through as the primary concern. Edwards then had participants create an "Idea Tree," or all the possible ways in which Coordinators could improve the flow of information between the various levels. The next step, she said, was to put potential strategies in place that can only improve communications.

Jim Brown of Strive!, a private company devoted to helping maximize the effectiveness of people and organizations through leadership development, spoke to the new Board of Directors. He began by asking Board Directors to state what excited them about the new structure. The feeling that new Board members were pioneers, forging ahead, and that the new structure would work was clear. Brown reminded Board that they should draw on each other and speak hope into each others lives.

The primary focus of the workshop was to highlight the essentials of the law for an incorporated non-profit organization. The Corporations Act is the primary source of legislation defining the legal obligations of a director for most incorporated and non-profit organizations in Ontario.

The law imposes two general types of obligations upon Board Directors in connection with the management of the organization's business and affairs: Fiduciary Duty and Standard of Care. Fiduciary



The Coordinators from left to right are Carol Helfenstein - Public Relations, Anne Dyas - Lobbying, Rosella Clancy - Tweedsmuir and Mary Lou Norton - Education.