

Meet the New Curator...

I should like to introduce myself to all WI members in my new capacity as Curator of the Erland Lee (Museum) Home. I am delighted to announce my arrival in Stoney Creek and look forward to seeing many WI members, friends and family visit the Lee.

I come from Kingston where I worked for six years at Fort Henry, a historical site interpreting an 1867 British garrison in Canada. I worked for three years as a costumed interpreter and was promoted in 1996 to a desk job in the support department of the Fort as Quartermaster Sergeant. This job entailed assisting the interpretation program, organizing inventory of reproduction equipment and artifacts, repairing leatherwork and antique firearms, helping with exhibit design and special events preparation, and building black gunpowder charges for the Fort's antique cannons and rifles.

In short, it was a wide-ranging variety of tasks, which never ceased to keep me on my toes. Such a work experience will be invaluable in ensuring completion of the variety of tasks the position of Curator at the Lee entails.

I earned my B.A. (Honours) in History from Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo and my Masters Degree in History from the University of Toronto. I was raised in Nepean, Ontario, a suburb of Ottawa, where I worked for a dozen years with the Scouting program. Armed with such experience, and a love of history, I intend to implement educational programming here at the Lee. I encourage WI members involved with youth groups to consider booking a tour of the Lee grounds.

I look forward to working with the committee members of the Erland Lee (Museum) Home here at the birthplace of the Women's Institutes. It is a pleasure to come on board.

Michael Gemmell is Curator of the Erland Lee (Museum) Home.



Binbrook WI President Sharon Ryan presented Curator Michael Gemmell with a cheque for \$200 to go towards operating expenses at the Home.

What's New at the Lee

- A new exhibit about Gordon Lee, son of Erland and Janet Lee, is on display in the 1870s Drive House at the Lee Home. Gordon Lee perished in World War I, just after the Battle of Vimy Ridge. A number of his military possessions are on display.
- Another exhibit, entitled "100 Years (Plus!) of Women's Institutes History," traces the development of the WI movement and displays a selection of the many centennial gifts brought to the Lee by overseas visitors.
- Once again, the Lee is contributing a temporary exhibit to the Ontario Legislative Assembly Community Exhibit Program from September 28, 1998 to January 25, 1999. This year's theme is "Community Celebrations and Cultural Pursuits in Ontario (1900-1920)." The Lee exhibit examines Women's Institutes and their social activities in the Edwardian community, outside their traditional educational context. Please stop by Queen's Park in Toronto and tell us what you think.
- Educational Programming is offered at the Lee Home starting this fall. The programs are designed for two age groups, Grades 3 to 5 and 6 to 8. Invitations are extended to youth groups, such as Scouts and Guides, as well as to schools. The Lee's educational package includes a tour of the Home, followed by hands-on projects in the Drive House.

The Lee Home is open Tues. through Sat. from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and on Sun. from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. You can reach the Lee Home at (905)662-2691, or e-mail the Curator, Michael Gemmell at mgemmell@istar.ca

Regional Self-Profile: Southern

Alma Riddoch Does Lunch with Elvis



I've been married to my husband Jack for 44 years and we have five children - Douglas, Kathy, Louise, Jim and Lisa. We also have nine grandchildren, soon to be ten.

Lisa, our youngest daughter became interested in figure skating at an early age. I became involved in the Club as well. I was a member of the Board of Directors of the Moore Figure Skating Club, and held the position of Test Chair for 7 years. My Club has honoured me with an Honourary Membership for long volunteer service. I stay involved as Treasurer of the Bluewater Region of the Canadian Figure Skating Association.

My claim to fame is that I had Elvis Stojko and his mother for lunch one day when he came to visit a fellow skater who was in hospital.

As a member of the Knox Moore Presbyterian Church I am involved in our ladies group, choir and Board of Managers. I also do volunteer work at our senior's home.

My introduction to WI was through a friend who asked me to attend meetings. In 1974, I became a member of the Moore Centre WI. I have held several Branch positions as President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Chair of the Hall Committee, and at the District level as Secretary-Treasurer for four years and President for two.

At Area level, I served as Treasurer for four years and am currently on the Executive. I am the Southwestern Area representative to the Children's Hospital in London where we jointly serve with the IODE in volunteer work. Our mandate is to assist the needs of the children confined to hospital.

As a Board Director from 1992 to 1994, I learned about FWIO's involvement with other organizations. It was a learning experience to discover the importance of WI lobbying at the various government levels and that we do have a voice in the decisions affecting our homes and country.

I believe in the Mary Stewart Collect and what WI stands for in the home, the community, the country and the world. Every woman would benefit as a member of the Women's Institute.

Alma Riddoch is a member of the Moore Centre WI, Lambton Centre.