

**Donna MacPherson -
Working for Recognition
of the WI**



I was born in Durham, but grew up in Corbeil. I was the eldest of ten children. I met my husband Ron when I was working in Oakville. Ron and I have four daughters: our eldest, Colleen is 26 and works in horticulture; Marilyn is 25 and works in banking; Barbara, 21, is currently studying art at Humber College; and, our youngest, Dorothy, is 19 and just graduated from high school.

My involvement in WI can be credited to my mother-in-law Doris MacPherson, who was a source of inspiration to me and many others. I became an active member in the Hornby Branch for seventeen years. I had just completed my first year as Public Relations Officer for the Halton District when we sold our farm in Hornby and purchased another in Embro.

I shocked several Real Estate agents when I asked "Is there an active WI Branch nearby? If not, I don't want this farm." Shortly after we moved to Embro in August of 1989, I became an active member of the Embro & West Zorra WI, the United Church women's group and the Rebakah's Lodge 250.

I have two passions. I love to help people change their health and wealth through the use of herbs. I sell herbs either wholesale or retail. My other love is the WI. Their work touches my heart and soul, while embracing many of my goals and ideals.

One of those goals is to help make WI recognized at the street level in Oxford County, eventually province wide and then Canada wide. Working towards this goal I represent the WI on the Oxford County Transportation Task Force Committee and the Oxford County Injury Prevention Team.

The 14 WI Branches in Oxford County did a Needs Assessment Survey for the Transportation Task Force Committee this past January and February. In June many Oxford County Branches helped sponsor the Road Safety Challenge in Woodstock. I wrote letters to different organizations and newspapers to gain support for three resolutions presented by our District. All were passed by the Provincial Board. We have presented briefs for the last four years at the Farm Forum hosted by the Oxford County Federation of Agriculture.

I am working on becoming an excellent public speaker. I read constantly, and enjoy writing and building my business. Ron and I love to travel, particularly with WI groups. You can be sure I will be at the next ACWW Conference, greeting old friends, making new ones, and realizing, once again, that Peggy Knapp's statement, 'We are all sisters under the skin,' is so very true.

Donna MacPherson is a member of the Embro & West Zorra WI and President of the Oxford District.

**Literacy:
A Basic Need in Our World**

For several years, the Consumers' Association of Canada (CAC) has been working to promote literacy awareness, plain language and other projects designed to improve the marketplace for persons who have difficulty reading, writing and using numbers. This year, the CAC has teamed up with the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) to hold literacy awareness workshops for 1500 Women's Institute (WI) groups across Canada.

Each WI Branch in Canada is being asked to hold a literacy awareness workshop this fall. The workshop will focus on a short video designed specifically for the project and introduced by Peter Gzowski. Gzowski, a long-time literacy advocate, challenges WI Branches to come up with ideas for future projects which will improve literacy in rural Canadian communities.

CAC and FWIC hope that a number of good ideas will be fed back to the provincial and national levels from the Branch level. The best of these ideas will form an action plan and the two

organizations will then work together to seek funding to turn the ideas into active projects for FWIC next year.

A kit will accompany the video. It will include workshop guidelines for the Branch facilitator, as well as general information, press releases, plain writing exercises, fact sheets and a project report sheet. Future project suggestions are to be reported between the dates of November 15 and 30, 1998, to the World Wide Web address as noted on the Future Projects form.

For more information on the literacy awareness workshop contact Donna Russett, FWIC Executive Officer to FWIC, at phone/fax: (613)395-4305 or Arlene Strugnell, FWIC Executive Director, at phone/fax: (613)234-1090.

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A heartfelt thank you to the following members who spent just over 60 hours preparing the Literacy Awareness Workshop Kits mailed to each Branch Secretary: Glenna Smith and Ruth Laking from the Arkell WI and Lise Simmons, Sharron Currie, Margaret Currie, Nancy Allen, Emma Hasson and Lois Tosh from the Westend WI.

Children's Cuddle Quilts



A request from Terry Bell from the Ontario Provincial Police for children's cuddle quilts was answered by five WI Branches in Bruce County District. A total of 58 tied quilts were presented to Officer Bell (kneeling, centre photo) and Warton Public School children by several WI members (standing, back row). The quilts will be distributed to police cruisers in the event of children being involved in accidents, abuse or trauma. The occasion was televised by CKNX TV and covered by the Warton Echo newspaper.

Submitted by Megan Ouderkirk, PRO, Bruce County District V