



From the Heart

By Marg Harris

"No matter how long I live, it was the highlight of my life!" said Helen Baufelt, 100-year old guest from Thorold at the Convention '97 Opening. Memorable, marvelous, magnificent were words used in letters from near and far describing Convention '97 in Hamilton, Ontario. Indeed, this was a historical event in Women's Institute history. Congratulations everyone!

Who is Ontario's longest-serving active member? Word of a 75 and 73-year continuous active membership comes from Prince Edward Island and England respectively. Let me know of our long-time members.

An Ontario WI Branch has nine new members, largely due to one person's efforts. The FWIO Membership Coordinator and I have something coming to Area conventions regarding such results. I look forward to seeing you there to talk of this.

The Finance Committee brought in a balanced budget at August Board. FWIO is prudent, responsible and in a healthy position financially. As President, I am pleased to assure the membership of this fact.

Four years ago the I received a call asking me to allow my name to stand for President-Elect. At that time, my concern was "what does the Women's Institute have in place as a platform following their centennial celebration?" Upon being elected as President-Elect, my personal obligations were four-fold:

- to be accountable to the Branch members;
- to do what is deemed best for our organization;
- to be a part of setting, establishing and realizing goals and objectives; and,
- to lead in ensuring a solid foundation for our next one-hundred years.

The organizations's vision, goals and mission statement, its structure and its strategic and business plan - all these things needed consideration as we looked ahead. Action comes from the input and caring of many people. Credit belongs to those many special people who recognize the needs of this organization. Changes and challenges were faced and dealt with from many sources. It has been tough sledding. Objectives have been realized. Many positive changes are now in place. There is always more to do and that keeps us on our toes.

This year I have had 229 days away with WI related activities, travelled over 50,000 kilometers, spoken to untold numbers of people and written almost 1,000 cards and letters. As Past President, I will continue to support the new President, Arthena Hecker, and the incoming Board Directors. May you enjoy tranquillity as you take office Arthena. And to the new President-Elect, welcome and best wishes from all of us.

To Bud and to each Committee Chair, Provincial Board Director, FWIO office staff, the *Home & Country* Editor, and most of all, to you as Women's Institute members and friends, I say thank you for your support and confidence *From my Heart*.

Marg Harris is the outgoing President of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. She can be reached at RR 3, Kerwood ON N0M 2B0, Phone: (519)247-3695, Fax: (519)247-3921.

Ceremony to Mark the Grave of Mrs. Alfred Watt, Founder of ACWW

By Peggy Knapp

Even though the afternoon sky threatened rain, Trisha Needham's Trumpet Voluntary soared across Mount Royal Cemetery in Montreal as members from six Canadian ACWW Societies, joined by executive members of FWIC and ACWW gathered at the graveside of the founder and first President of the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW).

Mrs. Alfred (Madge) Watt's grave had gone unmarked for almost fifty years when Lucy French of the Quebec WI discovered the omission and brought it before the Board of Directors of the FWIC. An appeal was sent out for donations toward a grave marker, and following the FWIC Convention/Centennial Celebration in Hamilton a ceremony, organized by a committee of FWIC and hosted by the Women's Institutes of Quebec, took place on June 26, 1997.

The ceremony included opening remarks

by Charlotte Johnson, Past President of FWIC, reflections on the life and work of Madge Watt by Mildred Keith, newly elected FWIC President, and Lyndsay Hackett-Pain, President of ACWW. Prayers of Dedication and a meaningful Litany written by Quebec WI President, Sheila Needham, were interspersed with the Hymn of All Nations and Amazing Grace. As a closing tribute to this great Canadian woman whose ideals have touched the lives of so many women worldwide, all those gathered around the impressive granite headstone joined their voices to the sound of the trumpet in singing O'Canada.

The flowers on the grave, the flag of her country, and the flag of ACWW lent a solemnity to the occasion; the afternoon tea served by members of the Quebec WI in Taja Hall,



Pictured above (from left to right) at the Mount Royal Cemetery grave site is Thelma Klipp - ACWW Area President for Southern Africa, Noel Whamond - ACWW Secretary, Lyndsay Hackett-Pain - ACWW President, Hilda Stewart - ACWW Deputy President, Margaret Munro - ACWW Treasurer, and Peggy Knapp - ACWW Area President for Canada.

McGill campus home of Sir William Macdonald, added a note of celebration.

To all members who donated funds for this project, many thanks. You would have been proud.

Peggy Knapp is the Associated Country Women of the World Area President for Canada.