

**WOMEN'S INSTITUTE  
CENTENNIAL**

# Celebration

**& FWIC CONVENTION '97**

By Lynn Lodge

Although the formal opening of the 1997 Women's Institute Centennial Celebration and the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) Triennial Convention was still hours away, the morning of Tuesday, June 17, saw the lobby of the Hamilton Convention Centre bustling as delegates began arriving. They came from across Canada, Scotland, England, Wales, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, Germany and the United States.

Volunteers scurried to direct people to the registration desk, hotels, tour buses and display and business rooms. Down the hall approximately seventy women rehearsed for the first time together as the official Convention '97 Choir, under the direction of Betty Walther and accompanied by Marlene Matheson at the piano. The choir managed to find some rehearsal time every day of the Convention and performed at all the major activities in the Hamilton Place Theatre. What a thrill for Marie Harris to hear her winning WI Centennial Song before this huge audience of members.

The opening night in the Hamilton Place Theatre was full of pomp and ceremony, including the trumpet fanfare, the parade of flags, the piper, the dignitaries welcoming addresses and the national President



Let the celebrations commence! A trumpet fanfare opened the ceremonies.

Charlotte Johnson's address to the cutting of the magnificent anniversary cake, with its myriad of sparkling candles, horse and buggy figures and the space shuttle, to commemorate the theme "Indebted to the Past - Committed to the Future." A special guest at the opening was 100-year old Mrs. Helen Baufelt of Thorold, Ontario. A very articulate, long-time WI member, she emphatically told a media representative that she never stops praising the Women's Institute.

If you wanted to be motivated to return to your Branch full of enthusiasm for our second century, then the first speaker on Wednesday morning, Mr. Norm Rebin, fulfilled your purpose with his fast-paced and funny, but also serious address. "Speak the truth with unfettered courage so that none of your critics can silence you" he urged, congratulating the WI on their many programs throughout the years to help families, and especially children. "Kids tell us the biggest reason for suicide is loss of hope. They need models and



mentors to look up to and must be inspired to hope and dream in technicolour." He made it clear that the Women's Institute is an organization with a vital role to play in the future of the world. Working with schools, governments and political bodies on future long-term planning is a goal the Institute can aspire to.

Dr. Linda Ambrose, author of *For Home and Country: The Centennial History of the Women's Institutes in Ontario*, spoke on the Convention theme "Indebted to the Past." She asked: what is the nature of that debt?, what do you owe the past? She stated from the past comes three things which you are celebrating this week: the WI's cast of heroes; the WI's model of continuity; and, the WI's spirit of unity.



Rosalie Wysocki, one of Canada's leading motivational speakers, encouraged members to become more effective and more productive. As members we are to remind ourselves "to welcome change" and "everyday expect something wonderful to happen. If it hasn't happened by noon, make it happen."



Perhaps you came to the Convention to see what FWIC, the national organization, is all about? Throughout the week FWIC President Charlotte Johnson capably chaired many of the sessions and communicated her love for this organization and all its achievements across this great country. It was also a great opportunity to hear incoming President Mildred Keith of New Brunswick. Delegates could meet and talk with all the Provincial Presidents, hear short summaries of the last

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The anniversary cake was designed and decorated by Jean Gingerich of Baden, Ontario. From left to right are Charlotte Johnson - FWIC President, Grace Sutherland - President, Kemble WI, and June Williams - President, Stoney Creek Charter WI.

## FWIC TWEEDSMUIR COMPETITION WINNERS

**Handicraft: Hooked Rug**

- Isabel Annis, Pickering, Ontario, Honeydale WI, Ontario South

**Community History:  
Photo History of Century-Old  
Buildings in Your Province**

- Joan Chalmers, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Vandorf WI, York Centre

**Cultural: One-Act Play  
(a humorous WI incident)**

- Gertrude Hawwood, Calgary, Alberta, Glendale WI

**Senator Cairine Wilson  
Competition:**

**Essay with Photographs -  
"WI - A Family Affair"**

- Dianne Campbell, Round Hill, Alberta, Round Hill WI

**FWIC Special Project:  
A Collection of Artifacts in  
Use at the Turn of the  
Century**

- Marshfield WI, Prince Edward Island