

HOME & COUNTRY



First Ladies of the Royal

By Peggy Knapp

The Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO) have hosted "Women's Day at the Royal" for the past six years. The 1996 Planning Committee chose "First Ladies of the Royal" as the theme; details were worked out with David Garrick, Chief Executive Officer of the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair (RAWF), to give the FWIO a high profile as they approach their 100th anniversary. The Committee chose three women, who have made significant contributions to agriculture at the Royal, to receive the award and recognized them and their work during the Women's Day Luncheon.

Sue Burns, born on a farm north of the city of Toronto and owner of her own flock of chickens and turkeys, has been a faithful supporter of the Queen's Guineas Class for many years. She has sought prospective buyers to the Queen's Guineas Auction each year, to provide a competitive group of bidders to purchase the winners offered by their 4-H owners. To Sue, it is a labour of love in the hope that the monies gained will help young people continue their education at the post-secondary level. Sue Burns smooths the way for "livestock people" and makes them feel at home in their home-away-from-home.



Pictured above (left to right) are Sue Burns, Hartland MacDougall, Joy Palmer and Miriam Detwiler.

Miriam Detwiler, provides a public profile for visitors to the various competition rings at the Royal, explaining for the uninitiated what animals, and what breed of animals, are exhibiting in the show ring. Explaining countries of origin, the history of the breed and their importance to the economy, she provides a specialized education for anyone who comes within the sphere of her distinctive voice.

Joy Palmer, is the embodiment of her name; she brings encouragement, sound advice and warmth to the chilly aisles of the cattle barns, as she becomes "den mother" to the many boys and girls who come from the Maritimes to compete in the keenly-contested Knob Hill Farms Junior Beef Heifer Competition.

The "First Ladies of the Royal" were presented with framed posters of the RAWF at the Women's Day Luncheon hosted by FWIO. They were also presented with bouquets during the Horse Show on Opening Night by Marg Harris, President

of FWIO, and Hartland MacDougall, President of the Royal.

The Royal plays host to women and men from around the world and is one place in Canada where the Women's Institute can present its image to a national and international audience.

Peggy Knapp is the Chair of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario "Women's Day at the Royal" Committee.

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