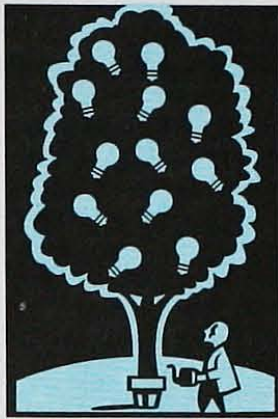


Ideas for a New Year



By Mary Lou Norton

This year will be an exciting, educational and informative year for all Women's Institute (WI) members - at the Branch, District, Area, provincial, national and international levels.

Remember, each Branch in Ontario received the program for February 19, 1997. We are asking that all Branches meet on that day to celebrate the 100th birthday of the Women's Institute. Invite all women in the community to attend and celebrate this day with you. Don't forget to assign a Women's Institute member to speak to both your local radio and television stations. And be sure that your local newspapers are full of Women's Institute activities.

Celebrating 100 years of the Women's Institute can be accomplished at various venues: educational meetings, teas, pot luck dinners, parades, mall displays, libraries, museums, schools, hospitals, store fronts, and numerous special events.

This is the year to network and tell the Women's Institute story to all other service clubs, organizations, seniors groups, agencies and local councillors in your area. This is the year when every member has the opportunity to be involved in spreading the word about our accomplishments at Branch, District, Area and the provincial level. We know who Adelaide Hoodless and Erland Lee were and what part the WI has played in the history of Ontario. Who better to tell this story than our enthusiastic members themselves.

What a golden opportunity to involve the community. Here are some ideas:

- **In February** - Invite everyone in the community to participate in the Special Program.
- **In March** - Hold a community event and tell people how the Women's Institute spread from Ontario across Canada.
- **In April** - Welcome the community to your ACWW Day event on April 29 and tell them how the Women's Institute became an international organization. Explain WIs involvement with the United Nations.

- **In June** - Organize a meeting at the local school in conjunction with "school days" or graduation programs. Highlight the WIs involvement in education, locally and provincially.
- **In September** - Make sure the WI is featured at your Fall Fair, noting their years of 4-H support and involvement.
- **In November** - Remember WIs involvement during the war years; arrange special events in conjunction with local Legions and other military groups, and be sure that they are reported in the November 11, 1997, editions of your newspapers.

The references for researching some of these ideas are many: the *Home & Country* newsletter, photograph collections, Women's Institute scrapbooks, Tweedsmuir History Books and provincial history books, especially *For Home and Country: The Centennial History of the Women's Institutes in Ontario*.

These are just a few challenges as we gather to celebrate 100 years of Women's Institute history. Plan your programs as a way to inform and include your community; it may even lead to an increased membership and the formation of new Branches? Pick up the challenge!

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Women's Time Out

During the long January of 1996, a couple of friends of mine who work for the Salvation Army planned a summer project for a group of city women. The group was called "Women's Time Out." The project decided upon was planting and maintaining a small garden. I offered a plot in my garden for the project.

This beneficial project required cooperation and allowed the women to see the results of their efforts. The majority of the women had never experienced the joy of watching something grow. They worked hard turning the soil, planting the seeds and weeding. Each week they looked forward to seeing the progress the plants had made.

As the plants matured, the women enjoyed the rewards of reaping the harvest. They proudly shared beans, lettuce, onions, potatoes, carrots, zucchini and even some ornamental gourds and flowers. It was a hands-on learning experience that formed friendships and emphasized the joy of sharing.

Submitted by Marie Hamilton, Stanley WI, Thunder Bay District.



Doreen Pearce (second from left) is pictured here with Perth WI members Donna Willows (far left), Barbara Elg (second from right) and Eleanor Williams (far right).

The English village of Twyford, Hampshire, came vividly to life when Doreen Pearce, a member of its Women's Institute Branch talked to eighty women at a tea arranged by the Kingston Area Executive. At a gathering in the Western Region, members from Perth, Middlesex, Huron and Oxford Districts also gathered to hear Mrs. Pearce speak.

She told about how their monthly meet-

ings were organized, always including an information table on the speaker's topic and a trading stall for the sale of crafts. She also spoke about some of their Branch projects, including an annual clean up of village roads, garden tours to raise funds and operating a village market that finances itself.

Submitted by Pat Barnes, Public Relations Officer, Kingston Area and Vivian Skinner, Public Relations Officer, Perth South District.

English Village Life & the WI