

FROM HONG KONG TO CANADA WITH LOVE



Thirty-three years after becoming the first sponsored child of the Solina Women's Institute, Carol Lai Ching made her second visit here from Hong Kong. This time, she was accompanied by her husband Pastor Chung Wong. From the time they arrived at the Toronto Airport until their departure three days later, their radiant smiles and charming ways won the hearts of everyone they met.

At the suggestion of the late Mileta Taylor, Past President of the Institute, the sponsorship of a child came to pass in 1963. The Solina WI became the "parents" of a shy, little ten year old, Ng Lai Ching, now known as Carol. The Sponsorship Committee of St. James's Settlement in Hong Kong had written about her: "this child is excellent in both her studies and her conduct, and if she gets

help she might be able to continue her schooling and have a brighter future."

We are so proud of her successes and achievements, throughout her school and her nursing career. It was wonderful in 1982, to welcome her to Solina for the first time. She had fulfilled her dream of coming to Canada and meeting her Canadian "family." "Now, you are not just pictures, but real," she said. At that time, Carol was given her scrapbooks that Solina Branch had compiled over the years of all her cards, letters and clippings.

Both Carol and her husband Chung intend to pass on this wonderful idea of sponsorship to others, and to the children they hope to have.

Submitted by Betty Grant, Public Relations Officer, Solina WI, Durham West District.



By
Lorna
McGrath

Well, here we are on the brink of the 100th anniversary of the first Women's Institute. It is our golden opportunity to sell ourselves to potential members if we do our marketing right.

Promote the fact that, through our programs we learn from each other and educate ourselves. We provide service to the community by doing fund raising and entertaining seniors. We experience personal growth as we learn to do the job and to do it well.

The social part of our organization gives enjoyment and friendship to those who belong. People have the opportunity to get to know and network

with local citizens. This network of acquaintances grows wider when we attend events outside the immediate community.

When we lobby for changes through our resolutions, we are learning about issues and influencing policy. Remember the wrapping of bread, the painted lines on the highways and the flashing lights on the school buses. Think of the difference that Women's Institute has made to daily life in our province. Look how one person, Adelaide Hoodless, has influenced us through the years.

Some people are interested in belonging to international organizations. We can offer that as well. Look at all those knitted squares that we have sent to Zambia and the non-members who have knitted and donated yarn. Remember the money to buy pigs and goats that we gave to Uganda to support the children who were orphaned because of AIDS. These children are offered the dignity of providing something for themselves because of the women who belong to our organization. Sell the fact that we care.

Centennial Plans Forge Ahead

By Mary Janes

On February 19, 1997, Women's Institute members around the world will celebrate the formation of the first WI Branch in Stoney Creek. In Ontario, all Branches will meet on that date, using a common program. Peggy McLeod, Chair of the Branch Program Committee, says this meeting will join us together in unity and spirit to honour this special day.

The major celebration of the centennial will take place at Hamilton Convention Centre from June 17-22, 1997. Delegates have already registered from Canada, New Zealand, China, India, England, the United States, Cameroon and the Isle of Wight. The theme speaker on the opening day is Linda Ambrose, author of *For Home and Country*, the recently published history of the WI movement.

A motivational speaker, Rosalie Wysocki, will speak on positive attitudes, team building and communication skills. Norman Rebin, an internationally known innovator, futurist and author from Saskatchewan, will speak on the convention theme.

Celebration Day, June 21, features an internationally renowned speaker on "Committed to the Future," followed by an historical pageant written by Peggy Knapp, a former FWIO President. An international dinner, with delegates in national costumes, and a multicultural program will complete the day. Registration forms for the centennial celebration are available from the FWIO Provincial Office in Guelph (call 519-836-3078).

Most of our members have no idea of the influence that the Women's Institute has on government and other organizations. We are represented at the United Nations as a non-governmental organization through the Associated Country Women of the World. Do we, as Branch members, see our organization as others do? We have a lot to offer the women in our communities. Let's offer it! Stand up and be proud to be a member of the best organization in the world in this centennial year.

In closing, I would like to express my thanks to those who accept the leadership roles in the Women's Institute organization, and to Janine, our Editor of *Home & Country*, for the interesting newsletter she compiles. It can't be an easy job in these times of cutbacks and restructuring. We don't always take the time to tell you that we appreciate your effort on our behalf.

Lorna McGrath is the Provincial Membership Coordinator for the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. She can be reached at RR 1, Elmvale ON L0L 1P0, (705)322-1320.