



By Hilde Morden

The role of the New Branch Organizer and her Committee is to attract new members, to organize new Branches, and to encourage present members. With these goals in mind, 24 Provincial Presidents and New Member/Branch Co-ordinators from across Canada met in Montreal in May. The discussion - "How to Attract New Members" - brought forth these results:

- ◆ sponsor a membership to introduce a new member to Women's Institute;
- ◆ organize a special induction meeting to recognize new members and keep existing members motivated;
- ◆ prepare a "Building a Better Tomorrow" Kit, for example, containing the *Home & Country*, your Branch Program, a list of all upcoming projects and activities, and the name, address and phone number of a contact person;

- ◆ include a tea bag with your kit with the suggestion: "Make yourself a cup of tea and read about an organization just for you - the Women's Institute;"
- ◆ extend a personal invitation and transportation to your meeting;
- ◆ hold meetings at the same location and time for continuity and prospective members convenience;
- ◆ plan a public relations event and welcome everyone in the community;
- ◆ provide local leadership by solving issues in your community with letters, briefs, phone calls and personal presentations to local officials;
- ◆ inform women that they are needed and tell them about the benefits of the WI; and,
- ◆ design a one-page handout to give to non-members.

Remember, we don't belong to a club that works in isolation. We belong to Branches and are called so because we are attached to the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. Through this attachment, a Branch receives help, ideas, support and encouragement. And in return, Branches provide programs, projects and activities that make the Women's Institutes strong, visible, credible and active in our communities.

Meeting new friends, opportunities to travel and regular fellowship provides each member with benefits in the areas of personal, family and community needs.

#### Ideas for a One-page Handout:

- advertise when and where your meetings are held
- give the name, address and phone number of a contact person
- outline your Branch programs, projects and activities for the upcoming year
- find out what skills your Branch needs; do they need members who can judge scholarships, organize a 'fun day,' research local history, make phone calls about local issues, prepare a display, or undertake a craft demonstration
- mention all recent Branch and individual member accomplishments

Hilde Morden is the New Branch Co-ordinator for the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.

## Erland Lee Award Winners

Wally Knapp was born and raised on a farm in Waterloo County. He farmed for 35 years in the Cambridge area, and later near Georgetown. He was once a busy international judge of Holstein cattle. Wally has often 'lent a helping hand' to the Women's Institute, working quietly behind the scenes at numerous events. At the Hoodless and Lee Homes, he has appeared in the costume of the day to shake hands and converse with visitors. His greatest contribution to the WI was as Agricultural Manager at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair (RAWF). His efforts and contacts helped launch Women's Day at the Royal, and establish a more prominent and active role for the two WI members on the Board of Directors.



Wally Knapp

Reginald Whitty was born and raised on a farm in Frontenac County. He was a farmer, egg producer, and writer of a weekly agricultural column in the *Kingston Whig-Standard* for over 30 years. Reg faithfully reported on Women's Institute anniversaries, District Annuals, Area Conventions and special events. It was said that he had a better attendance record at these events than many Women's Institute members. Reg always presented a positive image of the Women's Institute and the agricultural community at large. In the fall of 1990, the Kingston Area presented him with an honorary membership and an "Award of Merit;" Mr. Whitty passed away in October of 1992.



Reginald Whitty