



HOME & COUNTRY

HOME & COUNTRY is published quarterly by the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO). It has two objectives:

1. To provide educational material which cultivates more knowledgeable and responsible citizens and promotes good family life skills, leadership development and community action.
2. To provide a "communications link" among all members of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario and other related organizations.

EDITOR

Janine Roelens-Grant

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Debbie Thompson Wilson

© Willustration 1993

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Barbara Pinkney, Peggy McLeod (Co-Chair)
Margaret Atkins, Margaret Eberle,
Pat Ozsvari, Cindy Ashton
Janine Roelens-Grant (Secretary)

Deadlines: Summer Issue: March 15
Fall Issue: June 15

Please address all correspondence to:

Janine Roelens-Grant
Editor, Home & Country
FWIO

Guelph Agriculture Centre
P.O. Box 1030
Guelph, Ontario
N1H 6N1

FAX - (519)824-6941

PHONE NO. - (519)767-3507

Copyright © 1993 FWIO

Copyrighted material (including graphics) may be reproduced as long as it remains in context, its source is recognized and it is not used for monetary gain. To reprint copyrighted material under any circumstances please contact the Editor.

ISSN 0701-578X



Printed on recycled paper by Metroland Printing,
Publishing and Distributing, Willowdale, Ontario.

A Self-Profile:

A Moment of Years

By Margaret Atkins

In the silence of the hushed home, a faint light flickered and sporadic tapping disturbed the quiet, giving evidence of pre-dawn activity. The huddled figure straightened up, stared out the small window with unseeing eyes, and the arthritic fingers stilled on the keyboard of the post-war typewriter. She remembered... A chaos of memories filled her mind. Six decades of thoughts, words, deeds and changes within her realm flashed by in rapid sequence.

1940s - Awakenings: Dawes Road Branch, York East, hosted their first baby shower for Pearl G. Kelly's third child. The members assisted the family by cooking, cleaning, child-watching and attending to the needs of the new mom and baby. Recollections of the unravelling of knitted articles and the re-construction of socks, vests and blankets for the soldiers, the large cardboard containers being packed for overseas, the special handling of the food parcels, the hours spent at Red Cross depots, and the unlimited resources of the Women's Institute, combined with the strong neighbourhood spirit and the good feeling of family unity, made the child happy.

1950s - A New Dawn: Post-war affluence in the community meant a first time store-purchased sweater-set to wear to high school. The aromas of WI meeting night suppers of baked macaroni and cheese, custard, fresh-baked bread and salad filled the air. Time stood still. Months were like years and years like eons for the teenager. Sixteen came and went. WI filled those times with courses offered by the Department of Agriculture (a parade of hats, proud faces shone under the lampshades, and fashion shows of ladies apparel). Branch events rolled past (evenings bowling, grandmother's nights, picnics, bazaars, teas and new friends). Marriage, one child and responsibilities to home were interspersed with District Annuals, Area Conventions and conferences in Guelph. All was right with her world.

1960s - Family Oriented: Time passed quickly. Three children in scenes of confusion, elation and self-development - images of giggling, crying, sunny and funny faces; listening to musical interludes; waiting in the wings at dance recitals; and, those seemingly endless parent/teacher interviews; diffused with braiding hair, hours of ironing, chaperoning school trips and officiating at public speaking contests. Tired, but proud to be the mother of three individual young women; a hint of a smile surfaced.

1970s - Change of Direction: A panorama of moving pictures: girl's awakenings, boys, dates, clothing, hair styles, proms and 4-H Clubs kept her busy and aware of societal changes. Self-evaluation and development of creative writing skills surged forward and took her by surprise. She was not only an at-home mother, she was an individual, with aspirations of success. Her world had enlarged and many doors opened wide for her entrance. Her time had come. It was now.

1980s - Time of Discovery: A search for her place in this world took her back to school, which created a thirst for knowledge. Images of working into the night on journal entries, typing manuscripts and studying for exams flashed by in rapid succession. Three weddings, two grandchildren, a mother's passing - each picture denoted the involvement of Women's Institute in the life changes. The first Provincial Board meeting opened her eyes and thrust her into making decisions that she could live with and promote to the members. Old friends and new acquaintances meld together to create a panoramic view of her extended family. WI is behind her, pushing her forward with leadership courses, and personal growth exercises, as well as workshops to hone the skills of interaction within the family, community and country. Images and dreams filter past.

1990s - Reaching for the Stars: Reaching, searching and expanding her horizons in anticipation of the untouched Century, her eyes blink. The MOMENT of all the years faded with the dawning of a new day. Brushing back a stray hair, eyes focused on the future and with a rejuvenated burst of energy, she types. She knows in her whole being that her life and her club are indebted to the past, and committed to the future.

In addition to being the Public Relations Officer for the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, Margaret Atkins is a creative writer.