



Farewell Dear Friend

Bernice Blanche Noblitt
1914 – 2009

Written by Nyamme Samuels

Bernice Noblitt was a mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, an educator, a mentor, a women's advocate, a writer and above all, a source of inspiration to all who met her.

Bernice was introduced to Women's Institutes at an early age in Alberta. There were five girls in the family and they took turns going to the meeting with their mother. Bernice became

active in the organization when she and her husband moved to Barry's Bay during the war and she joined the Combermere WI.

Bernice was active in top offices of the Women's Institutes at various times in Branches and at District level. She was elected as president of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario in 1972 and subsequently served as president of the Federated Institutes of Canada from 1982 – 1985.

She has been involved in many projects on behalf of Women's Institutes, women in general and youth. Some of them include spearheading the buying, renovating and furnishing of the Erland Lee (Museum) Home and leading the 100 Member delegation to the Associated Country Women of the World conference in Perth Australia in 1972.

A teacher by profession, Bernice taught for several years in Alberta and Ontario and also found time to be a choir member. Not to be pigeonholed, she was also quite adept at cleaning chimneys when the necessity arose during the time she and her husband Harvey were living in mining camps.

Bernice received the Queen's medal in 1977 and in 1988 the Order of Ontario was presented to her by Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, Lincoln Alexander, for her "leadership and commitment to bettering the lives and advancing the rights of women". In replying to an interviewer on that occasion, Bernice said "I had an opportunity to do what I could and I did it to the best of my ability". Five years later, in another interview she said "all through my life the Women's Institute was an accepted fact of life, but when all is said and done the greatest value of the Women's Institute at any level is the friendships that one makes. I think that is the binding force".



It has been the pleasure of FWIO to recognize the significant contributions made by women in agriculture at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, by presenting them with a prestigious Women of Excellence in Agriculture Award.

If you know of a deserving woman who has made a contribution to "excellence in agriculture" at The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair please make a submission. The award is open to all women, currently or previously involved in agriculture at The Fair.

Your nomination package must include the following:

- A typed profile (not to exceed 500 words) describing the work of the nominee, particularly volunteer activities, while involved in The Fair.
- 3 nominators providing letters of recommendation including contact information (not to exceed one page)
- Contact info of the nominee

The closing date for submissions is September 15 2009. The winner will be selected by an appointed committee and the successful candidate will be notified by September 30th.

Forward completed package to:
Women of Excellence in
Agriculture Award
C/O Federated Women's Institutes
Of Ontario
7382 Wellington Road 30, RR#5
Guelph, On N1H 6J2