

History of Berne Womens Institute

Berne Womens Institute was formed in 1907 with Mrs Adam Cook as the first President and Mrs Madge McKinnif (McChas Hunt) as the first Secretary-Treasurer. For a number of years it was known as "The Farmers and Home Institute" with joint meetings being held in the Royal Hotel. They had what was called a Winter and Summer Series with Speakers being sent from the Dept of Agriculture. Women speakers for the women and men speakers for the men. At times they had joint meetings with as many as fifty in attendance.

The Speakers who came during 1912-1916, stressed especially the necessity and importance of a good training in Domestic Science and Home Nursing, for all young girls, believing it to be a great need for health and happiness for future homes. A trained nurse gave demonstrations and lectures, pointing out that mind had much to do over matter, in sickness. It was also impressed upon the members that it was necessary to use sound, careful judgment and efforts to always try to assist nature by natural means to effect a cure. Excerpt from an address given by Mrs. A. C. Emmonson "It has been our attention was particularly drawn to the necessity of the exercise of all our faculties, both mental and physical, in order to make life what it should be, and realize, that, after all, work is a real blessing, not a curse. That we are never too old to learn, and, by our activity we develop ourselves with a more noble and broad minded conception of life, and to the fact, that life is worth living."

The average attendance of the meetings held in the homes was fourteen, and the following are the names of the women in whose homes meetings were held during 1912-13-14-15-16. Mrs. C. L. Brown, Mrs. John Scher, Mrs. J. Perry, Mrs. D. Ketch, Mrs. George Chubb, Mrs. J. J. McKinnif, Mrs. A. C. Emmonson, Mrs. J. J. Emmonson, Mrs. John Allison, Mrs. Joe Arnold, Mrs. Dave Sturgison, Mrs. John Sturgison,