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A LIFE MEMBERSHIP in the Purple Grove Women's Institute was presented to Gladys Arnold, centre, last week in that area's community centre. The surprise award was

made by, left, Wilma Sutton, past secretary, and right, Marilyn Reid, past president. Mrs. Arnold has belonged to that institute since it was organized in 1947 and missed the very first

meeting due to a case of the mumps. The cake was designed by Janet Rhody. (Joanne Buchanan Photo)

Federated Women's Institutes open Erland Lee Home

Women's Institute History was made in August 1973 when over 400 people gathered at the Erland Lee Home, Stoney Creek, for the Official Opening. The occasion was to celebrate the acquisition of the property by the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario in June of 1972 and to honour Erland Lee and his wife Janet.

With Adelaide Hoodless providing the idea, Erland Lee and his wife Janet helped found the first Women's Institute in 1897. The first constitution was written by Janet Lee on the beautiful dining room table still sitting in the dining room of the Home.

The last of the Lees to reside in the house were Frank, son of Erland, and his wife Katie. Among the special guests were Frank's sisters, Miss Margorie Lee and Mrs. H.C. Freal, both of Stoney Creek, daughters, Mrs. R.L. Davis, Mrs. Frank Ryan and Miss Allison Lee, Hamilton and Mrs. Leslie Tulik of Newfoundland.

The crowd gathered under the shade of the whispering pines in front of the house for a brief ceremony. The Hon. William Stewart, Minister of Agriculture and Food, brought greetings and commended the Federated Women's Institute of Ontario for the great contribution it had made to the growth of the individual member, in the communities of Ontario, and now, in acquiring the Home for members all over the world.

Greetings were brought from the Associated Country Women of the World, by their deputy president, Dr. Irene Spry, Ottawa. Congratulations were read by Mrs. Austin Zoeller, New Hamburg from Mrs. John McLean, a Nova Scotia, president of the Federated Women's Institute of Canada. Mrs. H.L. Noblitt, Ottawa, president of the Federated Women's Institute of Ontario, chairman for the event, gave a short history of the Lee family. James was a staunch United Empire Loyalist, coming to Canada from the United States in 1792. She paid respect to the progressive, public spirited family who have played such a prominent part in the development of their communities, especially to Erland and his wife, for their part in the formation of the Women's Institute. Credit was also given to the Wentworth County for the enthusiasm in accepting the idea put forth by Mrs. Hoodless. Within 15 years the membership in Ontario was 29,000 and has since encompassed the world.

The ribbon was cut by Mrs. Russel Wise, Puslinch and Mrs. Allan Dickenson, Mount Hope, who were members of the committee when negotiations were begun, and also Mrs. Lyla Lyburner, Port Colborne, president of F.W.I.O. at the time.

South Wentworth District had a Memorial plaque erected on a boulder in front of the home in May 1961. The Historic Sites Board erected a plaque in October, 1967, at the instigation of the F.W.I.O. Eight bus loads came from as far away as 350 miles to be present. Guests toured the house and drive shed and enjoyed refreshments out under a large marquee erected at the back of the property.

WI praised for immunization role

The 30,000-member Federated Women's Institute of Ontario was praised Wednesday for its support of the ministry of health's campaign to initiate an intensive awareness of immunization.

Molly McGhee of Toronto, director of the home economics branch for the ministry of agriculture and food, told an Ontario WI Officers Conference at the University of Waterloo that the organization had a vital role to play in motivating the public, particu-

larly parents of youngsters, to make certain that their immunization shots are kept up to date.

It was particularly significant that in the International Year of the Child, she said, there is hope Canadians will develop a greater appreciation of some measures which can be taken to improve their rights and opportunities for self-fulfillment.

In 1890, the son of WI co-founder Adelaide Hunter Hoodless, died from drinking contaminated milk. His death led Mrs. Hoodless, who lived at St. George, Ont., to press for the formation of a women's

organization to discuss improvement of home life, including family health. Her effort led to the establishment of the first WI in the world at Stoney Creek, Ont., at the home of co-founder Erland Lee. Both the Hoodless and Lee homes are maintained by the WI as historical sites.

Miss McGhee said the agriculture ministry first provided a home economist, Laura Rose Stephen, in 1980 to help organize WI branches throughout Ontario and give lectures on domestic science. "Our early records show that in 1912 five staff were hired and they put on courses for 1,167 persons."

This year, with a staff of 49 home economists and two crafts specialists, the home economics branch has reached more than 70,000 people in

Ontario through its courses, and answered almost 17,000 consumer enquiries.

"Another 86,000 people were reached through our publications, and many more received information through newspaper and magazine articles, radio tapes and TV presentations," she said.

Although both staff numbers and contact has increased tremendously, history does repeat itself, she said. "In 1903 there was a course on bread-making. This year our Spotlight on Bread program was one of the most successful in recent years. This highlights the fact that each generation has its own emphasis on certain subjects."

She said the home economics branch and the FWIO are still working together to disseminate information to families and communities. She lauded the WI for providing more than 5,000 volunteer leaders to help the home economics branch in supporting hundreds of 4-H homemaking clubs during the year.

By FRANCES L. DENNEY
Record Women's Editor

It's taken 32 years, but Ontario government professional historical researchers have finally recognized the efforts of the amateurs — the hundreds of Women's Institute community history curators.

Wednesday, at the 31st annual Ontario WI Officers Conference at the University of Waterloo, the organization was invited to form a working committee to work with the

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