

Heritage Administration branch of the ministry of culture and recreation.

David Roberts, research co-ordinator with the branch, told the 600 conference delegates that he, as a professional historian, believes very strongly that the WI Tweedsmuir community histories provide an excellent, if not the best, means for recording local history.

The WI effort, which began in 1947 at the urging of Lady Susan Tweedsmuir, wife of novelist-historian John Buchan, who was Canada's first prime minister from 1935 to 1940, is one of the longest running historical projects in Ontario.

It was in 1939 that Lady Tweedsmuir, herself a member and county president of the WI in Oxfordshire, England, first recognized the need for preserving the history of a nation. She especially believed that the history of each local community should be preserved through comprehensive, factual collection of data.

She was aware that there was a need to pass on one generation's knowledge and perspectives to the next, and that the community history was an acknowledged steady influence, she believed its members would be able to

provide future historians with an accurate picture of rural life through its compilation of histories. The Federated WI of Ontario took up the project in 1947 to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of the WI.

Roberts, a native of Westport, a small village north of Kingston, said he found a Tweedsmuir history there, and that was incomplete, and somewhat inaccurate, it still stimulated his interest in becoming a professional historian.

After the Second World War, he said, there was stimulus to preserve the past of communities and the more recent and rapid rise in "local historical roots" is nothing new. It had its roots in WI preservation of community histories.

He recalled that the WI in Clinton lamented in 1950 the absence of first-hand information about that community, so its history — one of the first publications of WI gathered histories — it pointed out that its dates were copied from early data that may not necessarily have been accurate.

In the past year, Roberts said, there has been a tremendous upsurge in work by historical societies, architectural conservationists, museums, and genealogy groups, and among it the work by WI community history curators will become increasingly recognized.

The quality of the WI community histories may vary greatly, he said, keeping in mind the difficulties inherent in obtaining information, interpreting it and assessing its value.

He said he was in no sense advocating standards which would intimidate WI members who have a sincere interest in their communities' unique histories, but he was pleased that the organization had produced in 1973 a manual for compiling Tweedsmuir histories.

His proposal that the WI form a working committee to work with the Heritage Administration branch, dealing solely with the Tweedsmuir histories, brought loud applause from the conference delegates. The branch would assist the WI in defining standards of research among other things, he said.

The provincial government has assisted the WI curators by microfilming material, and the Archives of Ontario now has 68 microfilm reels containing several hundred local histories.

Ask not what your WI can do for you

It is many long moons since I got riled enough at a letter to the page, to feel like writing in myself, but a recent issue did it! Lily-Of-The-Valley, Ont. has taken a beautiful sweet at the Women's Institutes. It seems a little unfair to let her condemn a world wide organization, by her experience with one branch.

Here in Alberta we are busy in many ways with WI work. Maybe some of them are of earth shattering significance, but our motto is "For Home and Country" and this is exactly what we are trying to improve. If your homes, and your part of the country need no improvements, then you Lily, are justified in refusing to join, and lend your talents to the group, but I think if you were really honest, you would admit there are a few things you could do.

Besides the "good works" we can accomplish, did you ever sit down to evaluate the benefits of the Ladies getting together just for fun? We start off our year with a bit of nonsense. Every one has something in the house they don't want, or could do without. We wrap ours in parcels, and they are auctioned off at ridiculous sums of 10 cents or so silly? Perhaps, but we raise a good deal of funds for our Pennies for Friendship campaign. Do you not know what that is, ask one of the members, it may surprise you to know we are affiliated with the Associated country women of the world, who met last year in Dublin, Ireland, with 2000 women, from 46 countries. Have you heard one of the delegates report on this meeting? If you had you may not be so critical of conventions!

We have wonderful correspondence going with a group of native women in British Guiana, all WI members!

Just to keep us out of mischief in our "spare" moments we work all winter on entries of sewing, embroidery, huck weaving, stuffed toys, rugs or any other handicrafts that we may fancy. Once a year the home economist comes around and judges the work. This is where she separates the women from the girls! Did you, Lily, ever get a red ribbon pinned on a bit of needlework made by your very own hands? If you did, I congratulate you. You are not given away lightly. If you have never had that

experience, please get busy, next year you may be lucky enough to say "I got a First!"

In our own district there are always a lot of needs of help, someone, it may be a fire stricken family, it may be the 4-H kids, it may be the church ladies, it may be a dozen different things. Did you ever serve on a committee, to

clear to a wedding? When Mrs. up waded everything to rescue the Waldorf-Astoria, and you only have the good old dusty community hall downstairs? Try that on for size, if you want to tax your ingenuity. Or did you ever run your legs off, serving hot dogs and doughnuts at a community auction sale? It's a hectic way of life believe me, but when you have a group of women all pulling good naturedly together, it becomes an experience you wouldn't miss for worlds! Besides it puts a lot of shekels in the kitty.

This is all fine, but what about culture, you say? Well we try that for several years we have learned up with other WI's that I dare a bus, and gone touring. To date we have visited the dinosaur valley at Drumheller, and the world famous tiny church in that valley. We saw the Legislative Buildings in Edmonton, were taken on a guided tour of the beautiful Jubilee Auditorium. We went to many civic beauty spots in Calgary, also various plants and factories, and so I think we broadened the scope of our experiences quite a bit.

May I ask Lily of the Valley what she is doing for a Centennial Project? Our WI is publishing a history of our district, in honor of the pioneers who settled here, and fought the hardships of the early days. Does she think we are going to accomplish this job by sitting by the fire, or gossiping over the back fence? No! It will mean many, many late nights of typing material, gathered, and driving miles and miles, of interviewing people, of running the risks of being considered nosy! When that book comes off the presses this will be one of the proudest spots in all of Canada, and I for one will be in there cheering for the good old WI.

So dear lady, the next time your local branch turns down a safety campaign or any other project, for lack of a little leadership, get in there and volunteer. Show them you're doing. You'll soon be too busy to count the short comings of anybody or anything!

MRS. VIOLET SILVER, Husley, Alberta

Collect for Club Women

Keep us O Lord from pettiness; let us be large in thought, in word and deed.

Let us be done with faultfinding and leave off self-seeking.

May we put away all pretense and meet each other face to face, without self-pity and without prejudice.

May we never be hasty in judgment and always generous.

Let us take time for all things; make us grow calm, serene, gentle.

Teach us to put into action our better impulses straightforward and unafraid.

Grant that we may realize that it is the little things that create differences; that in the big things of life we are one.

And may we strive to touch and know the great human heart common to us all, and O Lord God let us not forget to be kind.

—MARY STEWART

Mary Stewart, distinguished U.S. educator and guidance counsellor, wrote the "Collect for Club Women" as a prayer for women. Since it first appeared in 1926, it has been widely read, including the Women's Institutes, the world over.

Development Dependent Sing Roles of Women 1963

Open Friday Night TILL P.M.

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kin Harrington who headed the home economic section of FAO.

Mrs. Van Beekhoff's first big assignment after becoming world president in 1959 was attending the FAO conference in Rome which launched the Freedom from Hunger campaign.

She was named as the only woman on its advisory council and has come to Ontario directly from FAO's World Food Congress in Washington where she delivered an address.

The UNESCO consults with ACWW in setting up its gift coupon schemes because of the contacts which can be made through its 140 constituent societies throughout the world.

Since her election, Mrs. Van Beekhoff has spent three or four months each year visiting member societies. In Africa she was food impressed with the great need for the advancement of women of the self her organization needed to do something to combat the influence of the scholarships which take African women to visit of home economists far from their own countries to study in Ontario. A grade 4 choir from d in ACWW, which joins differing societies in common goals, tries to create links of understand-

ing between women which leads towards understanding between families and nations, leading a step further towards peace.

Expressing appreciation for the gift of a handwoven table presented by Mrs. John Till of Doon, Mrs. Van Beekhoff said it would be useful when she visits Canada's newest territories in the North West Territories. She met the 43 guests at the end of the program.

Mrs. Austin Zeiler of New Hamburg, president of South Waterloo District WI, was chairman of the anniversary dinner which was also highlighted by the presentation of gifts to district past presidents and secretaries.

Among those expressing congratulations were Mrs. James Haggerty of Napanee, president of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada; Mrs. L. G. Lymburner of Part Colborne, past president of FWIO, and Rosemary Clark, Guelph, supervisor of home economists for Iron Curtain countries to study in Ontario. A grade 4 choir from d in ACWW, which joins differing societies in common goals, tries to create links of understand-



MEET PRESIDENT—Women's Institute members meeting Mrs. Geerda Van Beekhoff of the Netherlands (holding roses), the president of the Associated Country Women of the World (left to right) Mrs. R. C. Luskhart of New Hamburg; Mrs. T. D. Cowan, RR 3, Galt; Mrs. William Brown and Mrs. George Moore, both of RR 4, Galt.

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