

projects, making a total for two years of \$35,000 in this specific work.

Educational projects within the community, including scholarships, prizes for school competitions, donations to libraries and music festivals, received \$25,005 while health facilities, including hospitals and nursing homes, received \$45,454.

Institutes which sponsor children in foreign countries paid \$15,286 under this plan and an additional \$16,600 went to organizations such as the Canadian Cancer Society, the Mental Health Association, Children's Aid Societies, the Red Cross and the Heart Fund.

The board members were told to keep their eyes on the private members' bills which are currently before the Ontario legislature "to see how many incorporate ideas from resolutions we have passed," Mrs. Leonard Trivers of Thessalon said.

Mrs. Trivers, who is resolutions convener, noted that there are at least five bills dealing with matters the institutes have discussed.

These include requests for the addition of prescribed drugs and medication costs to the present family benefit payments; extension of Ontario Hospital Services Commission benefits to nursing home residents; extension of health insurance coverage to persons in chronic and convalescent hospitals or in approved nursing homes; establishment of a fund to pay the cost of crimes or violence of their dependents; and prohibition of the sale of non-returable bottles.

BY HILDA DOWNEY

The first Women's Institute was organized on Feb. 19, 1897 at Stoney Creek, Ontario, by a group of women who wanted an organization to match the men's "Farmer's Institute." Their purpose was to raise the standard of home-making, to provide the women with a chance to learn better methods of house-keeping, and it was intended to include all topics of importance. Six classes of study were organized: domestic economy; architecture, with emphasis on heat, light, sanitation, and ventilation; health; horticulture; music and art; literature, including education, sociology and legislation.

The honorary president was Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless who was the first meeting speaker and encouraged the women to organize. Her home at St. George has been purchased by the W.I. and is preserved as an historic site. As the W.I. became a world-wide organization, this home is of importance to women all over the world.

The second branch of the W.I. was formed two years later, 1899, in Whitby and the third at Kemble in Grey County in 1900. By 1901, 33 branches had been organized and by the end of 1902, membership was 3,081.

In 1899, the first government speaker and organizer, Miss Laura Rose, attended the Stoney Creek meeting. She was an instructor in the Dairy Department at the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph. It was she who suggested the W.I. motto, "For Home and Country" in 1902, and designed the W.I. pin in 1903. The colours, blue and gold, were chosen at an early W.I. convention in 1901.

The Macdonald Institute was erected at the O.A.C. with the aid of a \$200,000 grant from Sir Wm. Macdonald of Montreal, one of the big tobacco profits. Mrs. Hoodless was instrumental in securing this gift.

Annual conventions are held at the O.A.C. The first one was held in 1902 with 24 branches represented. Membership is open to all women and girls over 16 years of age, "regardless of class, politics or creed." Annual fees were only 25 cents for years, then crept up to 50 cents, and today inflation has raised them to \$1.90 per year.

The first branch in Alberta was organized in 1908; in Manitoba and British Columbia in 1909; in Quebec, New Brunswick and Saskatchewan in 1911; in Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia in 1913; in Wales in 1915; in England and Ireland in 1917. By 1918, there were 670 branches in the world and it spread rapidly from then on throughout the world.

The first International Conference was held in Antwerp, Belgium, in 1930, and the first Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) meeting was held in Toronto in August of 1953.

By KATHRYN HANSULD Record Staff Correspondent

TORONTO — Ontario Women's Institutes will assist in financing the training of a young woman in Turkey, receiving provincial president Mrs. Everett Small of Essex County, at the annual board meeting of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario here Tuesday.

A donation of \$2,000 for Ontario's "scholarship fund" will help pay for nurse's training for a woman from Yalova, Turkey. She will be trained to act as a midwife to take the courses in the care of babies, nutrition and sanitation.

The money will be administered by the Aberdeen scholarship committee of the Associated Country Women of the World, Mrs. Small said. Turkey is one of the newest members in the international organization.

Secretary Mrs. John Charlton reported that Ontario W.I.s have raised \$29,849 for construction of a rural training centre in Villa Maria, a town of 17,000 in central Colombia. The original goal for this project, supported by Canadian and U.S. groups, was \$13,000 but costs are increasing and the fund will be kept open.

The primary function of the plan is to provide training in the Food and Agricultural Organization and ACWW, is to improve the nutritional status of children through the education of their parents.

Though institutes have given generously to international projects in other parts of the globe, more than half of their budget of \$394,470 was spent

in their own communities, said Mrs. Clarence RR in a letter to the provincial public relations officer.

Contributions for a joyous betterment, such as parks, sports equipment, recreation, beautification, restoration of cemeteries, totalled \$111,969. Of this \$300 was spent on one

of the projects. Joyous projects was the theme of the week.

From Ontario:

I am one member of the Women's Institute who will not turn her back on the organization. Why? Because it has been of great value to me during the whole of my married life. Through the institute I learned how to conduct a meeting according to parliamentary procedure but, most of all, I lost a lot of my self-consciousness and learned to speak up when occasion demanded. It taught me to take my place in church and community life.

I am sorry Mrs. Franklin feels as she does. We all know that times have changed. But it is not because I learned how to conduct a meeting of my own program to make it more interesting and up-to-date. Our own programs are interesting and we all hate to miss a meeting. There are younger members in most branches because one recent report said "most of our members are young married women with children."

I believe the Institutes still fill a need in the lives of rural women. The contacts she makes, the friendly chats with neighbors and friends, are far better for her morale than sitting home listening to the radio or watching TV. While the last two are entertaining and I would not like to be without them, they do not compare with warm visits with friends. A young spouse with small children needs an association with other women. So do older people.

And, if we are not happy with the conditions in our organization, it is up to us to work to change those conditions for the better. If more people had the courage of their convictions they would work to change what they do not like and not just whine, rather than hinder those who are doing their best.

The history of Maxville W.I. is a record of achievement which merits more than passing recognition. For example, the W.I. organized the local horticultural society and public library. It donates high school prizes and annual scholarships; contributes to programs for crippled children; sponsors the convalescent, spas, polio clinics and the 4-H homemaking club; entertains grandmothers.

Summing up, the Maxville W.I. believes that its role is "to be cheerful, to be neighborly, to make our houses homes whose influence for life's best shall radiate throughout our community, to be every day in every way in the best we can to pass along what we have learned and quietly teach those about us by word and action that fine spirit of co-operation which springs from our common ideal—right living. This, we hope, is the philosophy that, like a golden thread, runs through our work and serves as a link in the chain that unites our homes and communities and draws the women of the world into closer understanding."

The Women's Institute is a long way from being a has-been even in Ontario . . . when my children were small I attended Institute meetings three or four times a year at the most. They were the highlights of my life. I came home with a fresh incentive to improve my lot. I believe there are many women now with small children who have the same experience. Would you like the

Wives Turn to Assist More Thoughts on the W.I.

could be expected, we received many letters commenting on the article on women's Institutes featured in our February issue. Some were complimentary; very extremely critical.

think every organization must continually rethink and readapt its program to keep pace with the changes taking place in our society. Automobiles, radios, television, magazines, the changes taking place in our churches, the scientific developments, put new pressures on all organizations. They have to revamp their programs if they are to survive.

article in our February issue focused attention on the role of the Women's and so stimulated thought and discussion among W.I. members of the world their role in today's society. We feel it has achieved its purpose. Now we need to give Velma Franklin the last word on the subject of the W.I. and its feeling that it has as great a future as its members choose to give it.

Institute disbanded because every member does not go out and run for Parliament. Let us keep the Institute. Call it an antique if you like but it still serves a very useful and acceptable role in rural Canada.

We are not a large group but we are by no means "old ladies." Several members have small children . . . we certainly do not feel that an afternoon at a W.I. meeting is just an "old ladies tea party." We cannot understand what kind of president Mrs. Franklin would make with an attitude of this kind. She certainly couldn't expect the full co-operation of executive and members.

We don't "continually go out to collect for funds." Our branch has an excellent reputation for quilting and our annual "Pioneer Night" with its old-fashioned country store with home-baked and candy provides us with all the working funds we need. Mrs. Franklin claims that home economics has outgrown the W.I. Yet, if she could see the results achieved by our 4-H homemaking club girls in sewing, gardening and cooking, she would not feel that way. Our annual International Day is a highlight of our W.I. program. We learn everything we can about another country and lunch consists of the national dishes of that country. Our guests are always anxious to come back.

We're glad we got credit for something! Our historical research for the Tweedsmuir village histories seems to be the only part of the W.I. program that pleases Mrs. Franklin. However, in our community, the older women did not prepare it; equally as many young women worked on it and they are continuing it.

We don't know what kind of community Mrs. Franklin lives in. But her article is small and indicates lack of concern, sympathy or kindness . . . she speaks of the humanities and then she injures the humans on her doorstep . . . I do not know what their average age would be but they are not all as elderly as she would have one think . . . as for the program of the Institute perhaps it could stand an overhaul, a bringing up-to-date. Any member has the right to discuss the program and make suggestions for updating it. However, discussion, without effective construction, is useless.

I am not a member of their (Maxville, Ont.) Institute. Mrs. Franklin's article is small and indicates lack of concern, sympathy or kindness . . . she speaks of the humanities and then she injures the humans on her doorstep . . . I do not know what their average age would be but they are not all as elderly as she would have one think . . . as for the program of the Institute perhaps it could stand an overhaul, a bringing up-to-date. Any member has the right to discuss the program and make suggestions for updating it. However, discussion, without effective construction, is useless.

From British Columbia:

These accounts of W.I. meetings both grossly understate and overstate the importance of the work done by W.I. members, in B.C., at any rate. Our branch here has helped support (and we are not exceptional) a sanatorium for crippled children (entirely supported by B.C. W.I.s), a T.B. home for sick children, two refugee children (one in India, one in Korea) at \$100 each annually; despatched 400 pounds of washed,

Page 7

may 19 67

Continued next page