

# Burnstown WI turns 90

By LUCY HASS  
Mercury Editor

Although the actual anniversary fell on January 9, members of the Burnstown Women's Institute chose a far more pleasant spring evening on June 7 to celebrate nine decades of friendship and philanthropy.

The evening opened with a dinner in the basement of the Burnstown Church, followed by the dedication of new furnace-room walls in memory of Catherine Elizabeth McIntyre.

The daughter of Sandy Campbell and Elizabeth Box, she grew up in Burnstown and married Neil McIntyre. She was active in all women's organizations within the Burnstown church and was Mission Band leader at one time.

She was described as "a faithful, dedicated member of the Burnstown WI up until her death in 1994."

"She always enjoyed the meetings and a few of the current members joined as a direct result of her efforts, one being current president Kay Reid," Vice President Irene Robillard noted.

Life members Adele McLeod, Jean Denniston and Jessie Fraser set the festive tone for the evening when they cut and shared a birthday cake marking the 90th anniversary. Fellow life members Goldie Moore and Carmel Stewart were unfortunately unable to attend.

The first life membership — granted by the branch to anyone who has served actively for 25 years or more — was given to Annie McAdam in 1970 after she had belonged for 42 years.

But the cake cutting was just the beginning of an evening of fellow-

Women bless in every  
land  
Help them Lord to take a  
stand,  
Stand up tall for truth  
and right  
May they always see the  
light.

An Institute Prayer  
Ella Smith, Picnic Grove Branch

ship and fun.

The real icing on the cake followed with a programme that paid tribute — both historical and humorous — to each decade of the WI's lifespan.

Filled with facts and closing with fantasy (a comical look at the Burnstown WI in 2011) the programme of song and skits was only the tip of the iceberg.

As emcee Eileen Brydges said at the programme's end, "There is a great story untold" as glimpses were given of only the first year of each decade.

"What a tale could be told if we had the time to mention every short course, all the catering, all the speakers, all the exchange visits with other branches, all the fair exhibits, all the methods of fundraising, and all the things on which those funds were spent," she said.

Past secretaries on hand for the June 7 celebration were Adele McLeod, Ella Rosebrugh, Irene Robillard, Henny Schaly and Eileen Brydges.

Treasurers of the past decade were Irene Robillard, Pat Maika, Jessie

Fraser and Betty Brannen.

In closing, tribute was paid to some very special members. Years of active work in the branch were recognized with the following commemorative pins: 40 years Carmel Stewart, Jessie Fraser and Goldie Moore; 20 years Irene Robillard, Helen Jones, Norma Riopelle and Netta Wyatt; and 10 years Kay Reid, Diane McKinnon and Karen Schaly.

Betty Comba also received an FWIC pin for her 36 years as a member of Quebec WI and 9 years in the Ontario WI movement.

Earlier in the program District President Karen Pender brought greetings to the group.

The evening closed with words of inspiration by Provincial President Christina Raeburn who congratulated the Burnstown ladies on their milestone anniversary and outlined the challenges that lie ahead as women around the world use their social conscience to address such pressing international concerns as human rights and national issues such as the impact of globalization and protection of our natural resources.

"We have some momentous decisions on the horizon," she said, encouraging members to face the critical issues of our day.

"How do we want to see Canada in 2011?" she asked the ladies.

Meeting other women from around the world "one-on-one" and learning about their life experiences, Raeburn has learned, among many other things, appreciation.

"We are so absolutely fortunate to live here in the Ottawa Valley," she said, proud of being part of the Women's Institute movement, "an organization who cares."



Mercury photo by LUCY HASS

Aside from celebrating its anniversary, the Burnstown Women's Institute presented commemorative service pins. Present to accept their recognition were, left to right, Jessie Fraser, Diane McKinnon, Irene Robillard, Betty Comba, Norma Riopelle, Helen Jones and Netta Wyatt.