

Hobby fair taxes arena to limit

By ANN KELLY
Family Living Editor

It can't get bigger, because the Bruce Centre District Women's Institutes' craft and hobby fair has taxed the Port Elgin arena facilities to the limit, but each year it seems to get better.

Craftsmen, more than 80 in number, had the space booked by March. They came from such distant points as Strathroy, Wallaceburg, Grimsby, Wendon and Waterloo with crafts ranging from the unique to the elegant.

It has been estimated that about 4,500 attended the one day event. When the Ontario president, Mrs. Florence Diamond was seeking directions in Port Elgin to the arena she was told, "The Women's In-

stitute has taken over Port Elgin today."

By early afternoon 4,000 tickets had been sold on a quilt being raffled. White School Women's Institute made 125 pounds of sugar into candy and couldn't begin to keep up to the demand.

Gladys Lawrence of Wallaceburg was doing 13 by 17 pastel portraits throughout the day. She worked from 10 a.m. when the show opened, until past 10:30 p.m., after closing time, but managed time to eat one muffin, as she worked.

Mrs. Lawrence, who has no formal art lessons, does portraits as life-like as photographs.

She's been doing her portraits for about 10 years, but says, "I'm learning all

the time.

"You have to want to do it so badly you envy the person who can. You have to be dedicated and put your all into it."

Mrs. Lawrence admits she's had her own portrait done seven times, "For different techniques by different artists."

Over the years, she has made several visits to Knots Berry Farm in California and has watched artists at work there.

Georgina McCallum of Grimsby, a member of the Niagara Guild of Crafts, does exquisite things with a crochet hook, woven mats, tiny baskets, bamboo plates in a variety of sizes and shapes. Crocheted flowers, mixed with colored static, come to life in pictures, wall hangings and centre pieces in warm, rich shades ranging from pinks, magentas and purples through to neutrals, oranges, golds, blues in beautiful combinations only a creative individual could produce.

"I started with potted African violets (crocheted) for church bazaars and it mushroomed from there. I can't really crochet, it's all out of my head," Mrs. McCallum hasn't yet fulfilled all her hopes and plans for her craft.

From Acton came Melanija Bray's real flowers preserved under glass. Just preserving the flowers is an art, before making the flowers into eye-catching arrangements.

The history of Grey and Bruce has been captured in pen and ink sketches by John Goerts. These range from old barns and bridges to art galleries, fire halls, log cabins, lodges and churches.

Wildlife prints were preserved on Lake Huron slate, the work of one craftsman at the show. There were demonstrations ongoing of Japanese Tokyo Bunka punch embroidery,

the craftspeople coming from London. Miniature machines were in



Sun Times photo

GREETINGS — Amy Isber, 15-month-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Marj Isber of Port Elgin, gets acquainted with the hobby horses for sale at the Bruce Centre District Women's Institutes' craft and hobby fair held in Port Elgin.

July 6, 1978

operation, an attraction for the men at the show.

There were wood inlaid pictures and pendants, a baby boutique and a kitchen boutique. For those looking ahead to Christmas, there were decorated tree ornaments, drummer boy hangings, complete with sequins, even miniature lighted trees and snowmen.

Bus loads of interested spectators arrived from Sarnia, Forest, Warwick,

Meaford and Owen Sound to see jewellery, bottle cutting, knitting, crocheting, wicker work, petit point jewellery, china painting, decorative corn fibre hangings, dolls and doll cloths, sunbonnet spice ropes, leatherwork, collectors' filled wire spoons, paintings, belt buckles, caning, rugs, weaving, pottery, the list seemed endless.

Overall convenor for the

eighth annual show was Mrs. Maurice Gowanlock.

Throughout the day there were homemade meals in the recreation room and lunches, tea and coffee on the main floor.

The hobby and craft show represents the talents and efforts of 12 institute branches in Bruce Centre District and craftsmen from many parts of Ontario.



Convenor Mrs. Maurice Gowanlock

sets off to Mrs. Maurice Gowanlock and members of Bruce Centre District Women's Institutes for a highly successful eighth annual craft and hobby fair held in Port Elgin.

Already craftsmen are clamoring for space for next year, and it's absolutely impossible to accommodate the craftspeople who want to be a part of the action.

This year there was \$662 raised on the bake table alone. Each institute member is given \$1 to buy supplies for baking. The \$662 figure, and the success of the craft and hobby fair proves the adage, "Give a woman a job to do and she'll do it right."

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