

Banquet Highlights W.I. 40th Anniversary

- June 1956

Forty years of achievement were viewed in retrospect by both Renfrew District Women's Institutes on Tuesday of last week over 180 members gathered at Combermere in celebration of their fortieth anniversary. A full day of reports, discussion and reviewing of the many phases of Institute work under the chairmanship of Mrs. R M MacGregor of Lochwinnoch district president was climaxed by an anniversary banquet in the evening when business and financial matters were forgotten and good fellowship reigned supreme.

The day began at an early hour when four chartered coaches from the Renfrew County Bus Lines were on hand to pick up passengers at various points in the district to assemble them all in the town of Renfrew and thence to continue the trip up through the hills, the lake and river routes for which Renfrew County is justly famous to the beautiful village of Combermere. Nor were the Institute members at the lower end of the district the only ones up and doing before the sun that morning. The hostess group at Combermere were likewise hustling about in the early hour setting the banquet tables, preparing the hall for the business meeting and to the surprise and delight of the trippers from 75 to 100 miles distant making ready quantities of steaming coffee and great platters of doughnuts for gratifying refreshment before starting in the business of the day.

The business meeting took place in the parish hall of the Church of the Sacred Heart and a cordial welcome to delegates and members was extended by Mrs. H Stevenson, president of the Combermere branch. Mrs. Hector Scheel of Stewartville replied on behalf of the visitors.

In the president's address to the meeting, Mrs. R M MacGregor gave high praise to the 19 branches in the district for excellent work earned on all through the years and expressed appreciation of the help and co-operation she had received. She urged continued support of the high ideals set by the Women's Institutes and made special mention of the need for branch members to prepare themselves to follow the work through and take on district offices.

Mrs. W H Hamilton, district secretary, presented the financial statements and secretary's report which included the results of the special drive put on by district Institutes last fall to raise money for hospital equipment.

An interesting explanation of the set up of the whole Women's Institute organization was given by Mrs. Leslie Davis of Eganville, provincial board director. Mrs. Davis also dealt in some detail with the coming triennial conference of the A C W W to be held in Toronto this coming August, describing some of the plans for Canada Day which may be attended by Institute members from every district and which will be held in the Maple Leaf Gardens. Mrs. Davis closed a most interesting address with the warning note: "Don't lose sight of your educational opportunities by stressing too much the money-making activities. Women's Institutes are educational groups, not service clubs."