

# Deadly milk provided impetus for WI

Death from a glass of milk? It's hard to imagine that happening today, but back in the late 1800s it was a different story.

Milk wasn't pasteurized back then so there wasn't any protection from contaminated milk.

This became painfully clear to Adelaide Hoodless of Hamilton,

Ont. when her 14-month-old baby son died from drinking contaminated milk.

The unfortunate tragedy became the motivation for Hoodless as she campaigned for more education for rural women.

One of her speaking engagements was in autumn 1896 at the Ontario Agricultural

College in Guelph where she addressed the Farmers' Experimental Union.

In attendance was Erland Lee, a school teacher, clerk of Saltfleet Township and farm activist. He was so inspired by her address that he set out to establish a new educational organization for women.



Women's Institute logo.

His first step was to invite Hoodless to speak at Ladies' Night at the Saltfleet Farmers' Institute. The following week, Erland and his wife Janet were travelling the backroads of the township by horse and buggy encouraging women to attend a meeting at Squires' Hall in Stoney Creek.

The meeting on Feb. 19, 1897 attracted 101 women and proved to be the WI's starting point.

The WI now has members throughout the world, including some 20,000 in Ontario and 43,000 in Canada.

While the group's initial thrust of educating rural women has remained, its scope has widened to include such issues as the environment and highway safety.

One of its more recent projects was rural day care. WI is currently calling for changes to rural day care policy to

## FEDERATED WOMEN'S INSTITUTES OF CANADA.

WE ARE INSTRUMENTAL IN HELPING TO ACCOMPLISH:

- Having bread wrapped
- Having white line painted on the centre of provincial highways
- Having red stripes removed from bacon wrap
- Getting fluorescent paint used on sides of railway cars
- Getting garments labelled as to quality
- Putting music on the school curriculum (1937)
- "STOP" signs being placed at railway crossings
- Having fowl graded for sale
- Getting the legal marriage age sixteen years with parent's consent (1937)
- Requiring car owners to purchase liability insurance before getting a license
- Making the law mandatory for traffic to stop when school bus is stopped (1962)
- Making available hot lunches in schools
- Establishing the International Peace Gardens on the border between Manitoba and North Dakota
- Requiring breathalyzer and blood tests for motorists
- Hospital benefits for all nursing homes
- Making it necessary for persons handling food to have "T.B." tests
- Teaching sex education in schools
- Enacting legislation on dimming car lights when meeting
- Having staples abolished on packaged food products
- Having poison containers clearly marked
- Banning the sale of mineral based detergents
- Establishing a course in Household Science at MacDonal Institute
- Requiring the pasteurization of milk
- Dental and medical inspections in schools
- Establishing the MacDonal Institute, University of Guelph (Adelaide Hoodless)
- Encouraging war memorials and war services