

## • Women's Institute Prescott District Annual

# *Communication is the key to understanding*

by Rita Constantineau

1995

CASSBURN — "Let's get it straight, we need to communicate!" said Ethelda Boa, Prescott District President of the Ontario Federation of Women's Institutes.

### Listen, Chat & See

Communication "Listen, Chat & See... What WI Can Be" was the theme of the Annual Meeting of the District WI at Cassburn United Church on May 10. Mrs. Boa underlined the importance of communications in her address to the 72 members and visitors present. "Communication is understanding, listening and it is a two-way street."

What a member gets out of WI "depends largely on the person and how much she puts into it," Mrs. Boa stated. "You can put into WI as much or as little as suits you but remember the saying, "The more you put in, the more you get out." Members must be able to bend a little with the ups and downs, "listen and struggle to see the other's point of view and then put kindness and understanding over set rules and then we reach the goal."

Mrs. Boa noted that although the Prescott District (Cassburn, Green Lane, Hillview, Lookout Bay, Plantagenet, Sunshine and Stardale) was not large in numbers, they could be very proud of their accomplishments.

Speaking of the organization in general she said, "We have much to be proud of; WI is now a self-sustaining organization with its own publication (Home & Country), as well Ministry of Agriculture is there to assist us through rural development with publications, many of which are free of charge."

"But," Mrs. Boa emphasized, "there is still a need of more money to make it work, and she congratulated the Prescott WI members who contributed to a fundraising evening held recently. The money, she said, from the cards and bake sale will go to the headquarters fund.

Pointing out the Women's Institute's involvement with each other, the community, national and international events, Mrs. Boa said, "WI is a legacy. We hope to be able to pass it on to the next generation. Do be positive

and enthusiastic when we "chat" about the WI."

And she pointed out the need for WI with a question for everyone to think about: "Did you know WI is the only non-religious, non-partisan, non-political organization representing nine million women in 70 countries on five continents, working together as volunteers for the improvement of life in families and communities? The potential is tremendous!"

On display at the meeting were memorabilia from the past and she said, "As you view the WI memorabilia displays you will see what WI has been. You, the members, will determine what WI will be!"

### A Pause

A pause in the day came at lunch, served by Vankleek Hill Trinity United Church Women. During lunch, members of various groups were asked to provide entertainment for the ladies. Entertaining the group were Kerri Steele from Imaginary Heaven and Alana Cameron who just came back from a two-week stint with "A Breath of Scotland".

Ladies, being ladies, a ripple of amusement went through the luncheon crowd as it was announced that there was a plant left over and it would be given to the oldest lady in the group if she would identify herself. Jean Hayes graciously accepted the plant.

### Communication

The guest speaker of the day was Carol Banks (Handfield) from Chute-à-Blondeau, a radio announcer and reporter who works freelance in Ottawa and Montreal. "Sometimes both in the same day," she said.

She spoke of her career in radio and what it is like to be a radio personality. She also brought along some taped interviews to give her audience an idea of how an interview is conducted, as well as a microphone to conduct some interviews on the spot.

Banks also has a children's program on Cable 11 in Hawkesbury.

### Donations

Donations were made to the Rural Child Care program, Vankleek Hill and Riceville Agricultural Societies, Erland Lee Museum, the home of the founder of the Women's Institute, and two scholarships were given out to Rhonda Kinnear and Jolene Bradley to continue their education after high school.

A brief In Memoriam service was held to remember former members Nancy Manson, Gayle Kirby and Marguerite Robinson.

Jean Morrison, Curator of the Tweedsmuir History lived up the morning session with her unique perspectives on history. She will be replaced by Alma Presley as curator of the history.

Rural Advisor Marie Ouimet will no longer come to meetings, Mrs. Boa said, however, she will be available for advice when needed.

"It was an excellent day," said Mrs. Boa. "There was a full house, one of the biggest ever."

The next Prescott District Annual will be conducted in Plantagenet.