



Bridgevale Women's Institute
 c/o Mrs. W. O'Byrne
 Durban North, Natal,
 Republic of South Africa

Bells ring to celebrate centenary of the WI

ALL over Herefordshire — and the rest of England and Wales — the church bells have been pealing to celebrate the centenary of the birth of the Women's Institute, whose community and campaigning achievements have made it the largest voluntary women's organisation in the UK.

The movement was founded in Canada by Adelaide Hoodless, of Stoney Creek, Ontario. Her child had died from drinking contaminated milk, and she realised how little women knew of household hygiene.

One hundred and one women — and one man — met on February 19, 1897, to hear a dairying

instructress speaking on dairy hygiene.

Yesterday, the WI was celebrating the centenary. During the evening, Miss Pru Lloyd, of The Dairy House, Weobley, was due to mirror and bring up to date that first talk in 1897, bringing the wheel full circle.

Quarter peal

A second speaker, Mrs Celia Hargrave, was to relate her experience as the first British woman ever to attempt the Sahara Marathon, the 'toughest race on earth'.

Also yesterday, many local bell-ringing groups were involved — the Clifford and Kington District Bell-ringers treated Eardisland

residents to a quarter peal of Grandsire Triplets, 1,260 changes. They also went to Pembridge and Staunton-on-Arrow.

Not only were the bells ringing out in the good old-fashioned way, but the latest communications technology was also due to unite England and Wales with Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, as national chairman Eileen Meadmore was scheduled to take part in a video conference with her counterparts in those countries.

This is just the start of a centenary year for seven million members world-wide, in more than 60 countries, all of whom owe their organisation's origins to Canada's Mrs Hoodless.

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