

# New Northe

By CATHERINE FORD  
Of The Free Press

GUELPH—She only said a few words, in a quiet voice which barely carried over the microphone, but they were enough for the audience of 3,700 to break into thunderous clapping.

For Mrs. William Firth, of Fort McPherson, N.W.T., an Eskimo, it was her first speech, and for delegates to the 4th triennial conference, Federated Women's Institutes

much as the FWIC can give; in money, supplies, field workers and generous helpings of moral support. Recently, FWIC announced the fund-raising goal 20,000 dollars for work in the north had been exceeded by more than 4,000 dollars.

help others and themselves through doing.

It plays a large role in the life of Fort McPherson. "Nearly every woman in the fort" belongs to the WI, says Mrs. Firth, who is the branch vice-president.

Most of their projects are

concerned with making life a little easier in the north.

"If a woman is having a baby, and she has no clothes for it, the WI will throw a shower," says Mrs. Firth.

Even a most basic necessity — water — is hard come by.

of Canada, it was a chance to hear from their newest members—the Northern Canada WI.

Mrs. Firth and Mrs. Fred Lambert, Destruction Bay, Yukon are attending the conference this week at the University of Guelph.

The FWIC takes special interest in the northern organization, for the 13 branches (12 in the N.W.T. and one in the Yukon) are only a few years old, and are receiving as

For women like Mrs. Firth the WI offers a great many advantages, social and economical. It gives members a chance to meet with their neighbors, perhaps learn some new skills through a field worker, but most important to

"It's hard to do housework," she says, especially when water has to be hauled from a nearby lake. The river was the main source of water, until industrial pollution made it unfit for use, she says.

Mother to 13 children, eight of her own and five by her husband's previous marriage she is vitally interested in education.

"I never had a chance to go to school. I know how hard it is, to get along without schooling." It is a thrill, she says, to see her youngest daughter, 14, away from home

for the first time, going to school at Inuvik, and her 18-year-old son finishing high school.

Mrs. Lambert is past-president of Destruction Bay WI, the one branch in the Yukon. Although she is a charter member of the branch, she has been a WI member—for at least 20 years. The Lamberts have lived in the north for seven years. Mr. Lambert has a civilian job with the U.S. Army. Both Mr. and Mrs. Lambert and their three children "love" the Yukon and are planning on staying.

Her WI branch is mainly concerned with "working in our community."

"We spend funds as soon as we get them on something worthwhile; we try not to bank anything." The branch contributes greatly to a fund for retarded children, she says.

Yesterday, the convention took a day away from work to tour the area.

They visited Niagara Falls, via Queenston Heights, and were guests of the mother institute, Stoney Creek WI, for tea.

The convention continues today with election of officers and resolutions, and concludes tomorrow morning.



MRS. WILLIAM FIRTH  
— — — applauded by FWIC