

Hilda Beachin honoured by W.I. members

Women's Institute members from across Southern Ontario were among the friends and relatives of Hilda Beachin who gathered to honour the life of this dedicated woman, who passed away in her sleep on January 1, 2000 at the California residence of her daughter.

Rev. Terry Tribe of Winger Church of Christ Disciples conducted the service, with the assist-

ance of Rev. Walter Howlett, Hilda's former pastor. She spoke of Hilda's life of dedicated volunteerism and leadership. Hilda worked wherever she felt she could make a difference, - as a loving wife and parent, as a Sunday school teacher, as a church elder, and summer camp counsellor, and as a leader in the Women's Institute, Christian Women's Fellowship and UCW.

A heartwarming eulogy was

given by Peggy Knapp, who was a President of the Federated Women's Institute of Ontario when Hilda Beachin and her husband Victor acted as resident host and hostess for over 10 years at FWIO's Erland and Janet Lee Museum Home in Stoney Creek. Peggy spoke of her very special contribution to this office - delighting WI visitors from Canada, Britain and around the world by bringing to life the significance of this historic home, where in 1897, the Constitution of the first Women's Institute in the world was developed at the elegant dining-room table.

She paid tribute to the well-deserved honours Mrs. Beachin had received for her dedicated volunteerism, from the city of Stoney Creek, and the Province of Ontario. She quoted from Hilda's own writings to her grandchildren. "Opportunities knock on every door at one time or another. When they come our way we decide what to do. We can use them or abandon them. The decision is ours." She noted that Hilda had set a wonderful example not only to her family, but also to other members and leaders, in her willingness to use her talents to provide leadership when it was needed, and also to show encouragement to other by doing their best to improve their organization and their community.

Included in the 30 women forming the Women's Institute Guard of Honour were Pauline Lindsay of St. Thomas, former Chair of the Erland Lee Home; Peggy Knapp of Cambridge, a former President of FWIO, ACWW, and the Canadian Section of the Associated Countrywomen of the World; Edna Ward, Past President of Hamilton Area FWIO; Doryne Levere, Fort Erie, President of Niagara District FWIO (for which Hilda Beachin was Honorary President), and members from Winger-Wainfleet and Vinemount branches of WI where Mrs. Beachin had served for over 60 years, as well as WI friends from many local Niagara branches.

