

Vinemount WI honour long-time member

By JO URBANOVITCH
News staff

Hilda Beachin's spirit will continue to light the way at the Erland Lee Museum.

On November 17, 1999, The Vinemount branch of the Women's Institute took part in a province-wide program to honour their oldest and most valuable member, Hilda Beachin. Hilda died January 1, 2000, but her memory will shine on when, as part of a millennium project, a light is installed in the parking lot of Erland Lee Museum Home in her honour.

Hilda Haney was born on August 18, 1911, on a farm in Haldimand County. She married Victor E. Beachin in 1937, and bore two children, Marilyn (Paul Shields) and Ralph (Doris), and, years later, watched her four grandchildren grow up.

The list of Hilda's accomplishments is as long as her influence on the Stoney Creek community has been. Some of the highlights include her involvement with the Winger, Wainfleet Women's Institute, where she was twice president. Later, she was active in the Welland District

Women's Institute and became the first president of the newly-formed Welland West, the western division of Welland District Women's Institute.

In 1974, Hilda and her husband were resident hostess and host of the Erland Lee Museum House, and she said of this time, "we will always be grateful to the Federated Women's Institute of Ontario for this privilege".

The City of Stoney Creek, in April, 1994, presented Hilda with an award of recognition for her contribution of time and skills to residents of Stoney Creek, which enabled many to achieve a better quality of life.

Up until Hilda's death, she was active in the Vinemount Women's Institute and was presented in the late 90s with her 60 year pin. She was an active member of the Winger Church of Christ, holding the office of volunteer regional secretary for its Women's Work in Ontario chapter for 17-1/2 years.

Hilda, in her spare time, knit baby sets and caps for the Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, and she enjoyed writing, reading, cross-word puzzles, bridge and socializing.

In a brief autobiography of her life, Hilda said "opportunity knocks on doors, but it is not enough to just hear. We must do something! Each one is endowed with talents. What we are is God's gift to us. What we make of ourselves is our gift to God."

The community would like to thank Hilda for this gem of wisdom in addition to a lifetime of work committed to helping others.



■ In the late 90s, Hilda Beachin, centre, received her 60 year pin from fellow members Alice Hedden, left, and Elva Weylie.

