

THE STORY OF THE BEGINNING OF BELLEVILLE AREA CONVENTION

(First Annual Convention was held on October 26 and 27, 1926)

For the following report of the first Belleville Area Convention we are indebted to the first minute book and to Mrs. Rosebush of River Valley Branch for many details.

Mrs. K. Faul, R. R. 2, Belleville
Area Chairman, 1949-50 - 1950-51

A suggestion to hold a Women's Institute Convention in Belleville in the autumn of 1926, composed of the Counties of Hastings, Prince Edward and Northumberland, was sent to Mr. Putnam, Superintendent of Ontario Women's Institutes, and to the District Annuals of these Counties in June, 1926.

A consensus of opinion being in favour of this Convention, a meeting of thirty-five representative Women's Institute women was held in the City Hall, Belleville on September 10, when a programme was drafted for a convention to be held in the City Hall on October 26 and 27.

The following convention committee was appointed:

Chairman - Mrs. M. B. Weese, Rednersville
Mrs. James Deviney - District President, West Northumberland
Mrs. R. C. Allen - District Secretary, West Northumberland
Mrs. James Garbutt - District President, East Hastings
Mrs. James Jargey, Bloomfield
Mrs. J. A. McFee, Belleville
Mrs. Woodley, Belleville, Mrs. W. C. Mikel, Belleville.

A sub-committee included Mrs. G. F. Clarke, Mrs. E. B. Finkle, Miss Carrie Reid, Mrs. G. H. Lenry.

This committee held its meetings in New Queen's Hotel on Saturday afternoons to complete plans.

The first convention, with three hundred delegates, was held in the City Hall, Belleville on October 26 and 27, 1926. Mrs. M. B. Weese, the first chairman, presided at the opening session at 1:30. After singing the Ode and repeating The Lord's Prayer, Mrs. Weese made an appropriate address.

Mrs. C. A. Bleeker, Marmora, was elected press secretary and Mrs. G. F. Clarke, Brighton, Convention Secretary.

In the absence of Mayor Graham, Alderman A. B. Collins extended a hearty welcome to the visitors and Mrs. J. R. Brown, Marmora, responded.

Mr. Putnam addressed the Convention briefly and gave helpful suggestions during the sessions.

The District Presidents gave concise reports of work done in their Districts:

Mrs. J. R. Brown, President, North Hastings, reported 1,851 members.

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