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Women's Institute arts and craft sale draws big crowds

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The number 3 turned out to be anything but unlucky for the annual Arts and Crafts Show sponsored by the Prince Edward District Women's Institute.

The 13th edition of the popular mid-summer sale, which literally took over every square inch of the Prince Edward Community Centre and adjacent fairgrounds last Thursday, attracted some 5,000 paid admissions and raised about

\$28,500 before expenses.

Money left over once expenses have been taken care of will go towards a long-standing project of the Prince Edward District WI—an accessible transportation system for the county.

"We're still hoping to eventually establish accessible transportation here," said PEDWI president Mary Lou Norton, organizer of the craft show.

"And the show just keeps getting more and more popular," she added. "While tourism is down in the county this summer, our show had an increase

in attendance over last year."

"In fact, if you take into account all the people who didn't have to pay to get in—the vendors, gates people, WI members, children, etc.—we had about 7,000 people on the grounds throughout the 11 hours of the show."

Norton is quick to thank PECC manager Brad Doran and his staff for all their co-operation, as well as Giant Tiger owner Calvin Thomas, The Kiwanis Club of Picton, who manned the gates, and the Bloomfield and Cherry Valley Scouts and Rangers.

Support staff is essential at an event of this magnitude, which also included two buses of visitors from Toronto and one each from Cobourg, Lindsay and Barrie.

There were spaces for 300 vendors at the show, but Norton suspects they actually had more than that on the grounds.

Besides local artists and artisans, this year's show featured vendors from Niagara Falls, Oakville, Lucknow, Peterborough, Campbellford, Madoc, Stirling, Kingston, Gananoque, Ottawa, and Quebec.

This marked the first year that the Prince Edward Chamber of Tourism and Commerce had a booth at the craft show, and manager Babbs Welsh says they would definitely go back again.

"It went really well," she enthused. "I haven't totalled up the number of visitors we had, but even county people stopped by and remarked that we had a good looking display."

The 14th edition of the Prince Edward District Women's Institute Arts and Crafts Sale is already scheduled for July 31, 1997.

As usual Rednersville teamed with Mountain View WI and served supper, and, as usual we did well financially.

1997 - July 31, 9 pm closing time, open at 10 am.

Another successful Craft Show - over 250 vendors and in the local coverage in the Picton Regional it says "Come one come all, but for heaven's sake come early. The four buildings will be open and brimmed full of wonderful gift ideas and this year especially notable is that our newly appointed Lt. Gov. Hilary Weston will be in attendance to open the day.

This year we will have postcards for sale as Prince Edwards contribution to the headquarters Education funds as well as a new tartan to commemorate our 100th Anniversary. The huge display board featuring past history of WI accomplishments and the focus of WI in our communities catches your eye on entry into the Arena.

We again served supper along with Mountain View and had a successful fund raiser.