

ACTIVITIES



Women's Institute member Audra Brickman (in hat), who has been involved with the organization for 76 years, and district president Marlene Corfield cut the birthday cake while representatives from each of the celebrating branches look on.

Local WI branches celebrate anniversary

By Jeff Bower
Staff writer

GAZETTE

Hundreds of friends turned out, May 20, to help members of the Prince Edward District Women's Institute celebrate its 85th birthday and to hear the history of this community-minded organization.

The Prince Edward District Women's Institute, as well as the Bloomfield, Wellington, Gilbert's Mills, Cherry Valley and Mountain View branches celebrated 85 years as organizations at the event while it was the Consecon Branch's 80th anniversary.

District president Marlene Corfield welcomed those in attendance, about half of whom were from branches outside the county, and also acted as the evening's emcee.

Following a splendid dinner, prepared and served by members of the Odd Fellow and Rebekah Lodge, representatives from each of the celebrating branches cut a large birthday cake.

Next on the agenda was the evening's guest speaker, Dr. Ellen McLean, Past President of the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW), who spoke about the women she encountered while travelling the world during her term.

The ACWW is the only international organization of country women and homemakers with its millions of members living in more than 70 countries on all five continents. One of its aims is to raise the standard of living of women and their families all over the world and every Women's Institute member is also a member of ACWW.

"In talking about women in action around the world, I don't have much to say to you tonight," McLean told those gathered. "You are a prime example of women in action. I think about your annual arts and craft sale, what a fantastic opportunity it is for publicizing the Women's Institute and what it does, as well as raising money for the worth-

while projects to which you give funds."

The speaker then talked about the women she encountered in such nations as Iceland and Zimbabwe as well as on isolated islands in the South Pacific and the headway these women have made in pursuit of a better life.

She also focused on the Country Women's Association of Australia, which disputed the Australian government's plan to burn a stockpile of wool. The president of the organization there lobbied the government to allow its 50,000 members to use the 3 million bales of wool as material for knitted clothes for the underprivileged. Paraphrasing Winston Churchill, she said, "Give us the wool and we will finish the job."

She also talked about the donations Canadian Women's Institutes have sent to sister groups in developing countries, explaining the difference that the money has made.

McLean concluded her speech

by saying, "This is the kind of action we need you to continue to improve the quality of life for women. In all you action projects, even if you raise just \$10, it makes a difference."

A review of the history of Women's Institutes in Prince Edward County followed the speaker with representatives from each of the celebrating branches reviewing a specific facet of the organization's past.

For example, the Mountain View branch reviewed the organization's activities in support of the community over the years, including the establishment of local libraries, the care of cemeteries and the donation of refrigerators, light fixtures, curtains and other items for area town halls. Other topics covered included education, health and the popular arts and craft sale.

The evening ended with the introduction of the new Prince Edward District Women's Institute Executive and the singing of the national anthem.

Flossie Tripp, Bev O'Shea, Audra Brickman, Geri Manlow, Marlene Corfield, Elda Brooks, Norma Hamilton, Rena Cunningham

May 20, 1993

Nora Barber
Marlene Corfield
Mary Ellen Closson

