

Brooksdale WI celebrates 75 years

Snow covered the roads as the ladies of the Brooksdale area travelled eagerly to the home of Mrs. Angus Matheson who lived on the 3rd Line to attend the very first meeting of the Brooksdale Women Institute on Jan. 18, 1923 - the third Thursday of the month at 2:30 p.m.

Seventy-five years later, one chartered member - Mrs. Florence (Innes) Ross plus 40 present and former members and guests travelled again on snow covered roads to the Brooksdale United Church to celebrate the 75th anniversary - on the 3rd Thursday of January, 1998.

The anniversary celebrations began with a noon luncheon catered by Janice Mitchell of Uniondale.

President Joanne Shelley presided over the afternoon activities. Greetings were brought from Oxford North District W.I. Donna McPherson and subdivision 23 director Donna Willows.

To remember this special anniversary, the three surviving chartered members will be

given a pin/badge scarf made from the Federated Women's Institute of Ontario Tartan. Joanne Shelley and Helen Piatt presented Florence Ross with her scarf prior to the cake cutting ceremonies. The anniversary cake was decorated by talented member Jo MacKay.

Mrs. Mary Innes and Mrs. Frances Rowland will be presented their tartan badge scarf at a later date.

Rosina Morris, curator for the branch's Tweedsmuir History and secretary Cathy Morris highlighted the history and traditions of the branch.

A tradition started in Dec. 1923 was to remember to sick and shut-ins of the area. Even in 1998, recuperating patients still enjoy the thoughtfulness of the Brooksdale W.I. (B.W.I.)

B.W.I. has always taken an interest in the activities of the one room school to the modern complex of Zorra Highland Park with financial support for special projects and awards at the Grade 8 graduation.

Support of the 4-H program began in 1938 with the Girls' Club. Many girls who joined the club have become

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leaders of 4-H work and members of the B.W.I. or afar in their new communities.

Knitted and sewn items, quilts and jars of jam were made for the Red Cross during the Second World War. Today crib quilts, finger puppets, slippers and other items are donated to the Children's Hospital of SouthWestern Ontario.

Over the years, members have organized social activities for the whole family or just the adults. They sponsored dances at Bailey's Hall in Brooksdale and at the Embro Town Hall, garden parties, Halloween parties, euchre parties and bus trips to enrich the lives of the community.

Women's institutes have been well known to preserve local history and Brooksdale is no exception. Four books of local history of the area - history of farms, hamlets, schools, churches and community ac-

tivities are well preserved. There are four scrapbooks of newspaperclippings which are photocopied and mounted on quality paper to preserve this form of history.

Preserving your family history was the theme of the afternoon speaker Josie VanLoon of the Salford area. She stressed the importance of proper preservation of photographs by mounting on acid free paper and using acid free ink for labelling.

Labelling the who's who is very important for future generations.

VanLoon started her own business Creative Memories from her home just over a year ago and she runs classes in preserving in her home or at the customer's home.

Members had the opportunity to create their own theme page of personal photos using the acid free products from her business.



One of the highlights of the Brooksdale W.I.'s recently held 75th anniversary celebrations - the third Thursday of this month - was the ceremonial cutting of the cake. Pictured doing the honors is the institute's president Joanne Shelley and charter member Mrs. Florence (Innes) Ross. The ceremony was held at the Brooksdale United Church. (Laura Green Photo)

Renovations project earmarked for centre

The age old expression "you must have a bee in your bonnet" is one way to describe how an idea has developed into a full-scale renovations project for the Embro Community Centre.

The project is to develop an elevated heated viewing area in the lobby of the centre from which the entire ice surface can be viewed.

The project was spearheaded by Robert M. Matheson, who noted this style of viewing area at the Mitchell arena while attending his son's hockey game last spring. It is similar in structure to the Embro centre.

It will be wheelchair accessible for the physically challenged spectators and will provide a great spot for the fans who don't like sitting in the cold stands.

At present, a portable platform is set up against the boards in the Southwest corner of the arena for the wheelchair viewers.

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A committee of interested citizens have been working together since the spring developing plans and working through all the 'red tape'.

The final hurdle will be gaining approval from the Zorra council's recreation committee.

Engineering reports and plans have been drawn up and early estimates for the projects are \$40,000-\$50,000.

Funding for the project will come entirely from the com-

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Proposed renovations

Examining the engineer's plans for the proposed renovations at the Embro and West Zorra Community Centre are committee members (clockwise), Ronda Shewan, chairperson; Al Matheson, Robert M. Matheson and Dale Matheson. Renovations include an elevated heated viewing area in the lobby of the centre which will be wheelchair accessible. It will also have a full view of the entire ice surface. (Laura Green Photo)

munity. It calls for no tax dollars to be spent.

Chairperson Ronda Shewan said a flyer explaining the project and asking for pledges will be distributed with the next municipal tax bill. The committee is also hoping the local service clubs will undertake fund-raising projects for the renovations.

Donations can be made payable to: Township of Zorra-Embro Community Renovation Project and can be dropped off at the Royal Bank in Embro, Matheson Food Town or mailed to the township office. A tax receipt will be issued upon request.

The committee would like to

start the renovations at the end of the hockey season. The target date for completion is the Embro Fair.

Innes elected society president

The 60th anniversary year of the Zorra Caledonian Society came to a close at the recently held annual meeting.

A roast beef dinner served by the Embro Legion Ladies preceded the meeting.

The Highland Games -- the society's major event was another success despite the often cloudy weather. There were 176 dancers competing in the 16 classes - for they knew it never rains on the first of July in Embro.

The ladies tug-of-war team from Embro won its first match at the 60th annual Games also.

The society, working jointly with the Embro and Zorra Agricultural Society, completed the construction of a large storage building on the community centre grounds for both organizations' equipment.

The 1998 executive and directors are as follows:

- Past president - Gord Green
- President - Rick Innes
- First vice - Ken Minler
- Second vice - Mel Sim
- Secretary/treasurer - Rollie and Dianne Rutherford
- Dance secretaries - Marlene and Bill Matheson
- Directors - Keith Matheson and Gord Richards



New executive

The new executive for the Zorra Caledonian Society was recently elected. Standing at back: secretary/treasurer Dianne and Rollie Rutherford; director Gord Richards and dance secretaries Marlene and Bill Matheson. Front row: Keith Matheson; first vice-president Ken Minler; President Rick Innes and past president Gord Green. (Laura Green Photo)