

1897 - 1947

Ontario Women's Institutes Celebrate 50th Anniversary In Colorful Assembly

One of the highlights of the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Women's Institutes of Ontario on June 18 was the message of congratulations and good wishes by Her Majesty the Queen, which appears on this page.

Congratulations and every best wish are extended by the staff of The Ottawa Farm Journal to the Women's Institutes of Ontario on this momentous occasion marking a milestone in the history of an organization which has seen a half century of progress far beyond the highest expectations of the little band of women of vision who, gathered at Stoney Creek on February 18, 1897, saw the blossoming forth of the first Women's Institute of the world.

"We Treasure the Past—We Face the Future"—In keeping with this anniversary theme of the Golden Jubilee of the Women's Institutes of Ontario, the momentous gathering assembled on the campus of the OAC on Wednesday last paid tribute to leaders of the past 50 years, and voiced a message of encouragement and stimulus to the institutes of the future.

Upwards of 6,000 institute members from all parts of Ontario, many prominent leaders in public life and visitors from practically every province of the Dominion joined in paying tribute to those who 50 years ago formed the first institute at Stoney Creek.

Although given on this page recently, it would seem fitting to repeat here the names of the first executive:

Hon. president—Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless, Hamilton.

President—Mrs. E. D. Smith, Winona.

Vice-president—Mrs. S. Nelson, Stoney Creek.

Secretary—Mrs. M. Nash, Stoney Creek.

Treasurer—Mrs. J. McNeilly, Stoney Creek.

Greetings were extended from the Dominion Government, from Premier George A. Drew of Ontario, Hon. Thomas L. Kennedy,

Minister of Agriculture; W. R. Reek, acting president of the OAC, and Miss Anna P. Lewis, superintendent of Ontario Women's Institutes.

Mrs. Hugh Summers, president Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, was chairman for the official program.

Representatives were present from Federated Women's Institutes of Canada and all provinces of the Dominion. Mrs. A. E. Walker, past president of the FWIC and FWIC, brought greetings from the mother institute at Stoney Creek. Miss Laura Rose Stephens, first Government lecturer appointed for Women's Institutes, addressed the gathering. Mrs. Spencer Ewing represented the Associated Countrywomen of the World.

A magnificent climax to a gala day in the annals of institute work and development was the historical pageant "Let There Be Light". This colorful scene depicted the 50 years of history of the Women's Institutes. Members of the institutes and junior branches of Ontario took part in the many episodes which reveal the growth and achievements of the institute movement in Canada and throughout the world down the years.

Next issue will give more detailed account of this great event.

Once again congratulations and heartfelt wishes.



MISS ANNA P. LEWIS, superintendent of Ontario Women's Institutes, and director of the Women's Institute Branch and Home Economics Service, Department of Agriculture, Toronto, who was a central figure in planning for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Women's Institutes of Ontario celebrated at OAC, Guelph, Ont., on Wednesday, June 18.