

# Savard Women's Institute held first meeting in 1927

The Savard Women's Institute was organized under the direction of the Charlton Women's Institute; whose officers Mrs. Alan McDonnell - president and Mrs. John McAuley - secretary, were present. The meeting was held in the Community Hall of the Savard Consolidated School and twenty-four members joined in the Institute, in 1926.

The first officers of the Savard Women's Institute were: President, Mrs. Fred Pummel; 1st Vice-pres., Mrs. Lawrence Morrissey; 2nd Vice-Pres., Mrs. John Morrissey; Sec.-treas., Miss Ella Grundy.

The first regular meeting was held on January 13, 1927. It was decided to hold the meetings the second Tuesday of each month - if that day happened to be very stormy, the Tuesday following would be meeting day.

The twenty-fifth anniversary was celebrated on June 11, 1951. A second celebration took place Aug. 11 of the same year when there was a reunion of members and ex-members, including those now living at a distance.

Since its organization the W.I. has played an important part in the life of the community it serves. Following is a sketch of its accomplishments.

## In Agriculture and Canadian Industries

Many roll calls dealt with agricultural topics principally gardening and poultry raising. There were papers and discussions on control of weeds, raising vegetables, marketing farm produce, feeding and care of poultry, bees and their work, also the social side of farm life. Every year a donation of money was given to the local fair in Charlton and to the Savard School Fair. In recent years, when the Girl's Garden Clubs and the Junior Farmer Clubs were organized, financial assistance was given them also.

Easter Seal Campaign, War Charities Fund and many more charitable organizations. On the social side, the Institute sponsored plays, card parties, dances, suppers, social evenings and other entertainments.

During the war, members helped in knitting, sewing etc. for the soldiers, sent them parcels of cigarettes and later presented them with souvenir gifts.

## Historical Research and Current Events

Papers were given on: Pioneer days in Temiskaming, Peace and International Relations, Beginning and growth of the Red Cross, Society and Sick Children's Hospital, History of Women's Institute Work from the beginning, The first local Fall Fair (Charlton), Canada and the Canadians (A sketch of the early history of Canada).

Films of the Royal Tour of Canada were shown at a meeting and a scrap book made of the tour.

The Institute shared in helping win the War and in the Empire Day exercises and in the expense of the War Memorial in Charlton - also in Confederation Exercises. Parties were given to welcome returned soldiers, War brides and New Canadians.

A paper on Museums was given at one meeting and a display of antiques at another.

## HOME ECONOMICS AND HEALTH

Numerous roll calls were given dealing with the home, the cooking of meats and vegetables, preserving and canning, curing of meat, sewing, mending, knitting, making quilts and house cleaning. A millinery Course and several courses in sewing were sponsored for the benefit of all women in the community. Members took courses in sewing and cooking and became local leaders. Demonstrations were given in canning, making salads, making a hooked rug, knitting of

## Citizenship and Education

Laws of Canada were read at meetings. Programs consisted of debates, quizzes, geography and spelling matches. Papers and discussions dealt with Canadian literature, Canadian Statesmen, good citizenship and making your will. Books from a Travelling Library were circulated each year - then an Institute Library was established. Book reviews were given at meetings. Books were purchased for the School Library.

## Community Activities and Public Relations

Community activities were, at first, mostly in connection with the Savard Consolidated School which was built only a few years before the Savard Branch was organized. The Institute sent for trees and shrubs and had them planted on the school grounds for decoration and as a wind-break; furnished gates and helped with the school fence; furnished equipment for a tennis court on the playground; also furnished equipment for the Community hall of the school and helped with its upkeep. Every year the Institute helped finance the school fair, gave donations to the hot lunch for school children in the community. Later they helped in getting a skating rink at the school.

Besides this help to the school, clothing was procured and quilts made for needy families - special help given to families who had suffered loss by fire or accident - hospital bill for invalid was paid; an artificial limb provided for a needy labourer. All new babies in the community received a gift of a spoon and all couples celebrating wedding anniversaries received a gift and to every sick or aged person a gift was sent at Christmas. To those who were shut-ins on account of illness, viewmasters and films were sent. The Institute subscribed donations to the Red Cross Society,

socks, gloves and sweaters and Girls' sewing and cooking classes were helped financially.

In the interests of Health, the Institute had doctors come to the meetings and give talks on the common diseases, their cause, prevention and cure. The School principal gave a talk on developing health habits in children. Papers on health were given by trained nurses and demonstrations on First Aid - a course in nursing was given for all in the Community. The Institute helped in having a dentist come to the school and paid for eye glasses and tonsil operations for children who needed them but could not afford them.

Savard W.I. has certainly been a success, due in a great measure to the goodwill and co-operation between the officers and members; among the members themselves, between school and Institute and to the people of the community who patronized all their undertakings.

The above was written in 1951 and the Savard Women's Institute has continued on, doing some of the same things but keeping up with the changing times and changing needs. The same strong spirit of help for others is carried on and the women enjoy doing it. To some of us older members change is hard but we are determined to carry on cheerfully doing the work that is required for us to do, being thankful that our health allows us to keep going.