

Temiskaming Centre District W.I. report

MAY/90

by Jean Rodgers

CHARLTON — The annual meeting of the Temiskaming Centre District Women's Institute was held recently in the United Church in Charlton.

The motto was "Mind over Machine."

Following the interest in this International Year of Literacy, they chose a theme entitled "Illiteracy."

Guest speaker Elaine Milton, a retired school teacher who has recently become involved with teaching adults, explained that the illiterate person actually only lacks a skill.

Reading is a skill to be learned. Cooking and driving a car are skills that are learned. Mrs. Milton explained that there are different degrees of illiteracy. Some of the students may be able to read newspapers for example but have difficulty writing and understanding forms to be filled out. Others just want to be able to read the sale sheets from the grocery store, labels, recipe instructions, road signs and maps. These are ordinary living skills that these people have to deal with. They are not slow-learners as they have usually developed a keen memory and experience to cope with their lack of the skill of reading. In fact they are quite enthusiastic about learning.

The name of the program in Temiskaming to help these people is S.T.A.R.T. (starting together at reading together). At present there are 15 tutors and 13 extra people assisting. Classes are held in private homes and teachers are not allowed to release names of students. The initial goal is for tutor training. There are courses available at universities for Literacy Practitioners.

This guest speaker gave her talk in the afternoon session of the meeting. A gift as a token of appreciation was presented to Mrs. Milton as she was thanked for coming.

Sunday Creek W.I. was hostess and held this annual meeting in the United Church in Charlton.

All were welcomed at the registration table at 9 a.m. with Minetta Martin in charge. The name tags were shaped like a book. Coffee, tea and muffins were served before going up stairs to begin the meeting.

The first vice-president, Carol Ellerton, chaired the meeting, opening with the singing of O Canada and the Institute Ode also reciting in unison the Mary Stewart Collect.

Roll call was answered by nine members of the Englehart branch, six of Sunday Creek and four of Savard. They presented their year's collection of Pennies for Friendship and donation to the Scholarship Fund. Several guests were present also to enjoy the day's activities.

The business was conducted with reports read by the conveners. The Program Co-ordinator and Public Relations officers' display had a variety on their table such as newspaper clippings of reports of meeting, current interests, pens with branch and district name imprinted, an F.W.I.O. scarf, a hat commemorating the 90th Anniversary, Home and Country and a life member's copy of The Country Woman, the magazine of the Associated Country Women of the World published in England.

Board Director Elna Blackburn from Hunta near Cochrane was present and had a fine display of W.I. supplies such as badges, membership cards, cups, plates, etc. Price lists, order forms and addresses for special items were available. In her talk she provided much information on W.I. affairs. The new Adult Leaders Training courses are supported by F.W.I.O. and prepared by a group called "Pass it on." They have a two year plan to present these courses to Women's Institutes to enable them to lead in their communities. Learning, working together, reaching out, promoting personal growth are all important parts of the work of the W.I. They learn to "pass it on."

Pertaining to the Tweedsmuir History that W.I. began, the board director spoke of their value and they recommend microfilming for preservation of these books.

June is W.I. promotion month and W.I.s are encouraged to place Home and Country magazines in public places, ie. libraries, hospitals, doctors' offices.

Rural Organizational Specialist Sandra Grier came from the O.M.A.F. office in New Liskeard and brought information about the new A.I.T.C. (Agriculture in the Classroom) program; a workshop will be held for teachers. She reported on the new image of 4-H. Now it is 4.H.4.U. (for you!). It is creating a renewed interest as it includes other than farm youth and the age is lowered to begin at age 10. Another "Day for You" will be planned for the women in the fall. A gift was presented to Sandra in appreciation of her informative talk.

A generous amount of crafts, plants, ornaments, knitting, food and some very useful articles were brought by the members for an auction sale. The auctioneer was Edith Field. It was a great way to make money and have fun and laughter, too. There were draws for several door prizes to add to the pleasure.

An excellent dinner, buffet style, was provided at noon by the hostess branch, Sunday Creek W.I. The favors at each place setting, miniature bunnies were created by Dorothy Walton.

The new business included a motion to buy a trophy to present to a deserving Family Studies student at the Englehart High School Graduation Exercises.

A motion was passed to pay the expense of sending someone to a leadership training workshop. September 24-25 are dates to remember as the Cochrane Temiskaming Area Convention is to be held in Englehart this year.

Nominations were held for the new executive for 1990-91. Elna Blackburn conducted the installation of the officers: Past President — Beth Williams; President — Merrill Charlton; 1st Vice — Carol Ellerton; 2nd vice — Helen Dorrell; Secretary treasurer — Dorothy Walton; Public Relations — Jean Rodgers; Program Co-ordinator — Dorothy Walton; Tweedsmuir History Curator — Alma Cozac; Resolutions — Norma Gillespie; Area Delegate — Elizabeth Hamilton and Alternate A.D. — Edith Watkins.

The meeting adjourned with the singing of God Save the Queen.