

THROUGH THE  
*Grapevine*  
BY FWIO PRESIDENT  
MARGARET BYL



Looking across the vineyard I see an ocean of lush green. The vines are working hard to produce a wonderful harvest in the fall. A grapevine, whether it is for a table grape or a grape for a fine wine, takes 4 years of careful cultivation before it comes into full production. WI is like a vineyard, it takes time and planning but worth the effort when the time comes to enjoy the harvest! Special thanks to the committees of Eastern Area; Eastern Area Society, SOS Society and FWIO Society for their careful planning and hard work to make the Provincial and ACWW Canada Area Conferences wonderful events.

After many years of planning and, thanks to the Canada 150 project committee and FWIO Members who submitted their stories, the book launch at the Provincial Conference was a huge success! Order your copies of *“Ordinary to Extraordinary”* from the Provincial Office. They will make great gifts. I was also thrilled to see stories and pictures of the different ways that WI’s celebrated our 120th Anniversary and Canada 150! Congratulations to the “Women Involved”.

In the Spring issue of the *Home & Country*, I asked you to consider inviting one new person to attend a meeting or ROSE Session or to share your issue of the *Home & Country* with a friend or neighbour. I am pleased to say that at the ACWW Canada Area Conference, Best Selling Author and Human Rights Activist, Sally Armstrong accepted a Honourary FWIO Membership and at the FWIC Annual and Board meeting following the conferences, ACWW World President, Ruth Shanks accepted a Honourary FWIC Membership. Congratulations and welcome to our new WI Members. How did you do with your invitations?

After years of “cultivation” and planning, FWIO has received a grant to continue our Digitizing project. We gratefully acknowledge the Government of Canada’s support, through Library and Archives Canada’s Documentary Heritage Communities Program and the tireless work of Irene Robillard. The WI 120 project is still underway – see page 6 for details.

The WI Rose was another successful project to commemorate WI’s 120th Anniversary. The rose bushes are sold out. A number of WI’s planted rose bushes in their communities to be enjoyed by all. Thank you for your support.

In April, Lynn Zizzo, our Bookkeeper retired and Leah Gauthier, Office Assistant went on maternity leave. We are pleased to announce the arrival of Leah’s daughter in July. We are also pleased to welcome Ethel Muth, temporary Office Assistant and Judy Opar, Bookkeeper. We were grateful to receive a grant from Service Canada for 2 Museum Summer Students – meet Marissa Benjamin and Kathryn Stirling on page 8. Thanks to Alyssa Gomori, our Curator for the great job that she is doing and to the Erland Lee Committee for keeping things going.

I want to thank everyone for their invitations to attend various Branch, District and Area events. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend every event, but do appreciate the invitations.

I look forward to attending Area Conventions this fall. It is that time of year when we need to look to the future and think of what we can do for our organization. There will be many provincial positions open for election (see page 7 for details). Please consider standing for a position or nominating someone from your Area who you feel would be a good representative. As we have reduced the number of *Home & Country* issues, this will be my last message as your Provincial President. It has been an honour and a privilege to serve you, the women involved, and FWIO as your representative. I look forward to seeing many of you at the AGM in Kingston. Thank you to the Kingston Area Committee for their hard work in organizing what I expect will be an amazing time.

Many thanks to Kim Sauder, Andrea Morrison, Linda Zelem and the Provincial Board for their continued support in sometimes difficult situations. It has been an amazing journey, of which I am most grateful for the experience, the new friends and the memories.

I would like to leave you with this thought – The WI is much like planting a vineyard. We work together to nourish and cultivate the roots and watch it grow. Sometimes a little pruning needs to be done, but in the end we will harvest something special and enduring.

For Home & Country,  
Margaret Byl