

Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario

THE ERLAND LEE HOMESTEAD

On May 28, 1961 a Memorial Plaque on a rugged granite boulder in front of the Lee Homestead, Stoney Creek, was unveiled.

In Memory of

Erland Lee and his wife Janet
who pioneered the first Women's Institute
-now world wide-
at Stoney Creek, February 19, 1897
and to commemorate their home with table
on which the Constitution was drawn up.
Erected by the District of
South Wentworth Women's Institute.

On October 1, 1967, through the efforts of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, an Historic Plaque was unveiled and dedicated at the Erland Lee Homestead by the Historic Sites Board.

THE HISTORIC BACKGROUND

This property is situated on Lot 17, Concession 4, Township of Saltfleet, south side of Ridge Road, Wentworth County. The property is known as 'Edgemont', crown grant 1801 to John and Mary Lee on their marriage. The first dwelling was a log cabin built by John Lee for his bride. The young couple surrounded it with cuttings of Sweet Mary, Myrtle, Yellow Roses and a Snow Ball Bush. The cabin has long since vanished, but the plants still flourish.

A frame house was later built and in time the back part of it was removed by Abram Lee, son of John Lee. In 1960 the present house was planned. It was built in front of the older part. The wood used was virgin pine. A fourteen-year-old boy spent the whole summer hand-cutting all the ornamentation on the outside of the house. All hardware is original and the old iron latches and hinges are still there in the older part of the house.

Much of the furniture has been handed down through the generations. Of interest is the dining-room table, which Janet Chisholm brought with her as a bride of Erland Lee. The table was her Grandfather's. On it she penned the final draft of the Constitution of the first Women's Institute in the world.

An option on the property was taken out by the Provincial Board in June, 1969. It included this dining-room table, with leather upholstered dining chairs, a large sideboard, desk built in the dining-room bay window and the floor-to-ceiling pine cupboard.

The option to purchase the Erland Lee Homestead will be taken up in June, 1972. The purchase of the Homestead is made possible by the generous contributions of all the Branches in Ontario and by gifts from interested people. The Provincial Board of Directors will make the decision of how best to use the building. A Foundation Fund is being set up to maintain the Homestead and equip it for whatever use will be made of it.

The Homestead is of great historic value, particularly to Women's Institutes of Ontario. It will be our very own possession (remember the Adelaide Hoodless Homestead belongs to all the W.I. members in Canada) and we are very proud to own it.

18/4/72

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