

Institutes want action on issues

The Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario have called for immediate action on issues of concern to rural women, according to a recent news release.

At its spring meeting, the FWIO board decided to send a letter to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, expressing opposition to proposed cuts in VIA Rail services. Individual members have also been encouraged to write letters.

Although FWIO has passed resolutions in the past about the closing of rural post offices, at the urging of the British Columbia Women's Institutes all members in Ontario are being asked to write to their members of parliament, to express concerns that the way of rural life is threatened by the closures.

Rural child care is an issue of concern to all rural families. The Bethesda Reach Branch ran a successful Rural Day-Care project last year. This year, it is having trouble obtaining the necessary funds, so the FWIO has been asked to lend support.

In 1984, FWIO initiated the pilot projects for the Rural Day-Care program, and has issued a policy statement supporting the availability of rural child care.

Board members were informed that the survey, 'Child Care Needs in Rural Canada', a project of FWI of Canada, has passed the preliminary test survey, funding is in place, and branches across Canada will be asked to assist in conducting the survey.

Margaret Munro, FWIO president, spoke of her experiences on a study tour of Nicaragua. OXFAM and FWIO plan to work together to promote a project for farm women in Nicaragua. As well, Ms. Munro will be leading workshops and telling of her experiences at the Women and Development Conference, April 21 and 22, at Ridgeway College.

Innovative new projects have led the FWIO to work with the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada to present a program entitled 'Surgery — A necessity or Your Choice?' After taking the five sessions, women will be better informed and more confident when making health care decisions.

Further evidence of the influence of Women's Institute members was demonstrated when the board was shown the program for the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Brock Act.

The idea for Brock University was that of the mother of Jean Egerter of the Allanburg Women's Institute. In 1957 she spearheaded the first resolution to the Allanburg Institute asking for a university in the area, and did the initial surveys.

Although initially turned down, the women persevered and now their children and grandchildren have access to higher education as a result.

The Women's Institute County Scholarship program has been ratified and winners will be announced at local presentation ceremonies.

Women's Institutes are well on their way to a goal of 100 new programs on waste management-recycling by 1990. W.I. members have been speaking to groups, presenting briefs to township councils and putting on displays.

A 'Dean Hurst Baby' recalls pharmacy career

by BLAIR BURGESS

Bert Morton won't be upset if someone calls him a "Dean Hurst Baby."

The former owner of Morton's Pharmacy in Beamsville is one of 66 remaining members of the Ontario College of Pharmacy — class of 1939 — all of whom started the course in 1937 under newly appointed Dean of Pharmacy R.O. Hurst.

This month marks the 50th reunion of the class of 1939, to be held as part of their associated University of Toronto's annual spring reunion. Most of the remaining members of the Mr. Morton's class are expected to be on hand to join in the celebrations.

Mr. Morton, now a resident at Albright Manor, would like to attend the gala event but he is worried his health won't stand up to it. He has Parkinson's disease, a chronic progressive disease of the nervous system.

But his health problems do not keep him from reminiscing about his years at the Ontario College of Pharmacy.

In the mid-1930s, at the height of the depression, Mr. Morton was offered a job as a pharmaceutical apprentice with a Beamsville pharmacy. Fresh out of high school and living with his widowed mother, Mr. Morton took the opportunity without hesitation.

After three years of doing everything from "sweeping the floor to dispensing sodas and

sundaes", he was accepted to the college in 1937.

Forty hours of classes a week, combined with extra studying and part-time jobs, left Mr. Morton and other pharmacy students exhausted during the two-year course, he recalled.

Mr. Morton called a YMCA "home" during his first year of college but later graduated to the relative luxury of sharing an apartment with another pharmacy student in his final year. Food was sometimes scarce, he said, and he did a lot of walking back and forth to school.

"At four tickets for 25 cents, street cars were too expensive to ride on," he said.

Sometimes, Mr. Morton allowed himself the luxury of seeing a movie "at 50 cents a crack."

With women making up 60-percent of today's graduating pharmacists, Mr. Morton chuckled when he remembered there were only nine women in his class, and 108 men.

"The women didn't have far to go to get a date," he said, adding that three of the women eventually married classmates.

Mr. Morton said ties between the college and its affiliate, the University of Toronto, were at best strained — that is until his class arrived.

"We decided to become involved with the university," he

said. "We had to if they were going to let us use the library to study."

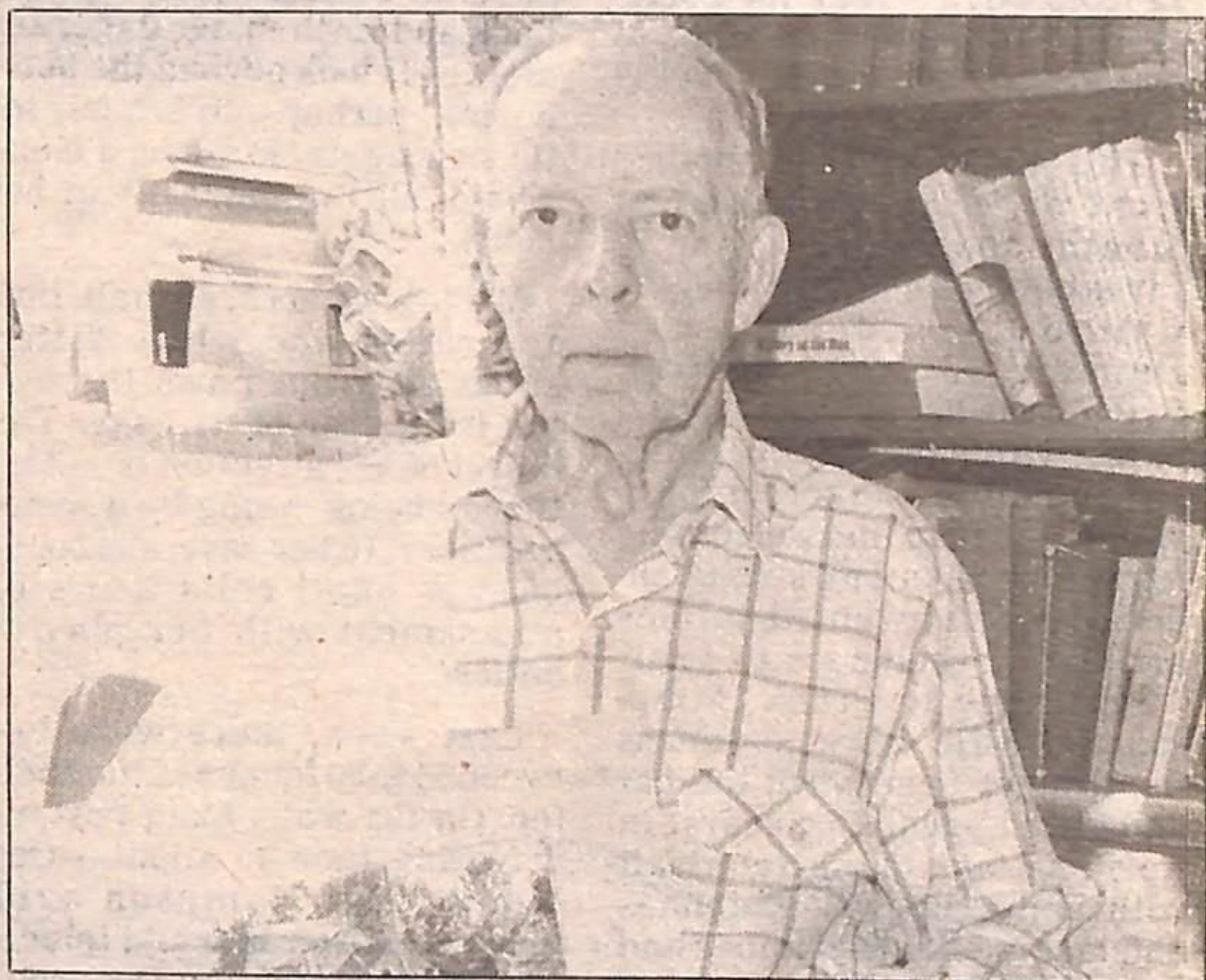
Mr. Morton made history when he became the first pharmacy student elected to the university's student government. One of the first activities he involved himself in as a student representative was helping to raise funds for a flood of Jewish refugees fleeing Hitler's Germany.

When the Class of 1939 planned its graduation ball, they decided to go all out and use their entire funds to finance the event. Mr. Morton said this was contrary to what had become traditional — passing whatever balance remained to the next pharmaceutical class.

Breaking the tradition meant finding only the best possible band available. So, Mr. Morton and his classmates hired Barney Rapp and the New Englanders, an American band. Mr. Morton said few may remember the band today, but one band member was Doris Day, who went on to become a major movie star.

Since graduation, all the 'Dean Hurst Babies', except a few who sadly lost their lives in the Second World War, went on to establish successful careers in pharmacy.

After recalling his youthful days, Mr. Morton vowed to try to make it to his reunion — ill health or not.



Bert Morton shares his love of being a pharmacist with a love for photography. His University of Toronto pharmacy class of 1939 will be holding a 50-year reunion this month. JUNE 7 89