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The WI in Bervie was founded about 1907, perhaps helped by the Kincardine branch which was founded in 1902. WIs seem to put their goal of preserving heritage into practice by acquiring old buildings and putting them to use. Please see the note below referencing Erland Lee.

The WI, it is generally agreed, was formed in 1897, when Adelaide Hunter Hoodless (1857-1910) gave a speech to the Farmers' Institute at the invitation of Erland Lee\* of Stoney Creek. She was born on a farm in St George, Canada West, now Ontario, the youngest of 13 children. After she married John Hoodless, she moved to Hamilton. She was an educator and organizer. When her infant son died in 1889 from drinking impure milk, she campaigned for the pasteurization of milk. She devoted herself to educating new mothers on household science and raising of children. She was active in the YWCA where she taught domestic science. With Lady Aberdeen, she founded the National Council of Women, The Victoria Order of Nurses and in 1898 published a book, "Public School Domestic Science."

But it was that speech in February of 1897 when Erland Lee invited her to speak to the Farmers' Institute that had, it seems the most impact upon rural women world wide. She talked of the value and need for teaching domestic science and sewing in public schools, and suggested that a Womens' Department of Domestic Economy be formed in affiliation with the Farmer's Institute. The WI was born, and has spread world-wide. The main mandate of the organization is not to raise funds, but to promote education. The Constitution reads:

"The object of this institute shall be to promote that knowledge of Household Science which shall lead to an improvement in household architecture, with special attention to home sanitation to a better understanding of the economic and scientific care of children with a view to raising the general standard of health of our people;....and carrying on any line of work which has for its objects betterment of home conditions surrounding community life."

The motto chosen: "For Home and Country".

The Bervie WI has been continuously active since 1907. Among their projects in addition to milk purity and pasteurization, abbatior cleanliness, and general home education, they have stressed sewing workshops, quilt mending and patching, proper diet. They support water projects world-wide, Canada Comforts (teddy bears), and Grandmothers' in Africa. They are supporting crafting supplies to Haiti. Their crowning achievement, as it is with all WIs, is the Tweedsmuir Histories which chronicle the farms of the WI area. This history is invaluable for research and local legacy which is often dismissed and lost. The saving of historic structures fits well with this history gathering.

Every woman is more than welcome to join the WI. The Bervie WI meets on the first Wednesday of the month. Please contact [www.brucecountydistrictwomensinstitute.com](http://www.brucecountydistrictwomensinstitute.com) for more information

\*Erland Lee was a descendant of John Lee, son of a British ex-serviceman, James Lee who emigrated to Saltfleet Township (now Stoney Creek) in the 1790s after the American Revolution. It is John who built "Edgemont" in 1808. In honour of Erland Lee and his insight into the genius of Adelaide H Hoodless, The Federated Womens' Institutes of Ontario bought the Homestead and restored it in 1972 to the period of 1897. It became a National Historic Site in 2003.