

The Ontario Women's Institute

(Continued From Page 22)
Pursuing her crusade for the teaching of Home Economics in schools, Adelaide Hoodless was instrumental in having classes set up in the Hamilton YWCA Building. The classes soon outgrew the space available and Mrs. Hoodless began to look for a suitable building. There was also a growing need for teachers for this subject.

Visiting her son, a student at the OAC, Guelph, Mrs. Hoodless thought that she had found the right ideal spot. The Ontario Government agreed to provide teachers but it was up to Mrs. Hoodless to find the means to provide a suitable building. She approached Sir William Macdonald, a millionaire from Montreal, with whom she was acquainted. He was impressed and finally made financial arrangements for an outright gift of \$175,000., for a building for the teaching of Home Economics. This building opened in 1903 and was given the name of Macdonald Institute. Here Mrs. Hoodless was, for a time, a part time lecturer and for many years her portrait hung in the foyer.

In 1964 when the facilities of Macdonald Institute were limited the Ontario Women's Institutes pledged to raise \$50,000. to assist with expansion. The money was raised for the 75th Anniversary in 1972 of the founding of the first W.I. in the world, but the government, who had promised to provide a percentage for every dollar raised by the W.I., was then in a restraint program and the facilities have not been expanded as yet. The department now at the University is called College of Family and Consumer Studies.

Almost from the very beginning the Women's Institutes took an active part in education in the community. Branches near the local schools were interested in upgrading the facilities that the small country schools provided. Early records tell of the Institutes providing water pails, drinking cups, first aid kits, hot lunch supplies, library books, playground equipment, even an organ or a piano. In fact the W.I. first promoted the medical inspection and teaching of music in public schools, and were responsible for these.

The health of the children was one of the first things the Institutes studied naturally. They got bulletins from the Health Department on Infant Mortality, Contagious Diseases and about the health of mothers and babies, often distributing these bulletins around the neighbourhood. Here and there the Institutes battled with school boards to get permission to have a doctor come in to examine the children. The doctors were sometimes provided by the local Institute Branch. The institutes pioneered the teaching of music in schools. Sometimes when the school board felt that it could not stand the cost of a music supervisor, the local Institute agreed to look after her transportation if the board would pay her salary.

Institutes in Northern Ontario promoted travelling dental clinics. Many branches supplied milk and cod liver oil to their schools. Some branches gave assistance in an immunization programme for school children. In later years, Branches have been responsible for a crusade to give retarded and handicapped children a chance at school. If the Branches did not provide these innovations themselves they put organized pressure on the local school trustees to upgrade the facilities. With changes in the educational system, the W.I.'s urged their members to assist by having principals, teachers, or inspectors speak at meetings explaining the new curriculum, vocational guidance, new classroom arrangement and such. These programs often ended in panel discussions and question periods.

In many communities, the W.I. were the first to provide library services. Members often acted as librarians and janitors. In some cases, the Women's Institutes were the first to raise money to assist in establishing up-to-date library buildings.

In 1945, the Provincial Board of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario began to plan for a celebration to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of the organization. A scholarship fund, as a memorial to Mrs. Hoodless and those who laid the foundation of the W.I. was suggested and accepted. Thus it was possible to invest \$19,000. in bonds following the November Board Meeting in 1947. The interest from this investment was to provide five Ontario W.I. Entrance Awards of \$100. each for students entering the degree course in Home Economics at then Macdonald Institute at the OAC, Guelph. The scholarships were to be regional, giving students throughout Ontario an equal opportunity to win. Since that time with accrued interest, as many as 25 have been given some years. With extra accumulations the nucleus for additional scholarships such as Dorothy Fitcher and Florence Eadie were set up to honour a former Ontario W.I. President and Miss Eadie whose contribution to juniors and 4-H'ers was so great. Also many countries or districts have raised \$2,000. which FWIO administers and the interest goes back to that county or district for a scholarship each year.

International

On April 30, 1929, in London, England, there took place an International Conference of Rural Women's Organizations. Lady Aberdeen, the wife of a former Governor-General of Canada, was Chairman of the meeting with Mrs. Alfred Watt, a former Canadian, and Grefin Margarete Keyserlink of Germany as Vice Chairman. Twenty-three countries including Canada were represented. This meeting led to the formation of a new countrywomen's association which in 1930 was formally organized and came to be called the

Associated Country Women of the World. The Ontario Women's Institutes became a Constituent Society of this international body.

At the ninth Triennial Conference of the ACWW held in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1959, a proposal was put forth that International organization should have a Scholarship Programme and a resolution was unanimously passed by the Conference. It was decided that this scholarship be set up as a Memorial to Lady Aberdeen who had died in 1939. The scholarship was to be used for training women in

the field of Home Economics, Nutrition and Rural Community Welfare. It is financed by voluntary contributions from Constituent Societies, individuals and, if feasible from ACWW funds and enables qualified and voluntary leaders in the field of Home Economics and Rural Community Welfare to study in countries where societies and members will give them all the necessary help in getting insight into the work at hand. The administrators of the Lady Aberdeen Scholarship usually work closely with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

The Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, also have their own International Scholarship. For the 65th anniversary of the first W.I. they raised \$50,000., invested and the interest from this money provides generous help for education of young women in the developing countries. The Provincial Board works through United Nations agencies to select recipients for this Scholarship. In 1966 three young women from the Philippines received help for further education in Food Preservation and Nutrition at the training centre for food technology at Mysore, India. In 1968 a sixteen year-old girl from Turkey re-

ceived assistance for training to be a nurse midwife in the school of hygiene in Kutahaya, Turkey.



Carolyn Adams of Denfield, near London, poses for photographers Wednesday after winning the Miss CNE beauty pageant in Toronto. The CNE opened Wednesday and continues until Labor Day. (CP)