

Emily J. Guest

W.I. activist Hall of Fame nominee

This year's FWIO nomination for induction to the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame, Miss Emily J. Guest, was accepted. Miss Guest will be inducted on Sunday, June 9, 1985 at the Hall of Fame Gallery at the Ontario Agricultural Museum, Milton. Six other candidates will also be honored at that time, and likenesses of all seven will be unveiled. If you are interested in attending the event, please contact the museum by calling (416) 878-8151 or writing P.O. Box 38, Milton, L9T 2Y3.

Her life...

Miss Emily Guest was born on a farm near Birr, on April 27, 1871 in Middlesex County. She attended the University of Toronto and received her M.A. in 1901. She taught high school in Parkhill and Belleville in the early 1900's.

She was impressed by the high ideals of Adelaide Hoodless, and being a lover of the country and country people, she could see a great future for rural women through the medium of the Women's Institutes. She organized branches in Parkhill and Belleville as well as Birr. During this time she initiated medical inspection in schools in Middlesex County. In the oncoming years she visited every District in Ontario, and left her mark by her leadership in program planning.

The First World War had a traumatic effect on Miss Guest. She volunteered her services to Great Britain, and upon her arrival there in 1916 was appointed the Canadian representative with the British Red Cross. In 1917 she was asked to join the staff of the Agricultural Organization Society to assist in the food conservation

program by organizing Women's Institutes in association with Mrs. James Watt. Scotland was Miss Guest's assignment. She spent her time lecturing and helping to organize Women's Rural Institutes. When Miss Guest returned to Canada in 1919 she was presented with a special jewelled pin from the National Federation of Women's Institutes.

Upon her return to Canada she devoted the rest of her life to writing, and to Women's Institute work in the Administrative Department of the Parliament Buildings, Toronto. Miss Guest died in 1936.

After her death the jewelled pin was presented to the Birr Women's Institutes to be worn by each President in turn.